

NOW//NEXT

The Holiday Issue



INNOVATIONS AND TRENDS IN CHRISTMAS

This month we are focusing on all things Christmas, and how brands are working within this tradition filled time of year.

We are fascinated by human beings, culture and their impact on the food and drink industry. Christmas is designed to bring all of these together. It seemed like a perfect opportunity for us to explore what is new and what is coming next for the festive season.

Christmas is a time steeped in tradition, and navigating around these to find trends seems tricky. We have come across some new developments, indicating what sort of direction this holiday is heading.

Adverts seem to be moving away from tradition in interesting ways. Wellness and sustainability are at the forefront of consumers minds which becomes interesting at a time of year where spending and waste is at an all time high. Brands are coming to realise they must move with the times to engage with these issues.

In this edition of Now//Next we are looking at

Innovations

Communications

& Activations

in the Christmas period

MEET HUXLY

Established in April 2018, Huxly is a new brand, innovation and communications development agency.

We are a unique team of strategists, designers and sensory scientists who use radically new approaches to build stronger, more successful brands. Being part of the MMR group gives us a global network of researchers and strategists, powerful digital tools and a data science capability. This allows us to understand strategic and cultural situations globally and develop inspiring creative solutions.

We believe that people are complex, but great brands are simple. For marketing to succeed we need to understand our customers' motivations and their emotional, functional, social and sensorial relationships with our products. This already difficult task takes place in a fast-changing world, as new trends and commercial alliances transform the landscape in which we work.

What we do

BRAND POSITIONING

Understanding the needs and ambitions of your consumer, their sensory experience of your products, and your brand's role in society to create a compelling, consistent experience

INNOVATION

Mapping out new areas for your brand to expand into, generating stretching ideas, and building those into stronger and more meaningful innovations that consumers will love

COMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT

Understanding consumer responses to early stage advertising ideas and refining them to create more compelling, relevant and credible copy

USER EXPERIENCE

Understanding the role of your digital services in the life of your consumer, and fine tuning your propositions and user experience to maximise sales

Get in touch joe@huxlyglobal.com

4 trends for Christmas

1. Advertising

2. Activation

3. Sustainability

4. CBD & Wellness





Advertising

Christmas advertising is surrounded by anticipation and excitement. Twitter users in the UK wait with baited breath for this year's John Lewis advert and other brands keep up pace.

1

ASMR Christmas

Advertising

What is it?

An Christmas advertising campaign honing in on the booming ASMR trend which has been growing during 2019. This advert displays their collection to a soothing soundtrack of mellow song and crisp ASMR sound effects.

Why does it matter?

Tiffany & Co. have approached their holiday engagement from a sensorial angle. Creating an advert which is visually pleasing and glamorous whilst also stimulating our ears, giving the consumer the comforting, electric feeling generated from ASMR. This advert is being shown on YouTube adverts, with YouTube being the home of ASMR it will capture a wide audience of open ears.

Sources:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfKBHlxsR-MrgytQOS9tbw>

<https://www.tiffany.com/stories/very-very-extraordinary-tiffany-gifts/>



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2

Grime Christmas

Advertising

What is it?

Ikea has teamed up with British grime artist D Double E to create this year's advert. Silence the Critics takes the form of a battle or slam which is popular within the genre, seeing the ornaments of the house insulting the resident's décor.

Why does it matter?

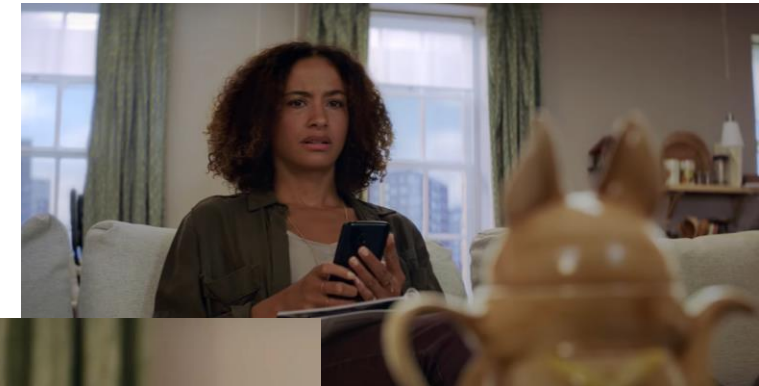
Christmas adverts have included pop ballads for years, think twinkling melodies with inspiring lyrics and soothing vocals. Ikea has moved with the times and introduced a distinctively different sound and feel to this year's Christmas campaign. They have integrated the grime genre into this year's advert which has shocked and delighted viewers. As well as the soundtrack itself by D Double E being grime, some of the angles in the filming also echo the genre. The panning shots of the salt and pepper snails and the hand gestures of the characters are reminiscent of grime music videos and live battles. D Double E has even released the track from this advert and it is being widely listened to, enforcing its success as an "earworm" advert.

