

1750

ART+ SCIENCE

The Perfect Blend to Take Your
Beverage to the Next Level

2025 EDITION

Finlays 





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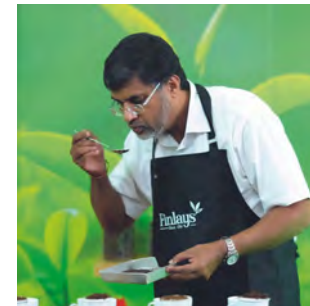
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WELCOME TO A WORLD OF BEVERAGE INSIGHT AND ANALYSIS

A welcome letter from James Woodrow
Group Managing Director





Hello and welcome to this edition of 1750, Finlays' annual thought-leadership magazine!

In an increasingly fast-paced world, 1750 offers an expert, long-term perspective on the biggest topics, trends, challenges, and opportunities in the global natural beverages industry. It also serves to update you – our valued colleagues, customers, and partners – on what's happening at Finlays.

WELCOME TO A WORLD OF BEVERAGE INSIGHT AND ANALYSIS

This year marks Finlays' 275th anniversary – but as ever, our sights are set firmly on the future. That's why in 2025, we unveiled our new corporate Purpose that defines not just the world we are seeking to create, but how we plan to get there.

The focus of this year's magazine is very much **Finlays Solutions** – the new brand for our integrated global extract solutions business, which encompasses our operations in the U.S., U.K., Kenya, and Asia.

Make no mistake, the launch of Finlays Solutions is a major milestone and speaks to how we are seeking to serve the ever-changing global beverage landscape through innovative R&D and exceptional partnership. You can find out more in ["We've got the Solution"](#).

Elsewhere, our tea and coffee businesses are going from strength to strength.

Finlays Beverages has continued to deliver its

transformation by building strategic relationships with its customers. You can find out more by reading ["Reimagining the Own Brand Model"](#).

Finlays Colombo, Finlays MEAC and Finlays Argentina are continuing to find new ways to do better each time for their customers, and I'm proud to say that, whether it's innovative beverage solutions, packed coffee, or sustainably sourced tea, Finlays is in a strong position.

Speaking of **sustainability**, we have continued to make strong progress on delivering against our Sustainable Future 2030 commitments, often with the support of customers, suppliers, and other partners. As the threats of climate change, human rights risks, and supply chain disruption grow ever more existential, it's vital that the industry comes together to find solutions. You'll find a **special feature on sustainability** later in the magazine.

Alongside all of this, you will find a veritable smorgasbord of expert insight on everything from the rise of LTOs, to Finlays' new range of botanical solutions... and from the emergence of Gen Alpha to how RTD coffee brands can stand out on shelf.

As ever, we are indebted to you - our customers, partners, and colleagues around the world. Our success is only ever thanks to you.

I hope you enjoy this edition of 1750 and, as ever, if you have any feedback, please do share it with our editor Thom.Walton@Finlays.net

Kind regards,



James Woodrow
Group Managing Director

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As ever, we are indebted to you -
our customers, partners, and
colleagues around the world.

James Woodrow, Group Managing Director

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FINLAYS' GLOBAL FOOTPRINT

Finlays' worldwide presence



FINLAYS' GLOBAL FOOTPRINT



JOY WITH EVERY SIP

Unpacking Finlays' new
Purpose and Values



JOY WITH EVERY SIP

Opener

Over the past three years at Finlays, I've had the privilege of visiting our operations across the globe.

And, as you might expect, wherever I am in the world, I'm always interested in what people around me are drinking. There is much one can learn from observing consumers in a high-growth coffee shop chain in China. Or browsing supermarket shelves in the U.K. Or studying menu boards at the latest Quick Service Restaurant to take the U.S. by storm.

Wherever I am in the world, one thing is always constant: the dynamism of the beverage industry when it comes to meeting consumers' diverse needs. Whether it's offering refreshment, functional benefits, or weird and wonderful flavors, truly does any industry on earth bring so many moments of happiness to so many?

In other words – ours is an industry that brings joy to billions of people around the world each and every day. And for me, the concept of joy – in all its different forms – is what defines our industry.

Empowering Customers

And while I am proud to work for a company that plays an important role in facilitating this creation of joy, it's important that at Finlays, we believe that ours is merely a supporting role. The star of the show, in our eyes, is our customers. The brand owners, foodservice operators, and retailers we partner with to create delicious, sustainable, healthy, and innovative beverage solutions that delight their consumers.

This is why, earlier this year, we reformulated our corporate Purpose as follows: **“To Empower Our Customers to Create a World Where Every Sip Brings Joy.”**

This simple phrase seeks to define why Finlays exists as a business. “A World where every sip brings joy” speaks to what we are trying to create – a world where the delights of tea, coffee and botanicals are enjoyed by as many people as possible. It also speaks to our commitment to nurturing growing communities and to source ingredients sustainably.

“To Empower Our Customers” is the specific role Finlays plays in the industry as a B2B supplier. This speaks to how we form strong and long partnerships with our customers, leveraging our centuries of beverage experience, and empowering them to delight their consumers.



A values-led business

To deliver on our Purpose, we have also refreshed Finlays' Values and are working towards becoming a truly values-led business. "Acting for the Long-term" means striving to do the right thing for a better tomorrow. "Taking Accountability" means taking ownership of our words, actions and results. "Doing Better Each Time" means challenging ourselves to build a stronger Finlays. And "Succeeding Together" means collaborating to deliver excellence.

Taken together, our Purpose and Values form a promise – to our customers, suppliers, partners, and the communities we serve. A promise that we will build on our heritage, and maintain a laser focus on the future to ensure that – whoever you are and wherever you are – when you partner with Finlays, you will be helping to create a world where every sip brings joy.



James Woodrow
Group Managing Director

WATCH: How Finlays is delivering “Joy with Every Sip”



THE FINLAYS' HOT LIST

Siân Edwards and Megan Conceição
from the Finlays Solutions Strategy &
Insights Team reveal the trends heating
up in the world of beverages.



THE Finlays[®] HOT LIST

Siân Edwards and Megan Conceição from the Finlays Solutions Strategy & Insights Team reveal the trends heating up in the world of beverages.



UBE COOL

Purple yam—aka ube—is a bright and colorful veggie from the Philippines, loved for its naturally sweet, nutty flavor.

Traditionally, it's been a go-to for desserts and sweets. Now, ube is making a splash in drinks too, like Pret's Ube Brûlée Latte, catching the eye of consumers who are all about trying bold, colorful new flavors.



Muscle Mocha

Influenced by growing popularity of weight-loss drugs such as Ozempic, consumers are turning to their favorite coffee beverages to support muscle-mass retention. This is driving major launch activity of protein coffees, such as Lavazza's protein cappuccino, spanning the health and indulgence trends.



Matcha Madness

Think matcha's had its moment? Think again! This year, matcha is booming everywhere—from stores to cafes to the runway — as fresh, fruity twists like Blank Street's blueberry matcha share the spotlight with high-fashion pop-ups such as Loewe x Tease Matcha.



Green Beans

Environmental claims on new coffee products have jumped 23% in the past year (to April 2025, Mintel GNPD), fuelled by growing consumer awareness. In fact, one in four coffee lovers aged 18-34 in the U.S. is genuinely worried about how climate change could affect their favorite brew. Brands that win loyalty are those making real efforts to tackle climate issues—and telling their customers about it.



Get It While It's Hot

Pumpkin spice lattes were just the beginning! The phenomenon of limited-time beverages continues to morph and evolve, driven by continued consumer demand. We're seeing drinks for every season e.g. Dunkin' Potion Macchiato for Halloween, and every cultural wave e.g. International Delight's 'Love Is Blind' LTO.



Interactive poll not supported

[View online version](#)



Siân Edwards

Director of Strategy & Insights



Megan Conceição

Insight Analyst, Finlays Solutions

WE'VE GOT THE SOLUTION

Stephanie Trachtenberg offers a glimpse
behind the scenes at Finlays Solutions



[ENERGIZING ORANGE
AND HIBISCUS ICED TEA]

Boosted with
natural caffeine

Sustainably sourced
hibiscus extract

The Big Idea:

Launched in 2025, Finlays Solutions is a forward-thinking, customer-centric partner in the beverage industry, blending centuries of expertise in tea, coffee, and botanicals with cutting-edge innovation, and a deep commitment to sustainability. By prioritizing collaboration, quality, and meaningful innovation, it is partnering with customers to co-create market-ready products that align with evolving consumer demands and global market dynamics.

