



ultra

2019  
holiday  
audit



# hello

ULTRA is an independently-owned creative agency in Minneapolis, MN. With 30+ years of experience in branding, campaign development and package design, we know consumers and CPG. As trend hunters, food lovers and cultural ambassadors, Ultralites add serious value to understanding the current cultural tide. Seasonal trends included.

This Holiday Audit is an overview of what we saw in stores during the 2019 Holiday Season. Stores include Sam's Club, Costco, Target, WalMart, Walgreens, Williams Sonoma and other specialty grocers. What package design caught our eye? What forms were used with impact? What flavors emerged and could be big next year? What categories had the most fun celebrating the season? We share it all.

Cheers,

ultra

# contents

## what we found:

packaging

form

flavor: peppermint bark & candy cane

flavor: gingerbread & snickerdoodle

product: ice cream treats

products: beverage



# PACKAGING - A TASTE OF WHAT'S OUT THERE



# PRODUCT FORM

- Mrs. Butterworth's, Mentos Gum, and Reddi Wip all designed to their existing forms with adorable results, making the most of their packaging without a shape change.

- Aldi's cheese selection took these delightful snowman, star and Santa suit forms, making holiday get togethers a little cuter.

- M&M continues to explore containers for gifting in shapes that feel make the moment more memorable.

- Trader Joe's melting hot cocoa snowman took the product form to a new, unique place.



# FLAVOR: PEPPERMINT BARK & CANDY CANE

- The predominant flavor this year was far and away Peppermint Bark or Candy Cane. Nearly every category of holiday fare had some minty representation.
- Designs incorporating traditional red and white stripes help telegraph the flavor cue.
- Both Oreo and Eclipse's blue packaging stood out in the mix. Sticking with their brand colors helped to enhance the cooling sensation of the mint and pop on shelves of red, white, and green.



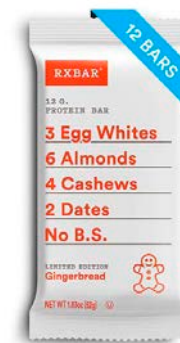
# FLAVOR: GINGERBREAD & SNICKERDOODLE

- Gingerbread and Snickerdoodle feel like a rising trend in holiday flavor. While neither are out of left field, they both cater to a more sophisticated palate with warmer spices.

- Protein bars, whey, and dairy alternatives brought the flavors to their consumers who want that same special holiday feeling in their lifestyle.

- Life's Gingerbread Spice was the only cereal we found that was playing in this flavor space. Feels like it could be a natural fit for other cinnamon based cereals.

- McDonalds put out a Snickerdoodle flavored McFlurry this holiday. Like Oreo or other brands that have played in the flavor space it was unveiled with similar excitement.



# PRODUCT: ICE CREAM TREATS

- Last year we were surprised at the lack of holiday representation in the frozen treat aisle, but this year more than made up for it!

- So many brands brought joy to their mostly limited edition flavors and holiday offerings - from classic flavors like Peppermint Stick, to the trendier Hot Chocolate and Marshmallow type offering.

- A number of brands got in on the Gingerbread and Snickerdoodle flavor trend.

- Blue Bunny's Mini Swirls really capture the shelf set with its clean package and bright red.

- Publix grocery's store brand was very trend forward with a variety of flavors and designs that felt both upscale & folksy.





# PRODUCT: BEVERAGE

- Holiday drinks are nothing new but more and more brands are getting in on the in-and-out action of the season.
- Polar Seltzer steered into bright, fruity flavors with pop-art like bottles for their limited edition winter offerings.
- Cranberry dominated flavor wise, via Sprite, Mountain Dew's Merry Mash Up, Canada Dry, and Califa Farms.
- Peppermint bark, like mocha flavorings, naturally fit into coffee creamers and cold brews of the season.
- A variety of dairies produced speciality milk flavors to compete for the non-nog crowd, including and primarily kids.





Thinking about exploring seasonal opportunities for your brand in the new year?

We would love to partner with you.

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