Sources:

Advert by **Mother** Creative Agency, London
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0EKS2YfLc0>



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*'I must confess
This place ain't bless
This place is a mess'*

3

Togetherness with technology

Advertising

What is it?

Global technology giants Facebook and Apple have both created Christmas commercials which surround the topic of togetherness through technology.

The story of Facebook Group's advert is based around a 'Military Mama' Facebook group, with her friends helping her out whilst she is deployed over the Christmas period. In Apple's Christmas commercial, we see two daughters cheer up their mourning parents and Grandpa after the loss of their Grandmother through the use of the family iPad.



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Why does it matter?

These commercials tell a story of technology connecting us and allowing people to have a loyal and caring community even when they are not close to us. Facebook and Apple have placed their brands in a more heart warming and family focused light here.

This narrative comes around at a time of growing scepticism surrounding many of our technologies and social media providers, helping shed some light on their brands messages.

Sources:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LDeRyyDrS40>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oaK_XZh4xbs



4

Traditional Christmas advertising still exists

Advertising

What is it?

'Traditional' advertising still exists and attracts attention from consumers. It seems there is something homely, comforting and magical about these idyllic, melodic adverts. UK retailer John Lewis have lead in the UK Christmas advert game for years now. This year is no exception.

Why does it matter?

This advert tells a familiar story, and one that has been prevalent in the past few years. That is a story of acceptance and of everyone having a meaningful impact to a community, with the tag line 'Show them how much you care'. This message is approached in a fantastical way, engaging all audiences and creating a heart warming campaign which allows them to sell large quantities of campaign merchandise. John Lewis has built up a reputation over the years of creating adverts which touch the hearts of the nation and cause many a tear to fall. This year's advert has done just that. The question however, is how long will these kind of adverts last for when other brands are pushing into different areas.

"It's been a few years since I had heart melting John Lewis ad tears but this year definitely yessss! Love it!"

-Twitter user, 2019



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Sources:

Advert by **adam&eveDDB**, London

<https://www.johnlewis.com/excitable-edgar-plush-soft-toy-green/p4801612>

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/john-lewis-christmas-advert-proves-a-tearjerker-as-internet-delights-at-excitable-edgar-the-dragon-a4286866.html>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9D-uvKih_k

5

Largest media spend

What is it?

Coca Cola is launching a Christmas campaign with its largest media budget to date. Not only have they released the traditional 'Holidays are coming' adverts and planned the Truck tour but Coca Cola GB have also designed a collection of activations to celebrate the festive season.

Why does it matter?

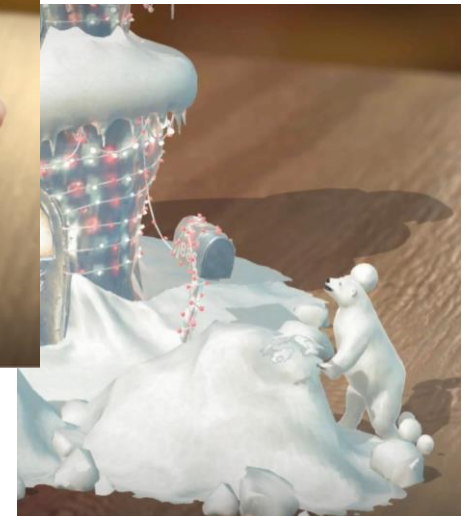
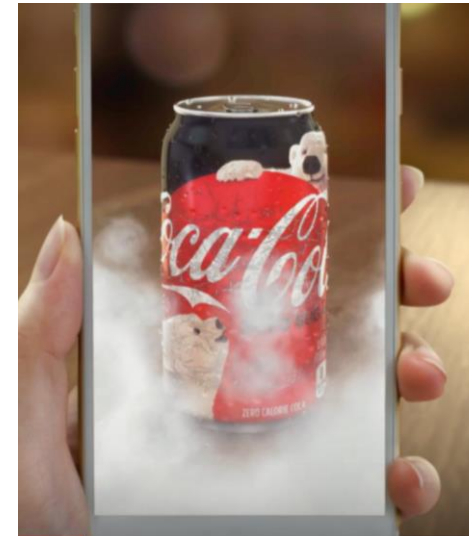
Coca Cola's holiday campaigns have been a much loved tradition for many years. They have, over the years, maintained popular traditions like the truck tour and 'holidays are coming' narrative. This year they are staying true to what they do best whilst also making all these traditions more interactive and bringing them more to life. However, they have come under some scrutiny about how eco friendly their truck tour through the UK is and indeed how much longer it has a place in this sustainably minded climate.