Argentinian tea extract
for low turbidity

Aroma essence for
sensory experience

WE'VE GOT THE SOLUTION

That first sip — the rush of refreshment, the spark of energy, the shared smile between friends — these are the joyful moments that make life richer. Finlays Solutions is empowering customers to make these moments of joy possible. But what sets Finlays Solutions apart? What's the secret sauce behind our steady rise as a leader in beverage innovation?

At Finlays Solutions, we believe the answer is simple, yet profound: a customer-first mindset, unmatched expertise, and a passion for creating what's next. As the beverage world evolves faster than ever, we're not just keeping up — we're helping shape the future. We're lifting the curtain to reveal the magic behind the scenes — showcasing how Finlays Solutions is redefining beverage partnerships and setting a new benchmark for collaboration and innovation.

Rooted in Tradition, Driven by Innovation

Finlays' journey began 275 years ago. From our origins as a tea-trading company, we evolved into a global leader in natural beverage ingredients. With deep expertise in tea

and coffee — and now botanicals — Finlays Solutions blends decades of knowledge with forward-thinking innovation to meet the demands of today's market. But heritage alone doesn't drive results. We pride ourselves on being agile, forward-looking, and willing to challenge the status quo.

As Charley Snell, CEO of Finlays Solutions puts it, "We pair deep expertise with modern technology to deliver solutions that last. We listen first, innovate with intent, and focus on creating long-term value—not just following trends."

A Different Kind of Partner

At Finlays Solutions, we don't see ourselves as a supplier. We see ourselves as an extension of our customers' teams — their R&D labs, their marketing brainstormers, their innovation hubs. It's why we live by a simple mantra: "Every exceptional beverage begins with a vision — yours."

Our customers' aspirations sit at the center of everything we do. We believe true partnership means co-creation, walking

alongside our customers from the spark of an idea to the moment that beverage delights a consumer. It's about listening — really listening — to what the brand needs, what the market demands, and what consumers crave.

That commitment to collaboration sets the tone for how we work: with transparency, honesty, and integrity. No smoke and mirrors. Just real conversations, practical solutions, and a shared dedication to excellence.

"One thing I discovered about Finlays Solutions when I joined, that I think we need to celebrate more," says Kathy Timperman, VP of R&D, "is the passion, flexibility, and agility our teams demonstrate in translating the imagination of our customers into delicious, commercially viable products."

Innovation that Matters

In an industry where innovation is often measured by speed alone, we take a different approach: innovation that is fast AND right.

[HIGH-PROTEIN DIRTY
CHAI BOBA TEA]

Fairtrade coffee
concentrate

Cold-pressed oat milk

Rich in total polyphenols

Organic Hot Water
Soluble black tea

Allison Cash, Chief Commercial Officer explains, “For us, innovation isn’t just about what’s new — it’s about what’s meaningful. We don’t lead with product, we lead with purpose. We start by deeply understanding our customers — their aspirations, challenges, and what truly motivates their consumers — and then build from there.” Finlays Solutions combines state-of-the-art R&D capabilities with a pulse on consumer trends to ensure that what we create isn’t just new — it’s necessary, meaningful, and market-ready.

Our R&D team — a diverse group of scientists, flavor experts, and technical specialists — is passionate about pushing boundaries. Whether it’s crafting new flavor profiles, enhancing health benefits, or developing sustainable product formats, we thrive on turning challenges into breakthroughs.

But our secret weapon is customer insight. We innovate, not in a vacuum, but in tandem with real-world needs and market realities. It’s why our development cycle includes not just trend analysis and bench trials, but also extensive customer feedback loops and testing.

Whether it’s creating a new chai tea blend in record time or refining botanical infusions for the next generation of health-conscious consumers, our innovation process is built to deliver a competitive advantage. “Ultimately our job is to make our customers feel heard, supported, and inspired,” Cash continues. “That’s how we turn great ideas into beverages that don’t just compete, but connect.”

Quality Crafted with Pride

At Finlays Solutions, we believe that quality is non-negotiable. From sourcing raw materials to delivering the final product, every step in our process is carefully designed to ensure consistency, safety, and superior sensory experiences. We offer an expansive portfolio of coffee, tea, and botanical products — each developed with precision and passion. Our end-to-end capabilities mean we control the journey from field to finished good. This allows us to maintain the highest standards and give our customers the confidence that their brand promise is safe in our hands.



And we don't just develop; we optimize. Our R&D and operations teams work closely to streamline formulations for scalability, ensuring that a prototype's brilliance can be translated into mass production without compromising taste or quality.

"Every day, we see firsthand how powerful it is when our customers feel truly understood," says Bret Buhler, VP Foodservice. "It's not just about selling a product — it's about solving real challenges with speed, agility, and a deep understanding of the U.S. market. We bring insights, not just ingredients. When our partners succeed, we succeed — and that's what drives us."

Modern Expertise Meets Market Realities

While we honor our heritage, we are anything but traditional in how we approach today's challenges. Finlays Solutions has embraced a modern mindset — blending our deep knowledge base with cutting-edge technologies and an openness to new ideas.

This allows us to anticipate emerging trends and proactively develop solutions that position our customers for success.

"Our commitment to truly understanding and anticipating our customers' needs is a key differentiator in a crowded beverage market," says Katy Smeathers, Head of Sales, Europe. "It's our deep focus on the customer experience — from taste to sustainability — that sets us apart. We listen, we innovate, and we deliver and that's why our customers choose us."

And we don't chase trends — we help our customers lead them. Whether it's formulating low-sugar beverages without compromising flavor, pioneering with functional botanicals, or improving supply chain sustainability, we're committed to innovation that moves the needle.

“*Finlays Solutions combines state-of-the-art R&D capabilities with a pulse on consumer trends to ensure that what we create isn't just new — it's necessary, meaningful, and market-ready.***”**

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Our scientists are not just creators — they're also reverse engineers, capable of deconstructing market favorites and reimagining them to be even better, cleaner, and more aligned with modern consumer expectations.

A Global Mindset with Local Impact

With operations spanning the US, Europe, and Asia, we bring a global perspective to every project. But we also recognize that consumers — and markets — are local. Preferences, regulations, and trends can vary dramatically.

Our global footprint, supported by the strength and stability of the Swire family, gives us the agility to deliver localized solutions with global consistency.

This means our customers can rely on us not just to meet today's needs, but to help them expand into new markets with confidence — armed with the right products, insights, and operational support.

As Raymond Wang, Commercial Manager, Asia explains: "The beverage market in Asia is very

dynamic and fast-paced. That's why clear, agile communication is critical.

We adapt to our customers' needs and channels for efficient responsiveness. Our commercial team works hand-in-hand with global colleagues in R&D, Applications, Marketing, Insights, and Regulatory, to deliver what customers need — fast and seamlessly."

“

It's our deep focus on the customer experience — from taste to sustainability — that sets us apart."

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Sustainability: The Only Way Forward

We believe that what we create should be good for people and for the planet. Sustainability is not just an initiative at Finlays Solutions — it's embedded in our strategy.

“

We pair deep expertise with modern technology to deliver solutions that last. We listen first, innovate with intent, and focus on creating long-term value — not just following trends".

Charley Snell, CEO Finlays Solutions





WATCH: Stephanie Trachtenberg offers a glimpse behind the scenes at Finlays Solutions



Finlays
Solutions

Stephanie Trachtenberg
on Finlays Solutions

1.
Tell us about the
Finlays Solutions
brand in a nutshell

“Sustainability isn’t a standalone initiative — it’s embedded in the way we design, scale, and lead our global supply chain,” explains Vaughn Ragoonanan, VP Supply Chain. “From ethical sourcing to operational efficiency, every link is intentionally built to align with our customer’s values and our company’s long-term growth. We see responsible supply-chain leadership as fundamental to delivering commercial value, resilience, and impact — for our partners and for the planet.”

From aggressive carbon reduction goals to responsible sourcing and a commitment to building diverse, inclusive teams, we are taking meaningful steps to ensure that we are part of the solution for a better future.

“

The beverage industry is evolving at unprecedented speed — but so are we.”

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Looking Ahead

The beverage industry is evolving at unprecedented speed — but so are we. As consumer expectations continue to shift toward health, authenticity, and sustainability, Finlays Solutions is uniquely positioned to help brands meet — and exceed — those expectations.

We know that today’s consumers care deeply about the brands they support. Partnering with Finlays Solutions means aligning with a supply chain and an innovation engine that values responsibility as highly as profitability.

