

Cakes, Cake Bars and Sweet Baked Goods - UK - 2023

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This report looks at the following areas:

- Performance of the market and the challenges and opportunities arising from the impact of rising inflation on households.
- Frequency of eating cakes, cake bars and sweet baked goods in the three months to February 2023, and where cakes are purchased.
- Reasons for buying these treats and the implications of these for product development and brand marketing.
- Attributes influencing the choice of one cake, cake bar or sweet baked good over another, including type of brand, new flavour twists and healthier attributes.
- New launch activity in cakes, cake bars and sweet baked goods, including premium and seasonal launches, as well as non-HFSS and other healthier products.
- Behaviours and attitudes related to the eating and buying of cakes, cake bars and sweet baked goods, including the importance promotions, affordability of premium and being freshly baked.

Using 'freshly baked today' messages where possible will help sales of cakes and sweet baked goods; these making such treats more appealing to 67% of people. Going beyond signage highlighting items being baked on the day, operators can elevate the 'freshly baked' experience by building anticipation through making waiting for a fresh batch part of the shopping. Stores without in-store ovens could tap into this keen interest through a 'baked the same day' tie-up with a local bakery.

Offering affordable luxuries will endear retailers to consumers in these tough times. Premium cakes and sweet bakes can deliver in this role as 47% of people see these as an affordable luxury, this also suggesting that these treats can do well despite the income squeeze and consumers looking to make their money go further. Demand for premium cakes is helped by a preference for less over cheaper.



"There being such a wide array of reasons for people to buy cakes and sweet baked goods will continue to support sales. The category faces intense competition though from other treats, making NPD important."

– Richard Caines, Principal Analyst, UK Food & Drink Research

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With fewer cakes and sweet bakes allowed in high-visibility locations in-store amid restrictions on HFSS products since October 2022, getting people into the cakes aisle has become more important. Promotions can play a role here, since 66% of buyers were prompted by a promotion to purchase cakes or bakes on impulse in the 3 months to February 2023.

Chocolate brands continue to be popular in the cake category, with 35% of buyers choosing one cake over another based on it being chocolate branded. NPD in chocolate-branded products is therefore still worthwhile. The further extension of café or bakery brands into mainstream retail is also an opportunity, appealing to 28% of buyers, and offering an additional revenue stream for such brands.

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