'Driving a truck the length and breadth of the country for no clear purpose sets a bad example'

- Mark Hall, 2019

Sources:

<https://www.motoringresearch.com/car-news/coca-cola-christmas-truck-ban/>
<https://www.marketingweek.com/coca-cola-biggest-ever-christmas-campaign/>





Activation

Around a time of year where brands are picking up the pace, spending big and thinking grand, it is important to stick out from the crowd and present something unique to consumers.

1

Branded Christmas Jumpers

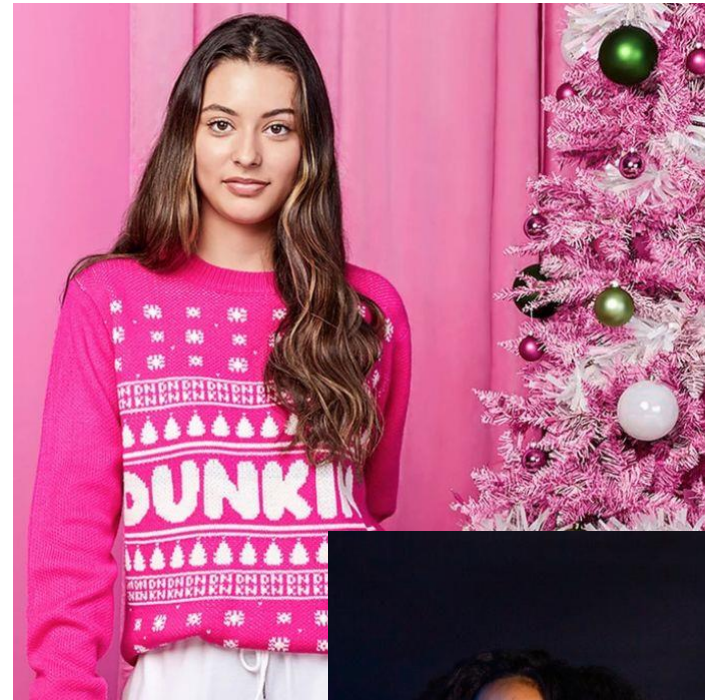
Activation

What is it?

Brands are releasing their version of Christmas Jumpers for their fans to sport this festive season.

Why does it matter?

Christmas advertising has been expanded beyond adverts or Limited Edition Christmas flavours or designs here, and turned into branded Christmas jumpers. These brands have created wearable, “Instagrammable” merchandise, allowing their fans to promote them whilst enjoying their festivities.



Sources:
<https://www.trendhunter.com/slideshow/branded-holiday-sweaters>

2 Promotional decorations

Activation

What is it?

Deliveroo UK are giving out free hand-painted Fast Food decorations to customers when they order their favourite meal.

Why does it matter?

These delicious looking decorations have been randomly included in customer's food orders and are depictions of the eight participating restaurant's most popular dishes. This random allocation acts as an incentive for customers who are wanting to own one of these limited edition (one of 1000) Christmas decorations.



Sources:

<https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/fast-food-ornament>

3

Pint-sized Pub

Activation



What is it?

Guinness UK are opening an exclusive pint-sized pub this Christmas, inviting consumers to enjoy free Guinness in their exclusive micro pub which holds a party of just 5 at once.

Why does it matter?

Free invites into this cosy pub have drummed up publicity interest. This has prompted a desire to get inside this exciting, festive cabin, which in turn ensures Guinness' presence in the mind of the consumer with all of the festive advertising surrounding them.



Sources:

<https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/pint-sized-pub>
<https://www.instagram.com/guinness/>

4 Giant Gift Box Giveaways

Activation

What is it?

KFC and Deliveroo have teamed up to bring London this 10ft Gift Box from which they are giving away their new festive burgers.

Why does it matter?