We are passionate about helping our customers turn big ideas into market-leading products. We are invested in being more than a solutions provider — we are your partner, your collaborator, your advocate. And while the market will always change, our promise won’t:

“Every exceptional beverage begins with a vision — yours.”

So, whatever your vision is — healthier beverages, cleaner labels, new flavor frontiers — we’ve got the solution.



Stephanie Trachtenberg
*Senior Manager, Brand and
Communications, Finlays Solutions*

A TRANSFORMATIVE EFFECT

Stephanie Trachtenberg sits down with Finlays
Solutions' new VP of R&D: Kathy Timperman



The Big Idea:

Through Kathy Timperman's R&D leadership, Finlays Solutions is transforming its approach to R&D, focused on consumer-driven, science-backed innovation that elevates natural beverages with modern functionality and strategic collaboration.



A TRANSFORMATIVE EFFECT

The beverage world is changing — fast — and so is Finlays Solutions. At the forefront of that evolution is Kathy Timperman, Finlays Solutions' newly appointed Vice President of R&D. With a strategic mind, a passion for innovation, and a deep respect for the craft, Kathy is poised to lead the company's R&D efforts into a new era of consumer-driven, science-backed beverage innovation.

In this conversation with Stephanie Trachtenberg, Finlays Solutions' Senior Manager, Brand Marketing and Communications, Kathy shares her vision for R&D, her career journey, and why now is the most exciting time to be reimagining what beverages can deliver.

Stepping Into a Transformative Role

Q: You've recently stepped into the role of VP of R&D at a pivotal time here at Finlays Solutions. What drew you here, and what opportunity did you see?

Kathy: I was drawn to Finlays Solutions because of the quality of our ingredients and the strength of our product portfolio — we're playing right in the sweet spot of categories that are growing and evolving. But beyond the products, it was the opportunity to shape our innovation pipeline and research agenda that excited me. There's a real momentum here, and being part of growing the R&D organization — developing best-in-class talent, building out research programs, and enhancing facilities — was a chance I couldn't pass up.

Defining a Vision for Innovation

Q: What is your vision for innovation at Finlays Solutions?

Kathy: Our vision is clear: category and consumer-driven concepts that excite customers, leverage technology that only we can provide, and drive long-term partnerships and business growth. I want us to focus on doing the right things — and doing them better than anyone else. Success will be creating transformational, seriously delicious products — the kind you see on a retail shelf and proudly say, "We did that!"

Q: How do you envision elevating traditional beverages with modern functionality, while maintaining natural integrity?

Kathy: Finlays Solutions already has a strong foundation in natural in-gredients — energy, phytonutrients, healthful bioactives. While clinical claims aren't part of our immediate strategy, we can — and will — ensure consistent delivery of key nutrients and a deep understanding of ingredient composition. It's about balancing functionality and natural integrity, delivering on consumer expectations for clean labels without compromising on innovation.



Turning Vision into Strategy

Q: How is the R&D team shifting gears to drive innovation forward?

Kathy: We're building out a technology roadmap anchored by what we call "North Star" ambitions — big, business-aligned goals that give the whole organization something to rally around. In parallel, we're developing a stronger external ecosystem — tapping into academic partnerships, startups, and technical collaborators to help us reach those goals faster and smarter.

Q: What specific changes are being made to position Finlays Solutions at the forefront of beverage innovation?

Kathy: We're fostering deeper collaboration between marketing and R&D to create truly customer-centric innovation sessions. We're also piloting an AI project with our IT team to build predictive models that integrate analytical, sensory, and consumer data. There's a lot of exciting change happening.



“

Success will be creating transformational, seriously delicious products — the kind you see on a retail shelf and proudly say, “We did that!”

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Meeting Consumer Demand with Purpose

Q: Today's consumers want more than just a beverage — they want health, flavor, and transparency. How is your team addressing this shift?

Kathy: We've always been focused on flavor and ingredient transparency, but we're doubling down. We're gaining a deeper understanding of ingredient composition and leaning into functional benefits, so we can better communicate health attributes and create products that genuinely meet consumer wellness needs. Since bringing botanicals into our portfolio, our R&D team has been hard at work conducting experiments and sensory evaluations to build expertise — and that knowledge helps us support our customers even better.

Q: What are some emerging consumer needs you think the industry is underestimating?

Kathy: Stress management is a big one — and not just in supplements, but in everyday beverages. Also, 'permissible indulgence' — consumers want to treat themselves, but they want to feel good about it. And lastly, the idea of food — or beverage — as medicine is gaining serious traction. It's all about helping consumers feel empowered in their choices.

Kathy Timperman on R&D at Finlays Solutions



Finlays
Solutions

Kathy Timperman on
R&D at Finlays Solutions

1.
What is your role
at Finlays
Solutions?

From Pipeline to Portfolio

Q: Can you share any examples that show how the R&D approach has evolved?

Kathy: One example I'm really proud of is Project Cartera — proactively building the product pipeline for our Vendor of Record program. The team developed over 14 product formulations for two contract manufacturing locations, while assessing critical performance metrics such as shelf life, cost, and customer interest. By getting ahead of customer needs, we've been able to design better products and speed up commercialization timelines. It's a great example of where we're heading — proactive, strategic, and focused on creating real market value.

Leadership in a New Era of Beverage Innovation

Q: What legacy do you hope to build at Finlays Solutions?

Kathy: I want to build a strong, passionate technical team — one that has the resources, the skills, and the energy to create lasting innovation. I hope to foster an environment where discovery and collaboration thrive, and where our creativity, scientific knowledge, and leading-edge technology build a reputation in the industry that we can all be proud of.

And one more thing — if we can find the right partner, can we please launch an RTD espresso martini? (laughs) I think the world needs that.



THE MATHEMATICS OF MAGIC

Allison Cash explains why, in business, $1+1=\infty$

Artwork by Jun Chung



The Big Idea:

True collaboration transcends simple addition, creating exponential value through the combination of diverse perspectives, productive disagreements, and reframed challenges. By viewing internal friction and customer feedback as opportunities rather than obstacles, organizations can unlock innovation, clarity, and strategic alignment that no individual effort could achieve alone.



THE MATHEMATICS OF MAGIC

Common sense tells us that one plus one equals two. But in the world of partnerships, this fundamental rule crumbles spectacularly. When people join forces – whether across departments or across organizations – something remarkable happens that transcends simple addition. This is an area where exponential value lives just beneath the surface of our daily interactions.

Building Bridges Within

What if the team member who questions every proposal isn't seen as being difficult? What if they're being essential? What looks like obstruction often reveals itself as protection against costly mistakes. Consider reframing these moments. Instead of viewing pushback as resistance, see it as the universe's way of stress-testing your ideas before they meet the real world.

Ellen Langer's research on mindfulness shows us that our initial interpretations rarely capture the full picture. The finance team that scrutinizes every budget request isn't trying to stifle innovation. They're ensuring resources flow toward initiatives with genuine impact. The

marketing department that challenges technical specifications doesn't have to be seen as being picky. Reframed, they're translating features into benefits that actually matter to customers. When engineering and sales seemingly speak different languages, magic happens in the translation. Technical precision meets market reality, creating solutions that are both feasible and desirable. These internal partnerships transform individual expertise into collective wisdom.

Turning Feedback Into Fuel

The customer who floods your support team with feedback doesn't have to be seen as a problem to be solved. They could be a partner in disguise. Their frustrations map directly to improvement opportunities that benefit everyone who follows. What appears as criticism often contains the seeds of your next breakthrough. Smart organizations flip the script entirely. Instead of viewing customer demands as interruptions, they see them as free consulting services. That 'difficult' customer who wants fifteen customizations? They're essentially conducting market research for features that dozens of other

customers secretly want but haven't articulated yet. This shift changes everything. Customer support becomes product development. Sales conversations become strategy sessions. Complaints transform into competitive advantages, because every problem solved for one customer prevents the same issue for hundreds more.

Philosophical Ideas Meets Modern Madness

The philosopher Hegel understood something profound about collective human effort when he wrote about how opposing forces create something entirely new through their interaction (his dialectical process). He thought ideas progressed with a starting point, the thesis, which would give rise to an opposing view, its antithesis, and their conflict would be resolved through synthesis. Then the process repeats over and over. "The truth is the whole," he argued, meaning that individual perspectives only reveal their full value when they clash and combine with others. He likely never envisioned his philosophy applying to cross-departmental meetings or beverage solutions, but his insight perfectly captures why the best solutions emerge from productive disagreement.

This principle underlies every successful partnership. Individual talents, when combined, amplify each other in ways that no single person could achieve alone.

