

# Indicators

Early clues on the post-crisis consumer & market realities  
March 31<sup>st</sup>

## #2 Comfort Cooking.

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As our frantic lives have been put on mute the pace of home life is slowing down. Time poor consumers have almost overnight moved from the world of compromised convenience foods to a world of home cooking and even slow cooking.

Necessity is the mother of invention. Being stuck at home means the kitchen is becoming a focal point of our day. But invention in this world isn't necessarily completely new meals or recipes. In fact, necessity during the Covid-19 seems to be much more about a retrenchment back into familiar old favourites.

Globally consumers are now finding comfort in cooking. In China, the original epicentre of Covid-19 lockdown, a national survey (n1000) conducted in February by Kantar China found that to pass time close to a third of people got into baking and cooking.

Cooking is back for us all now. Cooking for comfort. Cooking for sustenance. Cooking for security. Cooking to let us feel that something familiar remains in this all to unfamiliar new world.

We call this early indicator **COOKING CONFINED**.

## #2 Comfort Cooking.

### Familiarity breeds comfort in a world we no longer recognise

Research agency Behaviour and Attitudes, have been monitoring consumer sentiment since the outbreak in Ireland. They find that 46% of Irish people creating more tasty meals that everyone can enjoy and 44% claim more of their main meals are now eaten with others .

As everyone has descended on the home and as we hunker down, pleasing people through food is a priority. Cooking has become a focal point of households' day in a way that hasn't been the case for many years. As long days stretch out for consumers, cooking is especially important to make the day exciting and interesting.

Unsurprisingly sales for comfort carbs such as pasta and noodles are all in growth. This isn't surprising when we know that Italian pasta meals with tomato sauces are firm family favourites (What Ireland Ate Last night).

In the UK sales of dry pasta were up 55% year on year in week ending 8<sup>th</sup> March according to Kantar. Nielsen also noted in the UK that many UK stores have been emptied entirely of pasta, noodles, bread and also rice with a similar picture apparently emerging in Ireland.

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**Inspiration is part of the story and some of these recipes will stick**

“Cabin fever cooking” has brought with it new virtual learning experiences with many new chefs now running courses and cook clubs online. Jamie Oliver is even filming his new cooking programme on his mobile phone!

For some consumers, access to their favourite restaurants and takeaways has been cut-off so they have no choice but to throw their hand at their own take on their favourite dishes. Media coverage and online searches for ‘take-out style recipes’ has exploded...



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### Just how ‘sticky’ are these new cooking habits

According to a research study in University College London, it takes on average 66 days to change a habit – so is cooking something that is likely to stick as we emerge from our cocooning?

Early indicators would suggest that with these new learned habits and new found interest in cooking, some changes are likely to stick. While we may move on from comfort cooking, it's likely that some family favourites will remain so. And also that new family favourites emerge. We are in the midst of a revolution in cooking upskilling with consumers adding new dishes to their at-home repertoire on a daily basis....



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### Early Implications for Irish Food & Beverages

- Consumers embrace comfort foods
- Consumers replicate their take-out favourites
- Consumers reject convenience cooking

