

Christmas in July and Halloween Trends: EMBRACING EARLY HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS



As summer begins, retailers and consumers alike are diving into the festive spirit with Christmas in July and early Halloween trends. This marketing event has gained popularity across major retailers, shoppers are also noticing holiday-themed artwork and flavors in grocery stores, with coffee creamers and Starbucks cups featuring Christmas and Halloween designs.

TREND *watch* JULY 2024

Sharon Adler's knowledge of merchandising spans over 30 years, including 8 years with Associated Merchandising Corporation (AMC), the preeminent overseas sourcing and product development arm servicing the leading department stores in the U.S. and Europe.

Adler spent seven years sourcing and developing product for 2 leading seasonal wholesalers, the Director of Product Development for Santa's World (Kurt Adler) and Department 56 Inc. After leaving

Department 56 in 2002, Sharon joined Li Fung, the world's largest global sourcing company, as Director of Trend and Color overseeing the art department and all products of home merchandise.

She attended seminars and trade shows globally and produced color and trend reports for major wholesalers and retailers in all categories of home furnishings. Sharon is currently consulting in trend, color, product development and global sourcing in the home furnishings industry.



Statistical research indicates that Gen Z adults favor this trend of early shopping. In fact, 11% of U.S. consumers are starting their holiday shopping earlier, and projections show this trend is likely to grow. Last year, White Plains Mall, an upscale shopping center in New York anchored by Neiman Marcus and Nordstrom, introduced a unique Christmas in July event. They set up photo shoots with Santa dressed in a tropical shirt, posing against a beach scene backdrop complete with a kids' pool and floating beach balls. The lines of children eager to take pictures with "Summer Santa" were long. In an interview, Santa's wife shared that this was their first such event and expressed

surprise at the mall's initiative. The pictures were later emailed to the children. This echoes the sentiment of song lyrics from the musical Auntie Mame, "We need a little Christmas, right this very minute," reflecting the public's acceptance of early holiday celebrations. WGSN, a trend forecasting organization, has identified a consumer desire for "Glimmers" – micro-moments of joy and happiness, such as planning for the holidays. These small positive "glimmer" experiences, like when a favorite song plays on the radio, enjoying a favorite snack, or having a pleasant interaction while shopping, collectively uplift spirits.



Trends and Categories for Halloween and Christmas

HALLOWEEN

Celestial: Incorporate themes of the sky, stars, horoscopes, and tarot cards.

Nostalgic Icons: Vintage reproductions of pumpkin lanterns, black cats, ghosts, owls, paper-mâché figures, and candles.

CHRISTMAS

New Retro: Nostalgic icons and vintage glass ornaments from the 50s-90s, featuring Santa, pinecones, and sweet treats like pies and cupcakes.

Circus-Carnival: Big Top themes with playful polka dots, stripes, harlequin patterns, and Victorian-era images. Focus on strongmen and magicians, avoiding animal themes.

Fake Food Fruit: Glass ornaments resembling fruits, snacks, candy bars, and meal items like cereal boxes and hotdogs.

In the Pink: Various shades of pink for Christmas decorations and home décor, not limited to Christmas trees.

Snowy & Iridescent: All-white trees with iridescent accents, along with white home décor items like furniture, pillows, and dinnerware.

FALL AND WINTER GIFT GIVING

Food gifts are becoming increasingly popular, including candy, cookies, tea, coffee, snack foods, meal kits, and other delicacies. The Fancy Food Show in June showcased many new items for Halloween and Christmas.

KIDULT TREND

The "Kidult" trend, highlighted at New York Toy Shows, continues to grow. Toy purchases for adults which account for 28% of toy purchases, include nostalgic games like Monopoly, chess, and Candyland.

LEGO, traditionally for children, now offers adult-oriented sets, such as sculptures and licensed items like an Hermes Birkin handbag made of LEGOs. Upcoming events like the New York Toy Show and the Food Show will reveal more trends in this area.

We look forward to updating you on upcoming shows and notable trends, including Pet Parenting and Romantic Botanical themes. Have a great summer and let us be the first to wish you a Merry Christmas in July!

