

Stocking up on festive treats

Lucy Beverley of Leatherhead Food Research takes a look at some of the products that we might find under our Christmas trees this year.



UK consumers spent £824m on confectionery last Christmas (IRI). While a large chunk of that spend went on gifting and sharing items, consumers also like to indulge themselves, buying impulse treats as excitement about the season starts to build.

For many, the Christmas countdown begins with an advent calendar. The very grown up Grand Advent Calendar from Hotel Chocolat contains truffles, pralines, chocolate wreaths, chocolate snowflakes, choco-late Santas, a luxury hot chocolate mix and a treacle tart in a milk chocolate case. Amongst the daily surprises are 50ml bottles of cocoa gin and salted caramel vodka.



Children with dairy and gluten allergies and intolerances are catered for with Chocologic's Advent Calendar. The 24 choc shapes are made with cocoa, rice syrup and rice flour and are free from milk, gluten and wheat.



Writing a letter to Father Christmas is one of the most magical moments of the season for children. This year Ferrero has launched a Chocolate Santa Letter consisting of two 100g (8 x 12.5g) Kinder Chocolate bars, an envelope, paper and stickers. Each letter sent to Santa will be replied to by the Royal Mail.

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Brands are also giving treats added personality rolling out animal-themed packaging. Maynards Bassetts' first soft-filled candy is joining the Christmas range. Packaged in a festive penguin jar, Juicy Chews come in Orange, Cherry and Strawberry flavours.



Ideal as a stocking filler or impulse treat, Nestlé has rolled out a variety of animal characters including this Milkybar hollow white chocolate polar bear.



Also great for stockings is this new 43g carton of Cadbury Snow Bites – milk chocolate balls surrounded by a crispy white dusted icing sugar shell.



Swiss chocolatier Lindt has repackaged its Mini Santa for Christmas 2017. With perforated packaging, these hollow milk chocolate Santas can be popped into stockings or



used to accompany place names at the Christmas table.

Also ideal for the Christmas table are these Salted Caramel Pine Cones from Marks & Spencer. The cones are amongst a range which includes pro-secco mallows, a shimmering chocolate bauble, a Sparkle and Fizz chocolate bar and a single origin chocolate tree.



Mars chocolate UK has added a new Snickers selection box to its festive range to "provide a relevant gift for men". Containing varying sizes of Snickers, Milky Way, Maltesers, Twix and Mars, the gift further taps into the trend of consumers trading up on selection boxes.



Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without a glass of Baileys. The brand has teamed up with Lir Chocolates for this festive offering. Baileys Miniature & Truffles comprises two 5.8g Baileys Original Irish cream liqueur milk chocolate truffles and a 5cl bottle of Baileys Original Irish Cream Liqueur.