Flipping the Script on Common Challenges

What we call 'communication breakdowns' are actually opportunities for clarity in disguise. When messages get lost in translation, the solution isn't more talking. Instead, it's better listening and clearer thinking. 'Competing priorities' sounds like a problem, but it's really a strategic choice waiting to be made. These moments force organizations to define what truly matters, eliminating the noise that clutters decision-making. When timelines clash and

expectations misalign, partnerships reveal their true value by navigating complexity together rather than suffering through it alone.

Where It All Leads

Real partnerships create ripples that extend far beyond their original scope. Internal collaboration improves customer experiences. Customer insights drive internal innovation. Each connection strengthens the others, creating networks of value that compound over time. In this new mathematics, one plus one doesn't equal two. It equals infinite possibility.

“
*One plus one doesn't
equal two. It equals
infinite possibility.*

- Allison Cash

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Allison Cash
Chief Commercial Officer
Finlays Solution



A MAJOR FLEX

Multi-Sourcing of Tea Extracts is becoming essential, argues *Natalie Chanthavong*



The Big Idea:

In today's volatile trade environment, beverage brands and operators should source tea extracts from multiple locations to reduce risk, manage costs, and ensure supply chain resilience. However, this doesn't have to mean sourcing from multiple suppliers – partnering with a single tea-extracts supplier offers the perfect blend of flexibility, partnership, and global sourcing diversity.



A MAJOR FLEX

In today's trade environment, relying on a single source for ingredients, such as tea extracts, has become a risky undertaking. From shifting tariffs to congested ports, the global supply chain is under constant pressure. That's why multi-sourcing has evolved from a smart strategy to an essential one.

Trade barriers have increasingly disrupted agricultural imports, with tariffs significantly raising costs for products like tea. These duties have made tea extracts more expensive for U.S. importers, highlighting the financial impact of ongoing trade disputes.

Unpredictable trade tensions have compelled companies to move away from single-source suppliers, driving a shift toward diversified supply chains to better manage cost volatility and mitigate risk.

Logistical Strain

Beyond tariffs, global logistics have been strained by challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic triggered widespread port congestion, container shortages, and

supply chain bullwhips. More recently, geopolitical instability has added new layers of complexity. The Suez Canal has faced disruptions due to Houthi activity, while the Panama Canal has challenges linked to low water levels, and geopolitical relationships – raising concerns about potential delays and costs in the future. These issues have led to longer shipping times and higher freight costs, further emphasizing the need for a sourcing strategy.

The Multi-Sourcing Multiplier

Multi-sourcing offers a powerful solution. By sourcing tea extracts from multiple countries, companies can engage in tariff arbitrage – choosing suppliers based on the most favorable trade conditions. That said, there are benefits to working with a single supplier: stronger relationships, streamlined communication, and greater negotiation power.

Stronger relationships mean deeper trust, faster resolutions, and a more collaborative approach to

problem-solving. Streamlined communication reduces the complexity of managing multiple contacts and ensures that updates, such as changes in lead times or shipping routes, are delivered clearly and promptly. From a customer perspective, this also translates into fewer audits, reduced quality assurance workload, and fewer internal personnel needed to manage supplier interactions. Ultimately, the key is to find a supplier that combines these advantages with a globally diversified, low-risk sourcing network, offering both resilience and simplicity.

Finlays Solutions delivers exactly that. As a single supplier, backed by a robust, multi-origin tea extract network – including sources from Kenya, China, and Chile – Finlays offers the best of both worlds: the simplicity of a single point of contact and the resilience of a globally diversified supply chain.

How Finlays can support

What sets Finlays apart is its customer-centric approach. Finlays proactively communicates with customers, providing timely updates and clear explanations of the steps being taken to address issues. This transparency makes it easier for customers to navigate challenges without chasing multiple suppliers or reconciling conflicting information.

With Finlays Solutions, customers not only gain consistent supply, but also peace of mind, knowing they have a trusted partner who keeps them informed every step of the way.



Natalie Chanthavong

Product Marketing Associate, Finlays Solutions



NATURAL *EVOLUTION*

Introducing Finlays Solutions'
new botanical range



The Big Idea:

With botanicals booming, Finlays Solutions has launched a new Botanicals platform to meet rising consumer demand for natural, functional, and flavorful beverage ingredients that support wellness goals. By offering versatile, innovation-ready botanical extracts and a collaborative development model, the company empowers brands to create purpose-driven products that combine flavor, function, and clean-label appeal.

Meet Our Hero Botanical

Mint

Refreshing and cooling, known for digestive support.

Ginger

Warming spice with immune and gut health benefits.

Ginseng

A time-tested adaptogen for focus and sustained energy.

Monkfruit

Naturally sweet and rich in antioxidants.

Green Coffee Extract

A natural caffeine source with metabolic support.

Lychee Extract

Floral-sweet, rich in polyphenols.



NATURAL EVOLUTION

Finlays has long been at the forefront of custom beverage development, using coffee and tea as our creative canvas. But the landscape is evolving and today's consumers crave more. They want natural, functional, and flavor-forward ingredients that support their wellness goals.

That's why, earlier this year, Finlays Solutions introduced Botanicals as our newest innovation platform - a natural evolution built on our expertise with clean-label, plant-based ingredients. With Botanicals, we're meeting growing demand while empowering brands to create beverages that are as purposeful as they are delicious.

Why Botanicals, Why Now?

Botanicals are booming. Consumers are embracing nature-inspired ingredients, which deliver benefits from stress relief to natural energy. These ingredients align with top trends: wellness, and clean label. They also offer the

winning trifecta of natural flavor, vibrant color, and functionality. As brands search for versatile ingredients with strong consumer appeal, botanicals stand out for innovation-ready solutions.

“

Combining function, flavor and flexibility, our platform helps brands meet the moment, and shape the future.”

✕ in f

Functional Formats for Every Channel To support a broad range of applications, Finlays Solutions' powdered botanical extracts are ideal for everything from RTD tea, RTD coffee and energy drinks to healthy alternatives and CSDs. This flexibility helps our partners move fast across foodservice, retail, and ingredient channels.

Designed for Innovation

We collaborate with customers from trend insights to shelf-ready concepts. Our co-creation model ensures you move with speed, confidence, and creativity.

Ultimately, Botanicals aren't just a trend, they're a powerful new pillar of natural beverage innovation. By combining function, flavor and flexibility, our platform helps brands meet the moment, and shape the future.



Ryan Collins
*Senior Marketing Manager Tea,
Finlays Solutions*

INSPIRED BY NATURE

Mote Pooley celebrates 30 years of
innovation at Damin International



The Big Idea:

Damin International – a joint venture between Finlays and Damin founder and Jiang's Group Chairman Mr. Jiang Aiqing – has grown into a global leader in health-focused innovation, by blending science, tradition, and sensory appeal across a diverse product portfolio. With cutting-edge R&D, advanced manufacturing, and a global-local approach, Damin continues to redefine wellness through innovative, practical and scalable solutions, which support healthier living worldwide.



INSPIRED BY NATURE

This year, Damin International is celebrating its 30th anniversary – three decades of transforming nature’s potential into pioneering solutions for healthier living. Guided by our core belief — that Dreams Are Made In Nature (DAMIN) – we’ve grown from a small, but ambitious, startup into a leader in health-focused innovation, driven by the conviction that great innovation should balance both well-being and sensory delight.

Today, our ingredients, formulations, and manufacturing services empower businesses worldwide, while nourishing consumers’ lives, reflecting the core mission that guides us as we embark on our next 30 years.

Here are six ways Damin is delivering on this mission:

1) Redefining wellness through innovation

With today’s consumers increasingly seeking products that combine both nutrition and indulgence, Damin is developing pioneering products that deliver on both fronts. For instance, our Douruimi product line helps foodservice partners craft trending, functional beverages

with authentic flavors in seconds — making ‘easy wellness’ a delicious part of everyday life. Meanwhile, our unique 70ml mini-bottle offers a fresh take on portable nutrition, using patented cold-fill technology to deliver vibrant flavor and nutritional value in a lightweight, convenient format.

2) Advancing functional nutrition through technology

At Damin, we apply a practical and purposeful approach to technology— turning proven science into real-world wellness that makes nutrition more accessible, enjoyable, and scalable. Take, for example, innovative packaging such as our 70ml PET bottle and 20ml liquid capsules, designed to safely carry functional ingredients without sacrificing taste or stability. These ready-to-use formats help our partners bring health-focused products to market faster and more efficiently. In the coffee space, our patented dual-enzyme hydrolysis process solves a common challenge: scaling cold-brew production without compromising aroma or flavor. This breakthrough earned a 2024 Technology Innovation Award and National Invention Patent for our high-aroma instant coffee.

