



**Harmonya**

# CATEGORY

# TRENDS

# 2026

**PT 3-TREND FOCUS:  
PURPOSEFUL  
INDULGENCE**

# TOP 5 TRENDS

1 Functional Everything

2 Clean Label is Maturing

3 **PURPOSEFUL INDULGENCE**

How shoppers frame indulgence as earned, justified, and compatible with goals.

4 Home as a Performance Hub

5 Micro-Targeted Benefits

# INTRODUCTION

**This report examines how shoppers respond to clean label positioning across consumer categories using large-scale review and discussion data, all sourced via Harmony's Insights Agent.**

Purposeful indulgence shows up when shoppers want pleasure that still feels compatible with routines, budgets, or health goals.

Review language frames indulgence as justified. Shoppers describe "treat" moments as earned, intentional, or practical. They often pair indulgent language with guardrails such as low sugar, protein, value, skin feel, or a "small luxury" that fits everyday life.

Across categories, **this trend is less about excess and more about controlled reward**. The product experience has to deliver. If taste, scent, texture, or performance falls short, the justification collapses.



## SCOPE

This report analyzes shopper behavior across four categories:

- Food and Beverage
- Personal Care
- Household Cleaning
- Pet Care

Findings reflect how clean label positioning performs across different product contexts rather than category-specific tactics.

## METHODOLOGY

*Insights are based on analysis of consumer reviews and Reddit discussions collected between October 2025 and March 2026.*

Review data captures post-purchase evaluation, including sentiment drivers, attribute mentions, and outcome descriptions. Reddit data captures earlier-stage evaluation, where shoppers discuss use cases, ingredient concerns, performance expectations, and tradeoffs.

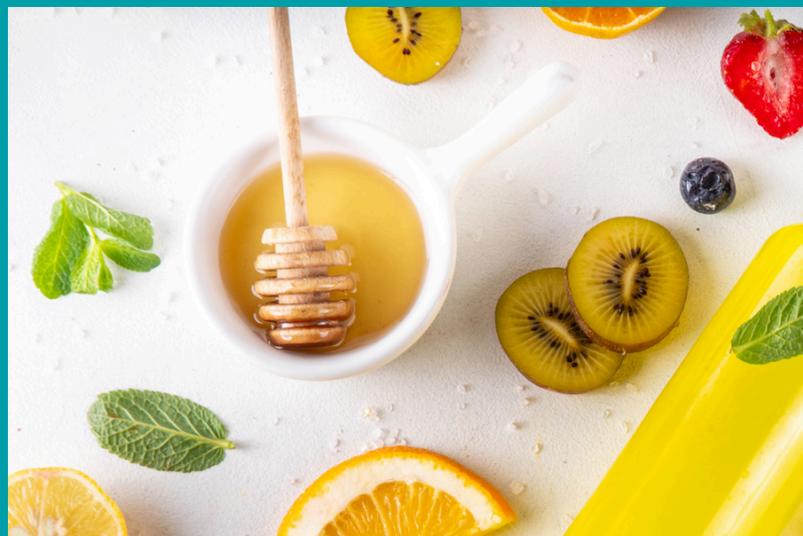
Together, these sources provide visibility into how functional expectations are formed, tested, and reinforced over time.

# FOOD AND BEVERAGE

## PURPOSEFUL INDULGENCE

In food and beverage categories, shoppers increasingly frame indulgence as intentional rather than excessive. Review language shows consumers seeking products that satisfy cravings while still aligning with personal health goals.

Across sports drinks, powder concentrates, snack bars, and nutrition bars (45,937 reviews, last 3 months), purposeful indulgence language appears in 6.2% of reviews. These mentions frequently describe products that allow shoppers to enjoy a treat while maintaining control over sugar, calories, or nutritional balance.



Mentions concentrate most in snack bars (38.8%), followed by sports drinks (31.6%), powder concentrates (21.7%), and nutrition bars (17.1%). Review language often pairs indulgence with terms like “guilt-free,” “healthy treat,” and “sweet craving.”

Customer voice suggests these products are frequently positioned as replacements for traditional desserts or snacks. sensory experience

“healthy treat”

“sweet craving”

Shoppers reward products that deliver indulgent taste while maintaining nutritional guardrails.

Negative sentiment tends to cluster around products that promise indulgence but fail to deliver satisfying taste or texture.

# PERSONAL CARE

In personal care, indulgence language appears when shoppers describe products as a way to turn everyday routines into small rewards.

