

# FROM OVEN TO SHELF: UNWRAPPING PACKAGED BREAD INSIGHTS

Today's bread shopper is evolving – and so are expectations around flavor, freshness, convenience, ingredients and occasion-based usage. Consumer insights research from the Grain Foods Foundation and Numerator reveals emerging opportunities for brands to drive relevance, innovation and category growth among younger and multicultural consumers.



## SIX KEY INSIGHTS TO WATCH

1

### NICHE BREADS ARE DRIVING MOMENTUM

Consumers, especially Gen Z and Millennials, are gravitating toward breads perceived as more **premium, innovative and versatile**, including artisan breads, brioche, ciabatta, focaccia and pita. These categories are also among the fastest growing in the market.

2

### BREAD IS SHIFTING BEYOND THE SANDWICH

Younger consumers increasingly use bread for snacking, breakfast sandwiches, sliders and on-the-go eating occasions. Research suggests future innovation should focus on **portability, snackability and smaller, occasion-driven formats**.

3

### THE IMPORTANCE OF INGREDIENTS & LABELS

Packaging is a critical communication tool, particularly for younger and multicultural shoppers who closely review **ingredients, nutrition facts and product claims**. Clean ingredients, protein, fiber and dietary-friendly formulations are rising in importance.

4

## HEALTH TRENDS ARE RESHAPING EXPECTATIONS

Consumers seeking gluten-free, alternative flour or “better-for-you” options are not abandoning bread – they are **redefining what they want from it**. Interest in gluten-free and alternative breads is especially strong among Gen Z and multicultural households.

5

## SHELF LIFE & FOOD WASTE ARE MAJOR BARRIERS

Price is not the leading obstacle to increased bread purchases. Instead, consumers, particularly smaller households, cite concerns around **freshness, shelf life and finishing the package before spoilage**. Smaller pack sizes and waste-reduction solutions represent a significant opportunity.

6

## GLP-1 USERS STILL VALUE BREAD

Consumers using GLP-1 medications continue purchasing bread, but are prioritizing **portion control, fiber, protein and snack-oriented usage occasions**. This audience presents opportunities for nutrient-forward innovation and smaller serving formats.



### What this means for the grain foods industry:

Bread remains a beloved, highly versatile staple, but the future of bread growth lies in evolving with today’s consumers. This includes premium and niche offerings, better-for-you innovation, smarter packaging and formats, and new usage occasions that fit modern lifestyles, from snacking to portion-conscious eating.

Full findings, detailed insights and strategic opportunities are available to GFF Investors on the Member Portal. Visit [grainfoodsfoundation.org/members](https://grainfoodsfoundation.org/members) for more information.



Source: Numerator, *From Oven to Shelf: Unwrapping Packaged Bread Insights*, commissioned by the Grain Foods Foundation, April 2024.