3) R&D: The foundation of innovation

Damin’s innovation leadership stems from sustained investment in R&D, with three dedicated research centers. Led by a team of 80+ qualified researchers, we’ve developed over 11,000 formulations, enabling rapid, customized product development. Our work has earned national and international recognition, including the prestigious National High-Tech Enterprise designation and the Geneva Invention Award. What sets us apart is our ability to turn scientific research into effective, flavorful, and nutritious product solutions — ensuring every innovation meets both scientific and market needs.

4) The Shanghai advantage: where collaboration meets speed

Opened in 2023, Damin’s Shanghai headquarters is a strategic hub designed to accelerate customer-centric innovation. By co-locating our entire sales force and R&D teams in China’s commercial capital, we’ve significantly enhanced proximity to domestic key accounts, the vast majority of which are based in the city or neighboring region.

Equipped with full pilot line facilities, the site enables faster development, rapid prototyping, and close collaboration through joint workshops and face-to-face engagement. This integrated setup removes traditional barriers, allowing us to deliver market-ready solutions faster — a clear competitive edge for our partners.

5) Product category diversification

Damin's portfolio includes tea, coffee, botanicals, fruit and vegetable extracts, and marine bio-ingredients — all designed to support health and wellness. We've grown in the 'convergence of food and medicine (Chinese: 药食同源)' space with products such as astragalus, ginseng, and dendrobium concentrates, blending traditional ingredients with modern science. Our formats range from powders and concentrates to ready-to-drink jellies and porridges, helping partners reach consumers at home, on-the-go, or in service settings.

6) Global reach, local impact

Damin offers integrated solutions — from ingredients to custom formulations — to a diverse range of partners in food manufacturing, hospitality, health foods, and nutraceuticals in 45 countries globally. We're committed to strengthening regional partnerships and tailoring solutions to local tastes and needs. By combining global

reach with deep local understanding, we aim to bring natural, high-quality health products to more markets worldwide.

Looking ahead: the next chapter of wellness innovation

As we celebrate this 30-year milestone, we reaffirm our commitment to advancing global healthy living. The years ahead will see Damin deepen expertise in fast-growing fields such as food-medicine convergence and marine functional ingredients — always anchored in the scientific foundation and quality standards that have defined our journey so far.

Our focus remains on practical innovation: creating safe, nutritious, and great-tasting products that reflect the best of both tradition and science. Together with our partners, we look forward to writing the next chapter in our shared pursuit of healthier lives.



Mote Pooley
Chairman, Damin International



REIMAGINING THE OWN BRAND MODEL

From Survival to Strength: How Finlays
Beverages Transformed its Future

Portrait by Thom Walton



A close-up photograph of a middle-aged man with short, light brown hair and black-rimmed glasses. He is wearing a blue and white checkered button-down shirt. He is holding a white ceramic mug with the 'Finlays' logo (in purple) and a small green leaf icon. He is drinking from the mug, with the rim of the cup near his mouth. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

The Big Idea:

Over the last three years, Finlay Beverages has been reimagining the own-brand model, shifting from a price-driven, own-brand supplier to a strategic, capability-rich partner focused on long-term value and trust. This change is driven by cultural renewal, investment in people and processes, and a strong commitment to sustainability, positioning the company as a leading force in the U.K. tea and coffee market.

REIMAGINING THE OWN BRAND MODEL

For over a decade, Finlay Beverages has navigated the rough terrain of being an own-brand supplier, operating in a margin-compromised world, where price often prevented true partnerships and contracts are won on cost rather than value.

But in 2022, facing its tenth year of adversity, the business reached a breaking point.

“We believed in the potential of the business,” recalls Andy Bulman, Managing Director. “But belief alone wasn’t enough. We knew we had to rethink – completely.”

That belief sparked a bold transformation - one that turned Finlay Beverages from a price-led commodity player, into a capability- rich partner. A business reimaged with a clear mission: to become the most trusted own-brand tea and coffee supplier in the U.K.

The Turning Point

Finlay Beverages had long operated with a lean, cost-focused model - delivering on price, but struggling to invest in long-term capability and value. So, the team made a purposeful shift: invest, simplify, and lead.

“It started with ambition,” says Andy. “We had to remove the fear of failure and create a learning culture. From there, we focused on building real capability.”

One of the earliest difficult decisions was to rationalize the customer base. Smaller, non-strategic contracts were let go in favor of deeper partnerships with aligned retailers.

“That decision hurt in the short term,” Andy admits, “but it gave us the space to serve our partners better. We chose focus, over fragmentation.”





“

We believed in the potential of the business, but belief alone wasn't enough. We knew we had to rethink – completely.”

Andy Bulman, Managing Director

✕ in f

WATCH: Andy Bulman on transformation at Finlay Beverages



Finlays

Andy Bulman
on transformation
at Finlay Beverages

1.
Tell us about the
journey Finlay
Beverages has been on.

Becoming a Better Partner

The biggest shift, says Andy, has been cultural: from supplier to strategic partner.

“We now act as custodians of our customers’ brands. That means understanding their goals, delivering the ‘brilliant basics’, and bringing innovation and insight that make a difference.

”Finlay Beverages’ dual-category strength — across both tea and coffee — is a key differentiator. Although, it’s the mindset shift that matters most: from reactive supplier to proactive partner, and with an appetite to co-create the future.

The transformation has been underpinned by serious investment. A robust learning and development plan now supports every team. Systems and processes have been upgraded. The coffee factory has seen major capital investment, and plans are underway to modernise tea operations too. “We’ve come a long way,” Andy says.

“We’re building a business that our customers can rely on - not just today, but for the long term.”



Sustainability as Standard

Tea and coffee are grown in some of the most socio-economically vulnerable parts of the world. Finlay Beverages understands that sustainability is the critical aspect in securing business continuity for generations to come.

“We have a responsibility to contribute to solutions,” says Andy. “Not just through ethical sourcing, but by working to secure long-term resilience in our supply chains.”

Finlays’ carbon-net-zero targets have been approved by the Science Based Targets initiative, and its Sustainable Future 2030 strategy has been embedded into all decision-making at Finlay Beverages. Every new product, process, and initiative is assessed not just for commercial potential, but also for environmental and social impact.

“Our customers expect it — and we’re proud to lead in this space. This is where responsible growth lives.”





What This Means for Finlay Beverages' Customers

For customers, Finlay Beverages' transformation means more than being a stronger supplier. It means a partner you can trust to deliver the day-to-day, while helping you plan for tomorrow. That includes:

- **Fewer compromises.** A focused portfolio and lean operations mean better service and consistent quality.
- **Stronger partnerships.** Finlay Beverages works with customers, not just for them - bringing proactive solutions, shared goals, and transparent dialogue.
- **Sustainable growth.** From carbon impact to sourcing resilience, Finlay Beverages is helping customers lead on sustainability without sacrificing value or performance.
- **Capability that delivers.** With investments in people, processes, and product development, they are better equipped than ever to support brand growth.

“We want to be the leading own-brand partner in U.K. tea and coffee,” Andy says. “And we’re on that journey with our customers, every step of the way.”

Bringing Purpose to the future

None of this change would have happened without people. Finlay Beverages' teams — both longstanding and new - have driven the transformation with resilience, creativity, and care.

“Our people are instrumental,” says Andy. “When you offer clarity, support, and trust - they show up with energy and accountability. That’s what has made this turnaround possible.”

Finlay Beverages' culture is now one of continuous improvement, shared purpose, and forward momentum. Whilst the road ahead will always bring new challenges, the business is better equipped, and more determined, than ever.

“Excellence is the goal,” Andy reflects. “We’ll never stop working toward it. Our customers can be confident that we’re doing it not just for us, but for them, and the future of both the tea and coffee industries.” Finlay Beverages isn’t just delivering tea and coffee. It’s delivering trust, value, and purpose – and for its customers, that means one thing: a better brew, built to last.



Daisy Barnes
Marketing Executive, Finlay Beverages

LIMITED TIME LASTING IMPACT

Megan Conceição explores The Rise of LTOs



LIMITED TIME, LASTING IMPACT

Megan Conceição explores The Rise of LTOs

LIMITED TIME LASTING IMPACT

Megan Conceição explores The Rise of LTOs



The Big Idea:

Limited-Time Offers (LTOs) have become a powerful strategy in the beverage industry, offering a low-risk, high-reward way to drive consumer excitement, tap into fast-moving trends, and boost footfall. By blending flavor innovation with cultural relevance and urgency, LTOs cater perfectly to Gen Z preferences and economic realities, making them a key tool for staying competitive and relevant.