Across 318,721 reviews (last 3 months), purposeful indulgence language appears in 3.3% of reviews (10,631 mentions). Reviews frequently reference **moments of self-care where scent, texture, and overall experience make routine products feel more enjoyable.**

## TOP PERFORMING BRANDS IN INDULGENT PERSONAL CARE

(October 2025 - March 2026)

### Dove

(32,539 reviews, 4.49/5)

### Old Spice

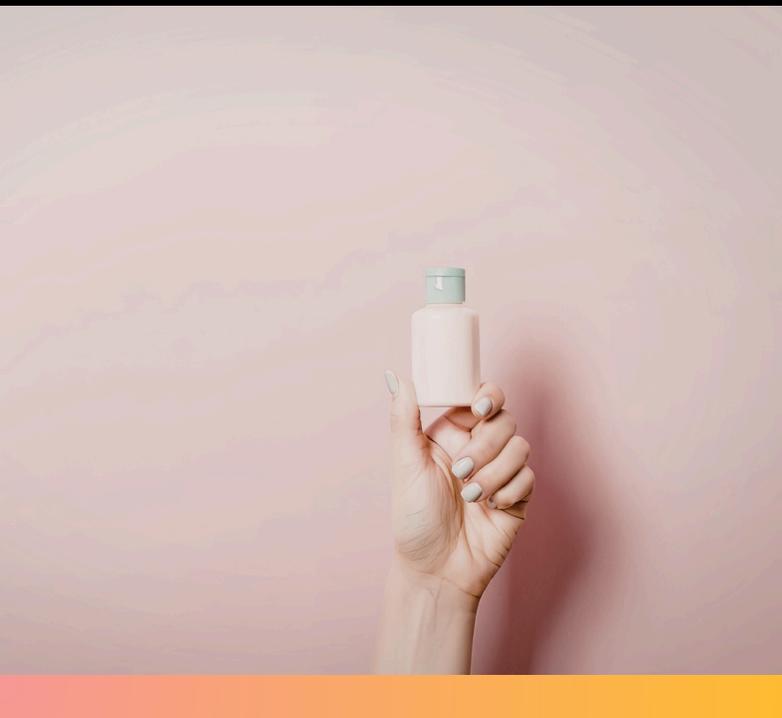
(75,183 reviews, 4.70/5)

### Secret

(49,667 reviews, 4.64/5)

### Native

(47,299 reviews, 4.62/5)



## “Treat Yourself” Language Maps to Daily Self-Care Rituals

These mentions cluster around products used daily, including body cleansing and deodorant. Shoppers often describe indulgence as a way to make routine care feel more rewarding.

**Dessert-inspired scents, rich textures, and spa-like experiences** frequently appear in positive reviews. Customers frame these products as small luxuries that elevate everyday routines without feeling excessive.

Products that successfully combine indulgent sensory experiences with reliable performance generate the most consistent positive sentiment.

# CLEANING:

## PURPOSEFUL INDULGENCE SHOWS UP IN SENSORY EXPERIENCE

In household cleaning, indulgence language appears when shoppers describe products that make routine chores feel more satisfying or enjoyable.

Reddit discussions frequently highlight **scent, atmosphere, and the feeling of a “fresh” home as part of the experience**. Products with pleasant, distinctive fragrances or premium presentation are often described as making cleaning feel less like a chore and more like a rewarding reset.



Sensory experience remains the primary driver of this type of indulgence. Shoppers often describe certain products as making their homes feel calmer, cleaner, or more comfortable after use.

**Approximately 40% of discussions reference scent preferences, including naturally scented or comforting fragrance profiles that enhance the cleaning experience.**

Products that balance sensory enjoyment with reliable cleaning performance generate the most consistent positive sentiment.

Brand-level discussion reflects this balance. Pleasant scent and aesthetic packaging are appreciated, but shoppers quickly criticize products that leave residue, feel overly artificial, or fail to clean effectively.

**Overall, indulgence in household cleaning is tied to the feeling of a finished home, but performance remains the deciding factor in repeat purchase.**





# PET CARE

In pet care, purposeful indulgence appears when owners describe treats and special foods as **intentional rewards** rather than everyday feeding.

Review and Reddit discussions frequently frame treats as a way to reinforce behavior, strengthen the pet-owner bond, or create small moments of joy. Owners often describe giving pets something special as part of a routine that benefits both the animal and the relationship.

Purposeful indulgence language appears in a small share of reviews, but when it does appear it clusters around treats and reward-based feeding.

**Purposeful indulgence in pet care functions as a reward signal.**

**Owners use treats to reinforce behavior and create positive shared moments with their pets.**



Customer voice frequently connects indulgence to emotional payoff. Reviews highlight the excitement pets show when receiving treats and the satisfaction owners feel in providing something enjoyable.

Shoppers also reference affordability and portion size as ways to make indulgence feel practical. Many reviews describe treats as small, manageable rewards that fit easily into daily routines.

