

KAGOME

TREND REPORT February 2025



2025 Year of the Crunch

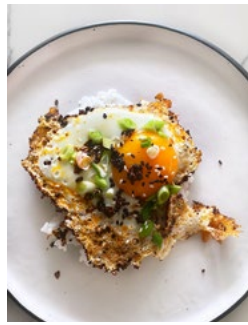
What is Year of the Crunch?

The Food Institute, a 90-year-old food industry publication, slated 2025 as the “**Year of the Crunch.**” They state, “*adding texture to meals and snacks will be crucial for brands hoping to keep consumers engaged in an increasingly saturated snacking market.*”



“New takes on chili crisp toppings and crunch-forward seasonings are also making their way into everything from roasted vegetables to desserts.”

What is Kagome’s Crunch Seal? Crunch Seal is Kagome’s proprietary, custom oil-based sauces line, that delivers flavor and keeps fried dishes such as chicken wings or chicken sandwiches crunchy, crispy, and craveable. Currently, this product is only produced at our facility in Osceola, Arkansas. Due to the popularity of this product, we will be expanding our manufacturing capacity by adding a new line to our California facility.



Chili Oil vs Chili Crisp vs Crunch Seal

What's the difference?



While these condiments may seem similar, there are a couple of key differences that set them apart.

Chili Oil is typically a chili-infused oil, a deep red color, spicy, but has no particulate. Often made with flavorless and odorless oils such as canola, grapeseed, soybean, and corn oil which allow the chili pepper flavor to shine through.

Chili Crisp on the other hand, is also a spice and chili-infused oil **with** particulate. Ingredients such as chili flakes, garlic, shallot, peppercorns, spice, black beans may be included to achieve a crunchy texture.

Kagome's Crunch Seal is a unique, proprietary line of sauces that blends the bold flavors, spice, and heat of chili oil and chili crisp into one. Unlike traditional options, the spices and aromatics are finely ground, offering all the flavor you crave with a smooth, refined texture.

Creative Applications for Chili Oil/ChiliCrisp/Crunch Seal

- Toss with your fried wings
- A textural topping for deviled eggs or avocado toast
- Make your yogurt spicy and savory
- Transform your next salad
- Spice up your roasted vegetables
- Fuse new flavors to pasta sauce
- Pair with your favorite fruit jam
- Blend in butter for a compound butter
- Baste chicken while roasting
- Replace jalapeños in guacamole
- Dipping sauce for empanadas or boiled dumplings
- Use in your fried rice or stir-fry
- Take your morning eggs to the next level
- Bring more heat and texture to your pizza
- Top your favorite ice cream



Spicy Preferences and Chili Oil by the Numbers

84%
of Consumers
Eat Spicy
Foods

The most
popular level
of **heat** enjoyed by
spice enthusiasts
is medium

69%
love or like chili
oil among those
who have
tried it

The spicy
flavors of heightened
interest are *spicy garlic*
(47%), *hot honey* (41%),
and *spicy mustard* (36%).
Other spicy flavors on the rise
are chili-lime, habanero and
jalapeño, Nashville hot,
and Kung Pao.

Chili Oil
has a
3.9%
Penetration
on all menus

53%
of Gen Z shoppers say
they *enjoy “swicy” heat*,
which combines sweet and
spicy as a flavor profile

Chili Oil is
more popular with
Asian and Gen Z
Consumers

May every step of the Year of the Snake guide you to success.

January 29, marks the Lunar New Year and the Year of the Snake. For those who celebrate, this is the beginning of a new zodiac cycle and the kick off of the 16-day Spring Festival.



Images by shutterstock

In China, the terms “Chinese New Year” and “Lunar New Year” are often used synonymously, and usually refer to the same thing. But Lunar New Year isn’t exactly the same as Chinese New Year for all people in China or in different cultures.

The term “Lunar New Year” is actually more widely used in other countries. Lunar New Year has different names in countries outside of China. In Vietnam, Lunar New Year is known as Tet; in Korean, it is called Seollal.

People prepare a variety of traditional dishes that have symbolic meanings. They are more than mere dishes; they’re symbols of luck and prosperity.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD LUCK FOODS



Long Noodles = Longevity



In Chinese, “fish” (Yú /yoo/) sounds like ‘surplus’.



Dumplings (Jiǎozi / jyaoww-dzrr/) resemble silver ingots = wealth



Whole Chicken: A homophone for ji (meaning “good luck” and “prosperity”), chicken is a welcome dish at reunion dinners. Served whole — including the head and feet — it symbolizes unity, wholeness, and a good beginning and end to the year.



Shrimp is a popular Chinese New Year dish among Cantonese people. Shrimp represents 'liveliness', as well as 'happiness' and 'good fortune', because the Cantonese word for shrimp, ha, sounds like laughter.



Certain fruits are eaten during the Chinese New Year period, such as tangerines and oranges. Round and "golden" in color, symbolizing fullness and wealth, but more obviously for the lucky sound they bring when spoken.



Interested in creating your
next craveable sauce?

Contacting us today at:
Ideations@kagomeusa.com

KAGOME



KagomeUSA.com