LIMITED TIME,LASING IMPACT

What started with a pumpkin spice latte has become an industry-wide movement. Buzzy, fun and undeniably enticing, Limited-Time Offers (LTOs) are taking the beverage space by storm, becoming - somewhat paradoxically - mainstays on menu boards.

For operators, they're a powerful way to cut through the noise and spark consumer interest. For inflation-weary consumers, they offer affordable indulgence amid ongoing economic uncertainty. The result? A win-win that's hard to ignore.

So why do LTOs feel so perfectly tuned to the current moment?

Menu boards have always reflected generational trends. Today, with Gen-Z consumers flipping the script on coffee consumption by reaching for iced drinks layered with creamers and sweeteners, LTOs are emerging as the ideal format to cater to changing preferences. Typically built around some form of flavor innovation, these short-

term launches offer a fresh and flexible way to keep menus feeling dynamic and relevant.

Moreover, with the zeitgeist moving at breakneck speed, overhauling an entire menu just to keep pace simply isn't practical. That's where LTOs shine; featuring only a few SKUs, for a limited window, they offer operators a low-risk, high-reward opportunity to tap into viral trends and flavors. Recent examples include Dutch Bros' innovative

Mochi Berry offering for spring - which plays into the growing appeal of textures and global flavors in beverages - and the widespread adoption of pistachio-flavored beverages by global operators such as Starbucks and Blank Street.



It's not just about flavor.

The ephemeral nature of LTOs brings a slew of other strategic benefits. They generate excitement, boost brand engagement, and create a sense of urgency that's often hard to replicate through core range offerings. Crucially, this is helping address a critical operational challenge: footfall as consumers get increasingly judicious about where, when and how they spend. According to recent research by Technomic, 91% of consumers say they're more likely to visit a chain that offers LTOs or new items.

To fully harness the potential of LTOs and their strategic benefits, operators must deliver novelty and new experiences - without compromising on accessibility or value. One of the most effective ways to do that? Lean into the growing convergence between pop culture, flavor trends, and brand collaboration. Adjacent categories such as desserts and sweet snacking offer obvious inspiration, as seen in the success of Starbucks' Tiramisu range or Pret A Manger's Ube Crème Brûlée Latte in the U.K.

But the opportunity doesn't stop at sweet. More unexpected inspiration - from sauces to savory condiments - is also gaining traction. Think hot honey coffees or miso caramel lattes: bold, boundary-pushing flavor profiles that speak directly to consumers' appetite for the new and unexpected. With a dedicated product development team and insights-led innovation at its core, Finlays is uniquely positioned to help operators stay ahead of the curve, bringing LTOs to life that are not only trend-forward but commercially effective.

“

To fully harness the potential of LTOs and their strategic benefits, operators must deliver novelty and new experiences - without compromising on accessibility or value.”

✕ in f



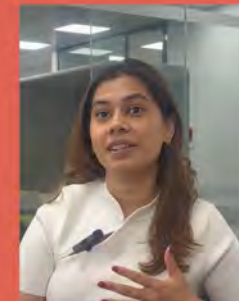
Megan Conceição

Insight Analyst, Finlays Solutions

Megan Conceição on LTOs

Finlays
Solutions

Megan Conceicao
on LTOs



1.
What has been
happening in the
LTO space in
recent years?

HEALTH HALO

Megan Conceição shares four ways the functional beverage trend is going from strength to strength



The Big Idea:

Functionality is becoming a baseline expectation in beverages, with consumers seeking drinks that support hydration, mindfulness, and nutrition. Brands that combine health benefits with bold flavors and cultural relevance are leading the next wave of innovation.

Global
Beverage
Trends



HEALTH HALO

It started with the quiet rise of immunity-boosting and added-vitamin claims – a response to lingering health anxieties in the wake of the pandemic. Half a decade on and functionality has become the default way of communicating value, particularly to consumers looking to mirror the aspirational lifestyles of their favorite influencers.

With the trend showing no signs of slowing, here's a look at where it's heading.

1. **Hydration:** Energy drinks are no longer just about a pure caffeine hit; they're being reimagined as comprehensive hydration solutions, reflecting a shift in consumer expectations. In fact, 91% of U.S. energy drink consumers now say they're seeking hydration benefits from these products (Mintel, 2024). One of the most prominent examples of the growing demand for hydration solutions is Unilever-owned Liquid I.V., which has quadrupled in size since 2020. Celebrity backing is also helping push the trend mainstream. Unwell, a new functional water brand by podcast

host Alex Cooper, combines electrolytes, B-complex vitamins and 75mg of green coffee extract for a natural caffeine boost.

2. **Mindfulness:** The rise of the 'sober curious' movement, particularly among Gen Z, has led to more consumers choosing to reduce or moderate their alcohol intake. In response, drinks featuring botanicals, adaptogens, and nootropics are gaining traction. Brands such as Ghia, Kin Euphorics, and Juni are leading the charge with low-sugar, high-flavor, and function-forward alternatives. These non-alcoholic beverages are designed to deliver some of the desirable effects of alcohol – relaxation and social ease – without the associated downsides, making them a compelling choice for a more mindful generation of drinkers.
3. **Protein:** Protein's vertiginous ascent continues. Once confined to core food categories, it is now making significant inroads in beverages, supporting consumers looking to optimize all aspects of their diet. The trend is gaining traction across both foodservice and retail. Dunkin' recently launched Strong Brew, a vanilla iced coffee with 20g of protein, while Slate's RTD protein coffee range grew a whopping 360% between 2022

and 2024, demonstrating the proof is, quite literally, in the protein.

4. **Health tech:** Despite a renewed focus on health, consumers still enjoy products that help them feel as if they're indulging in their favorite treats. Thanks to recent advances in research and technology, they no longer have to choose between taste and functionality.

Functionality is no longer a bonus, it's an expectation. From hydration and protein to nootropic-infused sips that support focus and calm, today's beverage consumers are increasingly looking for products that do more. For brands, the opportunity lies in blending benefit-driven innovation with bold, crave-worthy flavor and cultural relevance. With their health halos, flavor versatility, and innate functionality, tea and botanicals are uniquely positioned to drive the next phase of functional beverage growth.