Covered in 500 sq ft of sustainably sourced and recycled KFC wrapping paper, this festive installation stands alongside the River Thames and is acting as a photo and free burger opportunity for passers by. By considering sustainability in their grand installation, the brands are stepping away from the vast wastage created by Festive promotions.



Sources:

- <https://www.prolificlondon.co.uk/marketing-tech-news/campaign-news/2019/11/kfc-give-away-free-festive-burgers-deliveroo-london>
- <https://www.kfc.co.uk/our-food/for-one/burgers/festive-burger>

5

AR Christmas Catalogue

Activation

What is it?

Swedish beauty retailer Oriflame have released their Christmas catalogue with a difference. Upon scanning the front of this year's catalogue, consumers will see a festive story come to life, accompanied by magical backing music.

Why does it matter?

This is a fascinating marketing move for Oriflame. Catalogues are becoming less meaningful as online platforms replace them. Oriflame have taken this on by providing the consumer with a far more experiential angle to their Christmas shopping, thus restoring the purpose of the catalogue.

As images or videos of the experience itself are not readily available online, consumers who have read an article about these exciting AR covers might order the catalogue when they would normally have little to no desire to, increasing traffic to their products.

Sources:

<https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/ar-catalog>

<https://beautybusinessjournal.com/oriflame-wows-with-the-ar-catalogue-cover/>





Sustainability

Sustainability is in the minds of consumers. Society are moving towards more sustainable approaches to life, including adopting alternatives to lessen the waste and hardships at Christmas time.

1 Vegan Christmas made easier

Sustainability

What is it?

Meat-free Christmas feasts are becoming more delicious and more accessible. These two companies have made Vegan Christmas dinners easier in different ways. Tofurky have a plant based turkey roast and glazed ham range, which looks just like the real thing. The Game Christmas Tinner now come in a Vegan option, the most fuss free Vegan option out there.

Why does it matter?

With veganism growing dramatically, vegan products are becoming more easy to come by, in preparation for festive feasts. With Tokurky's realistic looking meat free roasts, perhaps even non-vegans might be tempted to get involved in a plant based Christmas. The Game "Tinner" allows even the laziest of diners to enjoy a Vegan meal from the comfort of their sofa, gaming headset on.



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START a
new
TRADITION
(without even trying)



Sources:

<https://tofurky.com/what-we-make/roasts/roast-and-gravy/#flavormenu>

<https://www.game.co.uk/en/the-game-christmas-tinner-2704307>

2 Giving, not receiving calendar

Sustainability

What is it?

The Advent of Change helps support 24 charities across advent. Each day a donation of 50p is made to a range of charities, from Blue Cross to Just One Ocean.



Why does it matter?

This calendar approaches the theme of 'giving, not receiving', something which has gained momentum this year. Society is becoming more mindful of their ability to help those in need and put other people before themselves. Being charitable and sustainable comes in form of this calendar, cutting down the waste generated from traditional advent calendars and implementing good.

Sources:

<https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/advent-calendar-for-the-holiday>
<https://adventofchange.com/collections/shop/products/charity-advent-calendar>

3

Recycled and reusable gift wrapping

Sustainability

What is it?

Wrapping gifts with recycled paper, newspaper and material bags. Decorating with sprigs of festive foliage and recyclable twine. Including reusable gifts like beautiful scarves and Christmas baubles in wrapping.

Why does it matter?

Gift wrapping is taking a turn for the recycled and reusable. Reusing past years wrapping is no longer seen as 'being cheap' but instead as 'being sustainable'.



Sources:

- <https://www.stylist.co.uk/fashion/christmas-gift-guide/eco-friendly-christmas-wrapping-ideas-presents-gift-giving-recycle/178770>
- <https://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/how-to-have-a-sustainable-christmas-a4288061.html>

4

Rent a tree

Sustainability

What is it?

Trees which can be rented, put up over the festive season and then replanted.

Why does it matter?

More and more people are putting thought into how sustainable buying and throwing away Christmas trees year after year is. Rental trees are fast becoming a more eco-friendly alternative. These trees in their pots can even be delivered to you, to help incentivise this option for busy consumers.



Sources:

<https://www.countryliving.com/uk/homes-interiors/interiors/a29695669/rent-christmas-tree-cotswold-fir/>



CBD & Wellness

CBD products have boomed in popularity and exposure this year and their presence in the holiday season is no exception. This goes alongside the importance of wellness. From gifting to feasting, these appear as strong trends in 2019.

1

CBD Christmas Pudding

CBD & Wellness

What is it?

A staple festive tradition with a twist. This CBD Christmas pudding contains 10MG of CBD.