Across brands and product types, purposeful indulgence in pet care reflects a balance between emotional reward and responsible feeding.

Review and Reddit language play complementary roles in how shoppers evaluate indulgent products.

# REVIEW LANGUAGE AND REDDIT SIGNALS

Reviews capture the post-purchase experience. Shoppers reference indulgent products when they deliver the expected reward, whether through flavor, texture, treat-like satisfaction, or emotional enjoyment.

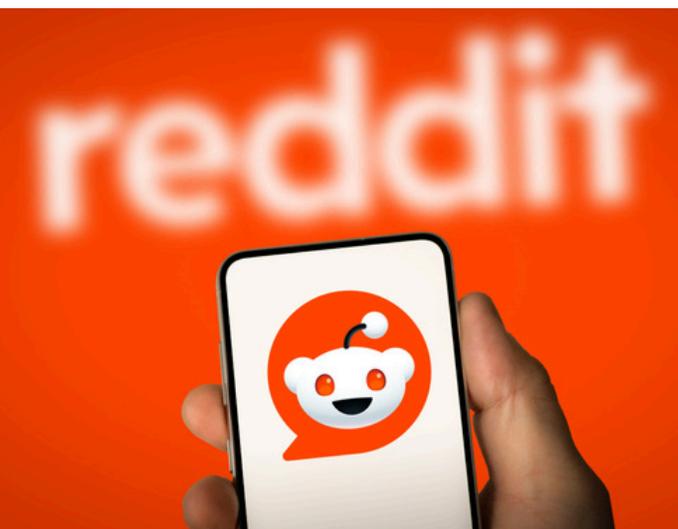
Positive reviews often highlight moments of enjoyment, describing products as “worth it,” “a little treat,” or something people look forward to as part of their routine.



Reddit surfaces earlier-stage conversation. Shoppers use discussion threads to debate sugar levels, ingredient choices, portion size, and whether indulgent products feel justified or excessive.

Together, these signals show how indulgence is framed through justification and experience. Online discussions reveal how shoppers rationalize indulgent choices, while reviews confirm whether the product ultimately delivers the reward they expect.

This dynamic highlights the value of connecting early-stage shopper language with post-purchase outcomes. Understanding how indulgent products are discussed before purchase and evaluated afterward helps brands identify which indulgence cues resonate and which experiences sustain repeat purchase.



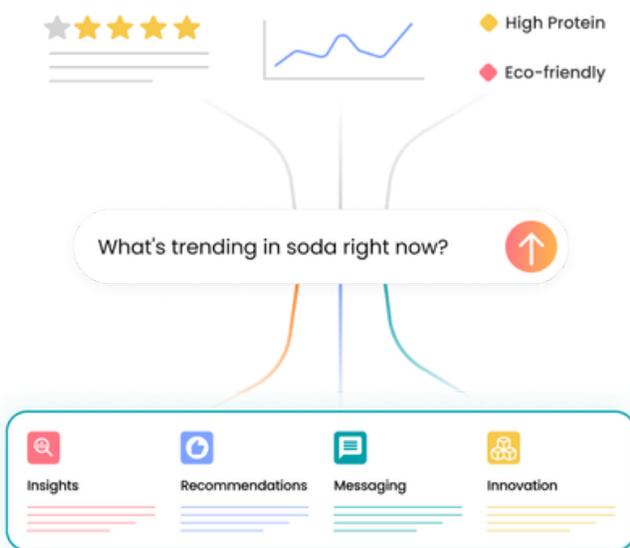
# WHAT WE DO



# Harmonya

Harmonya helps teams analyze review and discussion language together, linking early shopper signals to validated performance outcomes.

By structuring and quantifying shopper language across sources, we reveal which functional attributes generate interest, which claims are tested during evaluation, and which experiences ultimately sustain positive sentiment after purchase.



Legacy product data wasn't built to reflect how shoppers browse, search, or decide what to buy. As a result, critical signals around emerging needs, sentiment shifts, and functional tradeoffs often remain hidden.

**Harmonya enriches product data with the language consumers actually use.**

We add depth, structure, and shopper context to every product, so your team sees what's happening and why it matters.

# WHAT THIS SIGNALS FOR 2026

Purposeful indulgence reflects how shoppers balance enjoyment with intention.

Across categories, indulgent products are often framed as small, justified rewards rather than everyday consumption. Language around treats, comfort, and moments of enjoyment appears when shoppers feel the experience delivers real satisfaction.

Indulgence signals are strongest when they connect emotional reward with practical boundaries. Portion size, occasion, and perceived quality often help shoppers rationalize these choices.

Products that position indulgence as intentional rather than excessive tend to maintain stronger positive sentiment over time.

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AND CPG INSIGHTS**