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63% like or love it

HOW A "SWAVORY" FLAVOR TREND IS TAKING OVER MENUS YEAR ROUND

A leading brand's flavor of the year is transforming LTOs.

COCONUT MAY CONJURE IMAGES OF TROPICAL DRINKS AND WARM-WEATHER MENUS, but Monin's 2026 Flavor of the Year, toasted coconut, has potential beyond summer. Monin Toasted Coconut Syrup combines the creamy familiarity of coconut with roasted, slightly savory notes to provide more room to use the flavor across seasons.

The approach is backed by consumer interest. According to Datassential, 95 percent of consumers are familiar with coconut, and 63 percent like or love it. Toasted Coconut Syrup also fits into the "swavory" movement identified in Monin's 2026 Flavor Trends, as consumers show more interest in sweet flavors layered with savory, roasted, and charred notes.

"Toasted Coconut Syrup is endlessly versatile throughout the year, as those savory toasted notes add warmth and depth to creamy coconut," says Carrie Gillespie, director of product marketing at Monin. "From snowball-inspired cocktails to toasted coconut hot chocolate, it's a sophisticated flavor that goes from beach to bonfire with ease."

As temperatures drop, those characteristics give operators an opportunity to rethink how coconut shows up on the menu. Instead of pairing it with tropical fruit and other warm-weather flavors, toasted coconut can complement profiles consumers already associate with cooler months: think coffee, caramel, chocolate, and warming spices.

That flexibility opens the door to fall LTOs that feel seasonal without relying on the same flavors consumers expect every year. Monin Toasted Coconut Syrup can bring another layer to lattes, mochas, dessert beverages, and cocktails or mocktails while still delivering a flavor consumers recognize.

The same approach can carry into the winter holidays, when richer, more indulgent beverages take center stage. Toasted Coconut Syrup works across applications including hot lattes, espresso martinis, affogato, cream pie, and whipped cream, giving operators plenty of ways to adapt the flavor for the season. Changing complementary flavors, formats, and presentation can take it from fall into the holidays without introducing a new flavor.

"Indulgent drinks are a staple of fall and winter menus, and toasted coconut offers a fresh way to draw inspiration from the dessert table," says Brian Loukmas, vice president of innovation at Monin. "Treats like coconut macaroons, German chocolate cake, or coconut tres leches cake can be reimagined as seasonal lattes, cocktails, or dirty sodas. Toasted Coconut Syrup could even be used to craft coquito-inspired mocktails for the holiday season."

For operators, that range can also simplify seasonal menu development. Rather than bringing in an ingredient with a narrow window of use, restaurants can use Toasted Coconut Syrup across multiple LTO cycles, dayparts, and beverage categories. A flavor introduced in a summer drink can take on an entirely different identity in a fall coffee or winter dessert beverage.

That gives toasted coconut something many seasonal flavors don't have: a reason to stay on the shelf after the season changes. ❖

Visit **flavoroftheyear.com** to explore Monin Toasted Coconut Syrup and its potential across dayparts and beverage formats.

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