Why does it matter?

With Christmas for many being one of the most stressful times of year, CBD Christmas products are cropping up all over the market in 2019. This infused Christmas pudding is one of the most blatant of those.

'Remove pudding stress and just dish up one of these instead'

Sources:

<https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/handmade-christmas-pudding>



2 'Can you pass the (CBD) gravy?'

CBD & Wellness

What is it?

A cannabis infused turkey gravy for all your Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner needs.



Why does it matter?

Gravy is a staple component to any Christmas or Thanksgiving dinner. Kiva have thrust CBD into the centre of the Holiday feast this year with an infused gravy. Not only are they making headlines from this creation, thus receiving an abundance of website traffic but they are also helping normalise CBD products and place them in a domestic setting.

'Awkward family dinner conversation? In just under 15 minutes you'll start feeling the effects, so you can sit back, relax, and let the holiday cheer wash over you.'

Sources:

- <https://kivaconfections.com/news/turkey-gravy>
- <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/cannabisinfused-turkey-gravy>

3

The CBD Advent Calendar

CBD & Wellness

What is it?

This year, the world's first CBD advent calendar was introduced on a Crowdfunder campaign. Each day, the consumer can treat themselves to a piece of milk chocolate with 10mg of CBD.

Why does it matter?

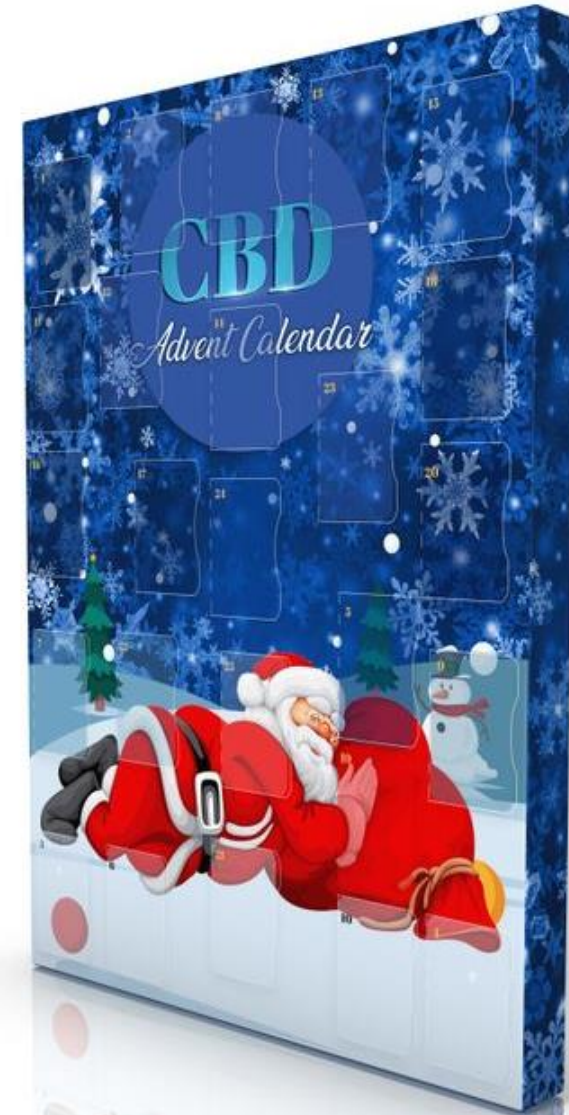
There has been a vast amount of talk around CBD in the past year, and CBD products are booming more and more and entering an array of different retail spaces. This calendar strives to improve holiday time wellness, amidst the pre-Christmas stress.

'Have yourself a very mellow Christmas!'

Sources:

