McDonald’s Introduces a New Dessert Inspired By ‘Grandmacore’ Trend

McDonald’s is set to launch a new addition to its dessert menu, the “Grandma McFlurry,” starting May 21. This limited-time offering pays homage to the comforting treats often associated with grandmothers and blends syrup, vanilla ice cream and candy pieces — and is a nod to a Gen Z-centric TikTok trend.

Image credit: McDonald’s

“Grandmas have always held a special place in our hearts, and today they’re having a major moment influencing culture,” Tariq Hassan, chief marketing and customer experience officer at McDonald’s, said in a statement. “The Grandma McFlurry tastes like a trip down memory lane, and we’re excited to give our fans that experience while honoring the grandma-figure in all our lives.”

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‘Grandma’s favorite’

The fast-food giant describes the Grandma McFlurry as reminiscent of “grandma’s favorite treat that she hid in her purse,” though McDonald’s has not disclosed the exact flavors of the candy pieces. However, speculation on Reddit suggests that the candies might be butterscotch, akin to Werther’s Original, a nostalgic favorite. Regardless, McDonald’s believes the treat has had a special edge since it started working on the recipe.

“The new Grandma McFlurry was created by a culinary team member who is a grandmother herself,” Marcelo Fajnerman, McDonald’s VP of menu strategy, said in a statement to *Entrepreneur*. “She was relentless in perfecting a deliciously crave-able treat meant to evoke special memories with the grandma or the grandma-figure in your life.”

Grandmacore

The new dessert option taps into the “grandmacore” aesthetic currently popular among Gen Z on TikTok. This trend draws inspiration from cozy, grandmotherly interests such as knitting, baking and an overall sense of nostalgic comfort.

Although McDonald’s is the first fast-food franchise to tap into the grandmacore trend, Burger King and Taco Bell have focused on eco-friendly practices and retro-style marketing to appeal to environmentally-conscious Gen Z consumers.

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Dedicated followings

McDonald’s has introduced several products that have developed dedicated followings, such as the McRib, which makes periodic returns. The sandwich’s dedicated fan base eagerly awaits its reappearance and even uses the McRib Locator to find the nearest McDonald’s serving it.

Another example is the Shamrock Shake, a seasonal favorite centered around St. Patrick’s Day and known for its minty flavor and green color. Fans begin to eagerly anticipate its return in late winter. Last summer, McDonald’s revived its character Grimace in honor of its 52nd birthday with a limited-time shake and signature meals, with the character — and shake — going viral, thanks primarily to TikTok.

McDonald’s is innovating to attract budget-conscious consumers amid recent sales struggles driven by inflation-weary customers who are opting for home-cooked meals over dining out. The chain plans to introduce a $5 meal deal next month.

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