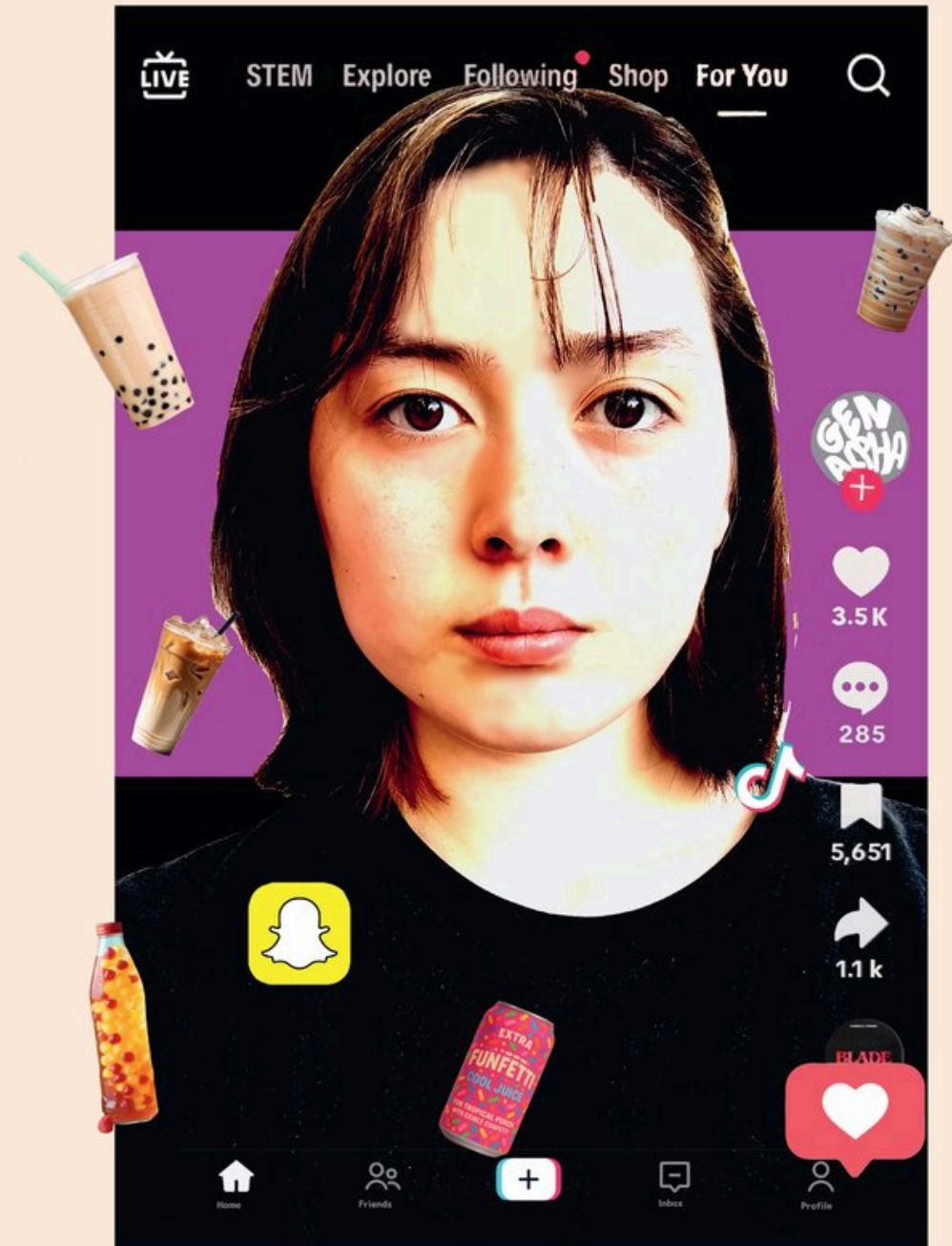


Megan Conceição
Insight Analyst, Finlays Solutions

ALPHA-BETS

How are Gen Alpha's beverage tastes shaping up? *Sian Edwards* investigates.

Artwork by Nina Allen



The Big Idea:

Gen Alpha is an emerging consumer group that appears to value fun, flavor, and visual appeal in their beverages, with growing awareness of health and sustainability. While social media and branding may influence their choices, taste remains the top priority, making flavor the key to winning their loyalty.

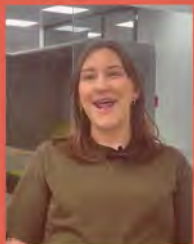


ALPHA-BETS



Forget Gen Z – there’s a hot new demographic on the rise. The oldest ‘Gen Alphas’ are now 15 and already becoming a powerful, informed, and plugged-in group of consumers.

What better way to understand this emerging generation than to hear directly from them? So, we ran a small global survey of young people aged 10–15 to find out what they’re looking for in a beverage. While the data isn’t statistically robust, it’s still full of fascinating insights. A big thank you to all the parents, guardians, aunts, uncles, godparents, siblings, and friends across the Finlays community, who helped gather responses – and an even bigger thanks to the brilliant young people who shared their honest and thoughtful views for 1750!



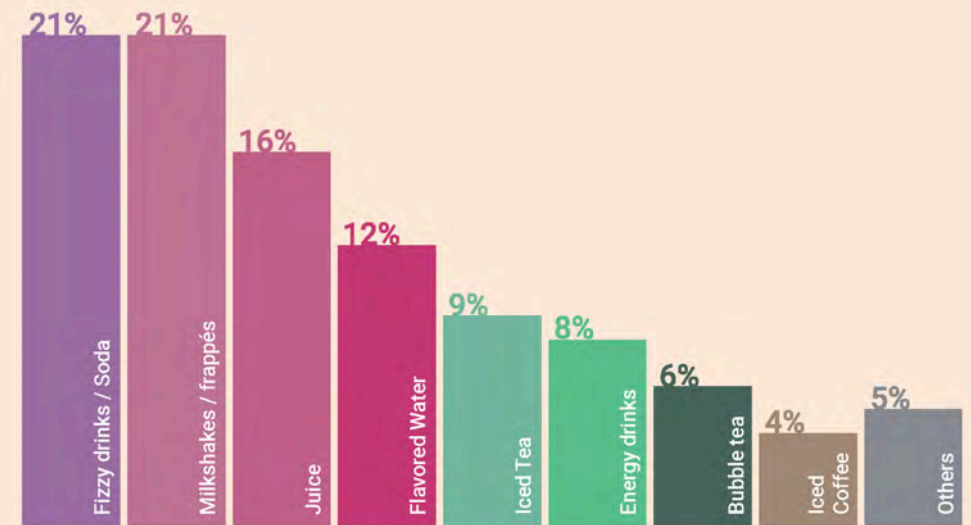
Finlays
Solutions

Siân Edwards
on Generation Alpha

1.
What is
Generation
Alpha?

WATCH: Siân
Edwards on Gen
Alpha

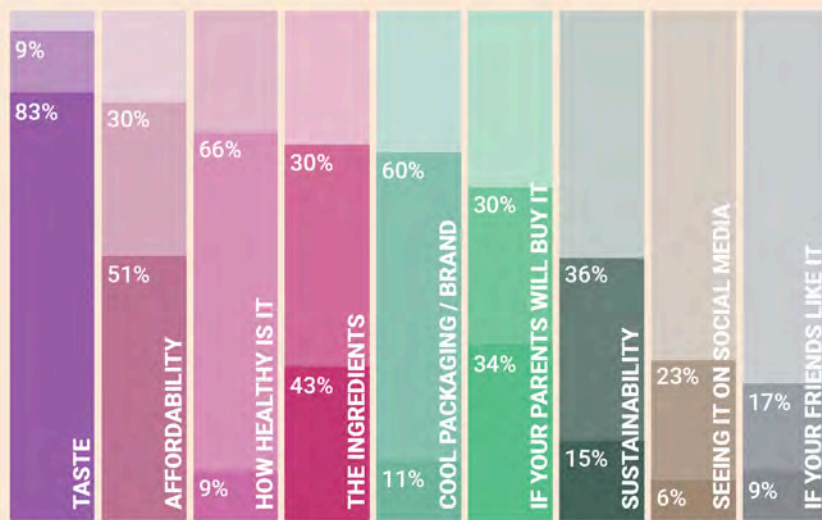
WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE SOFT DRINKS?



Insight:

Mainstream fizzy drinks still lead the pack, closely followed by indulgent, frappé-style beverages popularized by brands like Starbucks. Gen Alpha clearly loves sweet, fun drinks—driven by novelty, flavor, and social media. Interestingly, one in five showed interest in tea and coffee beverages, hinting at early adoption of more adult-like tastes. Compared to past generations, it suggests younger consumers are picking up lifestyle habits and are exposed to trending products earlier than before.

HOW IMPORTANT ARE THESE FACTORS WHEN CHOOSING A DRINK?



Insight

Gen Alpha's purchasing decisions closely mirror those of older consumers, with taste, affordability, and health as the main drivers. All factors score highly, emphasizing the need to meet diverse consumer demands—from trending flavors and health benefits to strong branding. Sustainability ranks slightly higher than we typically see with older consumers, reflecting Gen Alpha's greater awareness and priority on environmental issues.



HAVE YOU EVER CHOSEN A DRINK BECAUSE OF SOMETHING YOU SAW ON SOCIAL MEDIA?



Insight

Social media has influenced 60% of respondents to buy a drink, but mostly for one-off or occasional purchases – not regular habits. That's high, but it's not driving repeat purchasing behavior. Is this because beverage experiences aren't living up to the online promise or because these young consumers have less control over screen time and spending? It would be interesting

What makes a drink seem 'cool' or appealing to you?

*I generally go for something I enjoy first and foremost - the taste is crucial.
The taste, especially if it is sweet.*



1. Gen Alpha prioritizes **taste above all** when choosing drinks, with sweet and flavorful options leading the way.

*Bright, fun colors that pop, when you see a lot of people with it.
Creative packaging catches my eye.*

2. **Eye-catching, colorful packaging** plays a major role, reflecting their visual-first nature and desire for fun, expressive products.

Good advertising on social platforms like TikTok

Either when a famous person talks about how good it is or when a friend likes it.

4. **Celebrity endorsements, peer influence and social media** shape what's 'cool'. Products that are "talked about" feel aspirational and socially-approved, reflecting a desire to **express identity and belonging**.

A drink that's suitable for the environment and for the people

If it is promoted as not entirely unhealthy or a better alternative to an already existing drink

3. They're absorbing the adult language of '**better-for-you**' and **eco-consciousness**, particularly when paired with appealing flavors and strong branding.