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/cbdcalendar>

<https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/cbd-advent-calendar>



4 CBD meets Festive Lattes

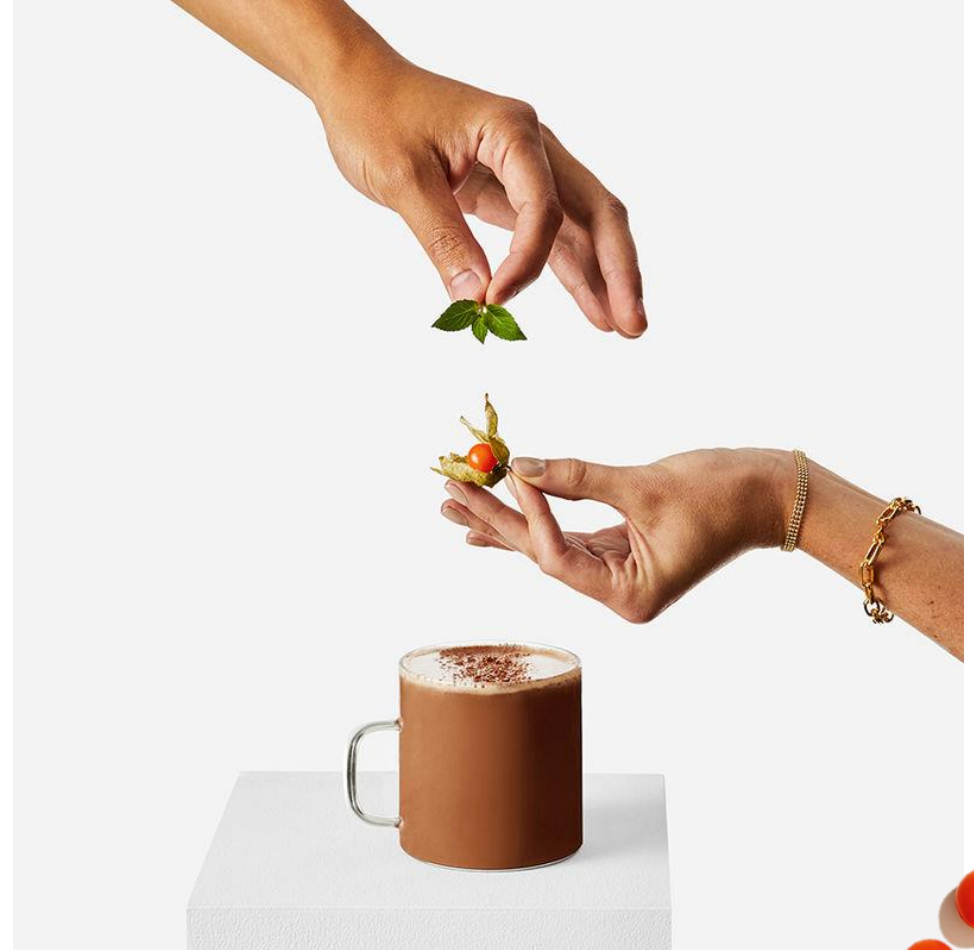
CBD & Wellness

What is it?

Daily Harvest have taken a popular tradition of peppermint lattes and hot chocolates, and added a calming CBD twist.

Why does it matter?

A peppermint latte or hot chocolate would, for many people, be considered an indulgent and relaxing festive treat; making them feel cosy and excited for the Christmas season. With the added promise of a great sleep, and a relaxed mood from the CBD, this drink is sure to be a success.



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'We turned a winter favorite into a next-level latte designed to de-stress during the holiday season.'

Sources:

<https://www.daily-harvest.com/app/blends/chocolate-peppermint-cbd>



5

Winter protection set

CBD & Wellness



What is it?

The Body Shop have released a festive gift set which contains hemp, for moisturizing skin protection this winter.

Why does it matter?

With skin getting dry in the colder seasons, this Body Shop set has you covered. Hemp in skincare and self care has begun to really make a name for itself this year. Being used in a Highstreet store's products like The Body Shop means the use of hemp is becoming more accepted in the mainstream. It is being adopted by a larger consumer pool, and celebrated for how well it does the job with five star reviews a plenty.

Sources:

<https://www.thebodyshop.com/en-gb/gifts/christmas-gifts/winter-protection-hemp-expert-moisture-gift-set/>

6 Wellness calendar

What is it?

Wellness advent calendars, promoting self care, mindfulness and better sleep.



Why does it matter?

Consumers are wanting a more wholesome and enriching advent calendar experience. In the past year, the focus on self care and mental health has grown and so have consumers desire to seek products and experiences which will better their wellbeing and mindfulness.

Sources:

<https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/the-mindful-advent>
<https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/12-nights-of-wellness>

7 Put yourself first

What is it?

This self care kit contains:

- CBD Calm gummies
- A 30mL bottle of 17mg CBD oil
- A deck of cards with 30 days of calming tips

Why does it matter?

With wellness as a central theme of interest this year, CBD brand Charlotte's Web have created a wellness kit to help soothe the holiday stresses. With many of these CBD Christmas products promising to banish the festive fear and stress, this kit also includes 30 helpful calm inducing tips as well as the soothing powers of CBD.





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