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Sharing Food Experiences Bridges Generation Gap, According to Y-Pulse Study

A new nationwide survey of over 2,000 U.S. consumers from Y-Pulse (ypulse.org) finds common ground between Baby Boomers and Generation Z when it comes to preferences in sharing meal experiences and food traditions.

"So often we see significant differences in the dining habits and preferences among consumers in different generations, yet the findings in this recent study confirm that food really does bring people together," said Sharon Olson, executive director of Y-Pulse. "It was encouraging to hear study participants of all ages saying that they enjoy creating their own food traditions when they cook with friends and family."

When it comes to food and dining, following are three areas of agreement among the generations:

1. Sharing Food Experiences Is Important

Among those surveyed, consumers of all ages enjoy sharing meal experiences with others. 85% of Baby Boomers and 86% of Gen Z study participants said they prefer sharing meals with other people rather than dining alone.

Members of both generations enjoy food market venues that facilitate sharing food with a group of diverse tastes and preferences. 80% of Baby Boomers and 87% Gen Z study participants agreed that takeout from different stands at a food market makes it easy to share a meal with others when not everyone in the party wants the same type of food.

2. Embracing Food Traditions Is Meaningful

Nostalgic foods and family traditions are important and appealing to Boomers and Zoomers. 88% of Baby Boomers and 84% of Gen Z respondents said old family recipes were among their favorite meals. There was also

strong interest in creating their own food traditions when cooking for friends and family, according to 76% of Baby Boomers and 82% of Gen Z participants.

3. Living the Local Food Lifestyle Is Appealing

Members of both Baby Boomer and Gen Z groups agreed that they prefer to order menu items with locally sourced ingredients, at 74% and 72%, respectively. Although the premium price of local goods is a cause for concern among many, the majority of those surveyed said they value locally produced goods enough to pay a premium price. 71% of Baby Boomers and 68% of Gen Z say they do not understand why local food items often cost so much more than foods that are shipped from a distance. Yet 70% of Boomers and 77% of Zoomers are willing to pay a little bit more for food that comes from local producers.



A balsamic roasted veggie and grilled cheese sandwich (top left) represents a new take on an old favorite. Baby Boomers and Gen Z respondents celebrate food that incorporates different traditions, such as (top right to bottom) Korean meatballs and noodles; Jamaican jerk shredded pork tacos with pineapple salsa; and Mexican tostadas with lime crema.