

Generations

The food fads of 2018

As I struggle to stick to my newest diet endeavor to lose weight, the Mediterranean Diet (which, so far, has been satisfying and successful as diets go), I came across an article on www.msn.com by Hristina Byrnes and Colman Andrews that caught my eye because it listed the biggest food fads of 2018.

Since everything we interact with on a daily basis seems to go through a fad of some sort with various durations, i.e., hemlines, haircuts, beards, dances, exercise, shoes, tattoos, music, etc., why not food?

So, No. 1 on the list was purple vegetables. Encouraged by nutritionists to “eat the rainbow” because vegetables of different colors offer more of a range of nutrients, the color purple in vegetables and fruits took the prize for 2018. This includes the ones we’re familiar with such as grapes, figs, cabbage and eggplant, but lately, other purple choices have been showing up on menus, such as purple-skinned carrots, purple sweet potatoes, purple broccoli and Brussels sprouts and purple potatoes. For potato lovers, consider that purple ones have four times the antioxidants.

No. 2 was unexpected, ice creams, and the example given was ice cream that includes pork — yes, you read that right — pork. Apparently, daredevils in New Jersey have decided to mess with the sweetness of ice cream and incorporate Taylor ham (or pork roll) into their ice cream, and it’s catching on.

And for women with cravings who insist on sending out their husbands in the middle of the night for ice cream and pickles, a New York City dumpling company has developed an ice cream with pickles included in the mix.

I’ll stick with vanilla.

This next one, Frosé, sounds heavenly and worth a try. It’s rosé wine blended into a kind of slushie, often with such ingredients as strawberries, watermelon, grenadine and lemon juice



Peg
DeMarco

(vodka can be added, but why mess up all those good tastes). It was the summer’s trendiest drink in 2017, but came back strong this year, so much so that Taco Bell added a version to its menu.

For popcorn lovers, the latest fad is popped sorghum. Sorghum is a grass, and one of the world’s top five cereal crops. The popularity of the “popped” grains is due to the fact that they are gluten-free and have fewer calories than popcorn, a little sweeter, and don’t stick to your teeth. There’s nothing worse than a popcorn kernel stuck in a denture in the middle of a hit movie while you’re sitting next to your grandchild. So, this might be worth trying. I checked out the product and, yes, they sell it on Amazon. It’s pricey, but so are dentures.

Every new Starbucks coffee-based confection zooms to fad status, at least for a while, but in the case of pumpkin-spice latte, the fad gets revived every year until it becomes virtually a part of the culture. Bets are 50/50 that Starbucks’ summertime 2018 Serious Strawberry Frappuccino will catch on and make it to 2019.

Plant-based milks, particularly those made from soy and almonds, have been a popular substitute for dairy milk for years, and I’ve tried the almond milk. It was quite good. Not willing to leave it alone, milks are being developed from flax, hemp, cashews,

oats, and, the latest craze, dried yellow peas. Another is turmeric milk, which is conventional cow’s (or soy) milk turned golden with the spice turmeric, heralded as a superfood for its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.

I already know my assessment in this category: No dried-yellow-pea-milk for this gal.

Doughnuts with nontraditional fillings, such as peanut butter and jelly, Snickers bars, taro root and Earl Grey tea have been on the market at least since 2012, but foodies are always trying new fillings to tempt the public.

Did you ever think a doughnut could cause a hangover? Well, the latest fad is to fill them with vodka, Bailey’s Irish Cream, and banana liqueur. That sounds criminal to me — why ruin a doughnut and why depend on a designated driver from a coffee shop?

There were more food fads in the article, but I’ll end with the Coca-Cola slushie. After eight years of trying out different slushies, Coca-Cola finally produced a version in the summer of 2018 that was a success. Unfortunately, it was only available in Japan. The company is now said to be experimenting with frozen versions of its popular Fanta Orange and Fanta Grape sodas. For those who don’t want to wait and are brave enough to try it at home, all it takes is a bottle of Coke, Fanta Orange or Fanta Grape, ice and a blender.

However, I’ve got a feeling that the Coke scientists have some sort of secret ingredient they won’t share, so you may have to buckle down and wait for an official release.

Peg DeMarco is a Morganton resident who writes a weekly features column for The News Herald. Contact her at pegdemarco@earthlink.net.