Gen Alpha Imagines its Dream Beverages

We also asked our respondents to invent their dream drinks. It's almost impossible to choose but here are some of our favorites, imagined with the help of AI

REPETITION



“

A mango-flavored drink with a calm, stylish vibe, bold red color, and trending Y2K-inspired fashion-forward packaging for all ages.”

✕ in f



EXTRA FUNFETTI COOL JUICE



“

A fun tropical punch with rainbow confetti packaging and edible confetti inside—playful, colorful, and bursting with party vibes.”

✕ in f

RAINBOW RACE



“

A fruity, feel-good drink in a colorful can. Ethically made, turtle-friendly, and designed for a chill, relaxed vibe.”

STAR SMASH



“

A white bubble tea with sleek blue and grey packaging – cool, modern, and made to stand out.”

TROPICAL ALPS



“

A tropical fruit drink packed with health benefits, featuring popping boba and real fruit pieces for a fun, functional boost.”



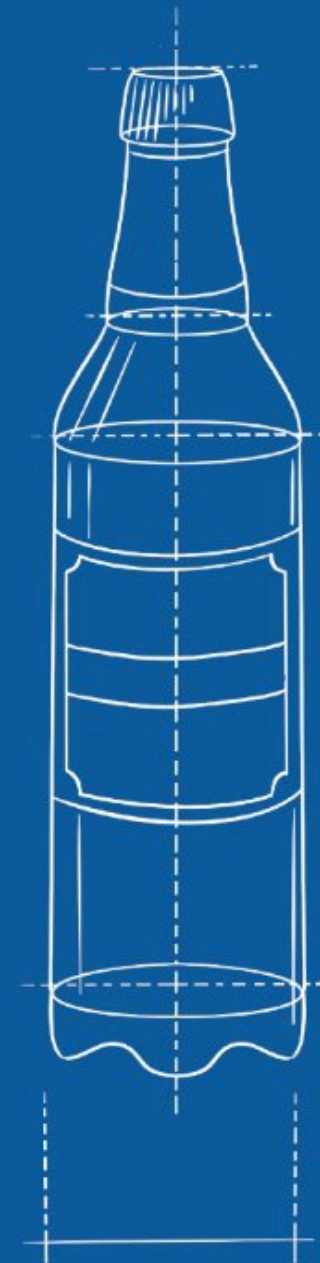
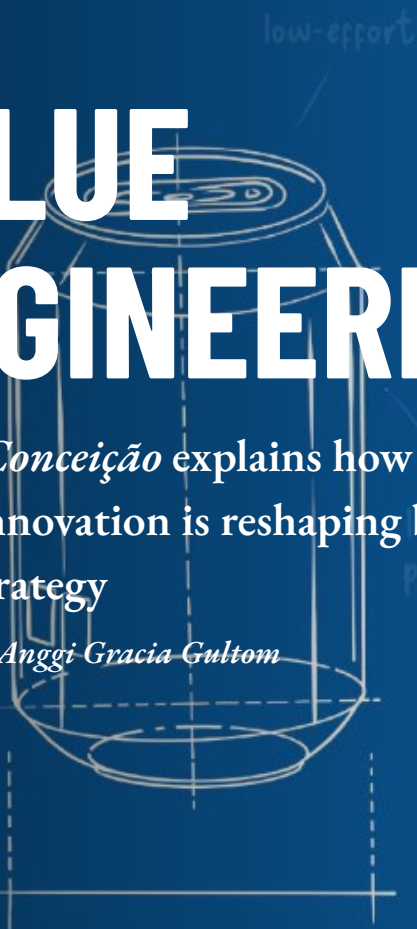
Siân Edwards

Director of Strategy and Insights

VALUE ENGINEERING

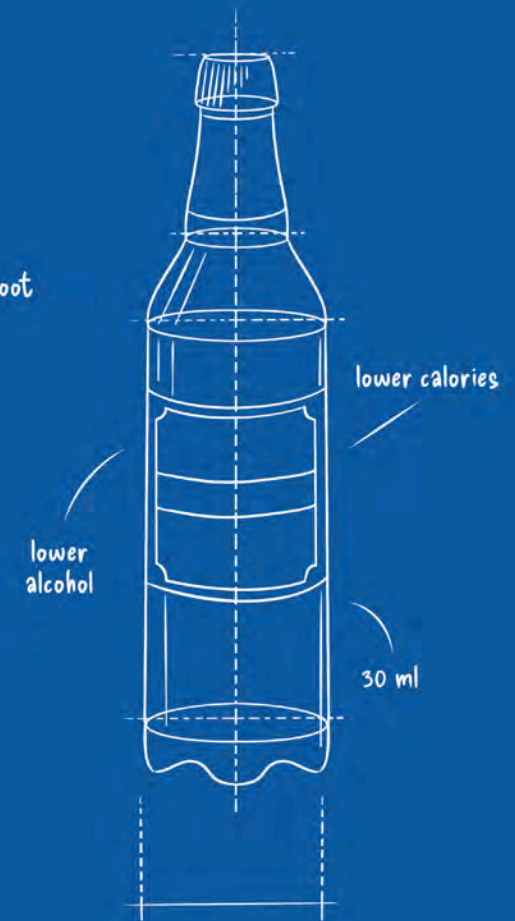
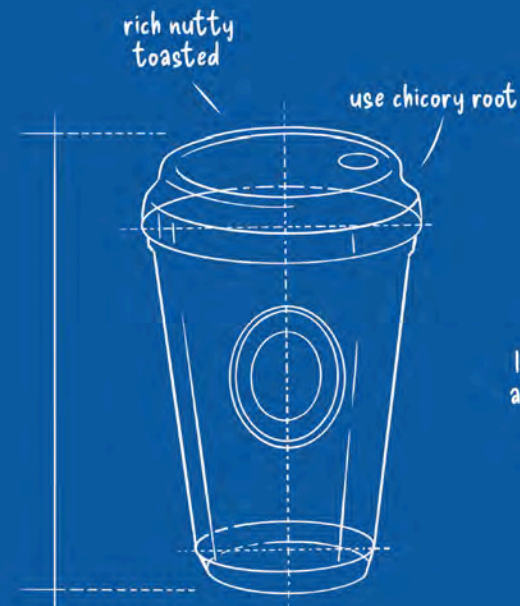
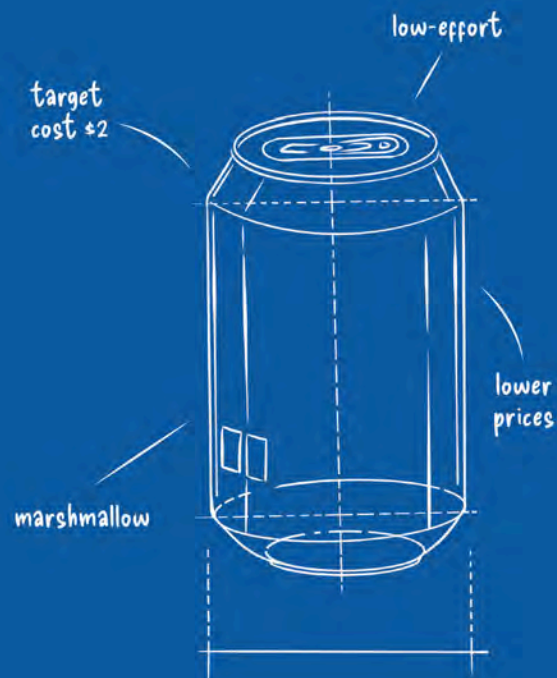
Megan Conceição explains how value-driven innovation is reshaping beverage brand strategy

Artwork by Anggi Gracia Gultom



The Big Idea:

In today's cost-conscious climate, beverage brands are finding creative ways to deliver value without compromising on experience – whether through affordable alternatives, heritage-inspired recipes, or scaled-down servings. By understanding what consumers truly value and focusing on low-effort, high-impact innovations, brands can build trust, boost loyalty, and stay competitive.



VALUE ENGINEERING

Cash is tight, and as people feel the pinch, ingenious cost-effective solutions are more than just a necessity – they're a powerful lever for building trust, boosting brand equity, and earning long-term loyalty. Here are just a few of the most inventive ways brand owners and operators are meeting the moment:

1) Jet-puffed marshmallows:

After a bird-flu-induced egg shortage sent prices skyrocketing across the U.S. earlier this year, Kraft stepped in with a creative cost-effective twist on a classic Easter tradition. The brand's Jet-Puffed marshmallow decorating kit included food-safe colorings, edible pens, jumbo marshmallows and a tray designed to resemble an egg carton. Retailing at just \$2 US, the kit offered families an affordable and festive alternative to traditional egg dyeing.

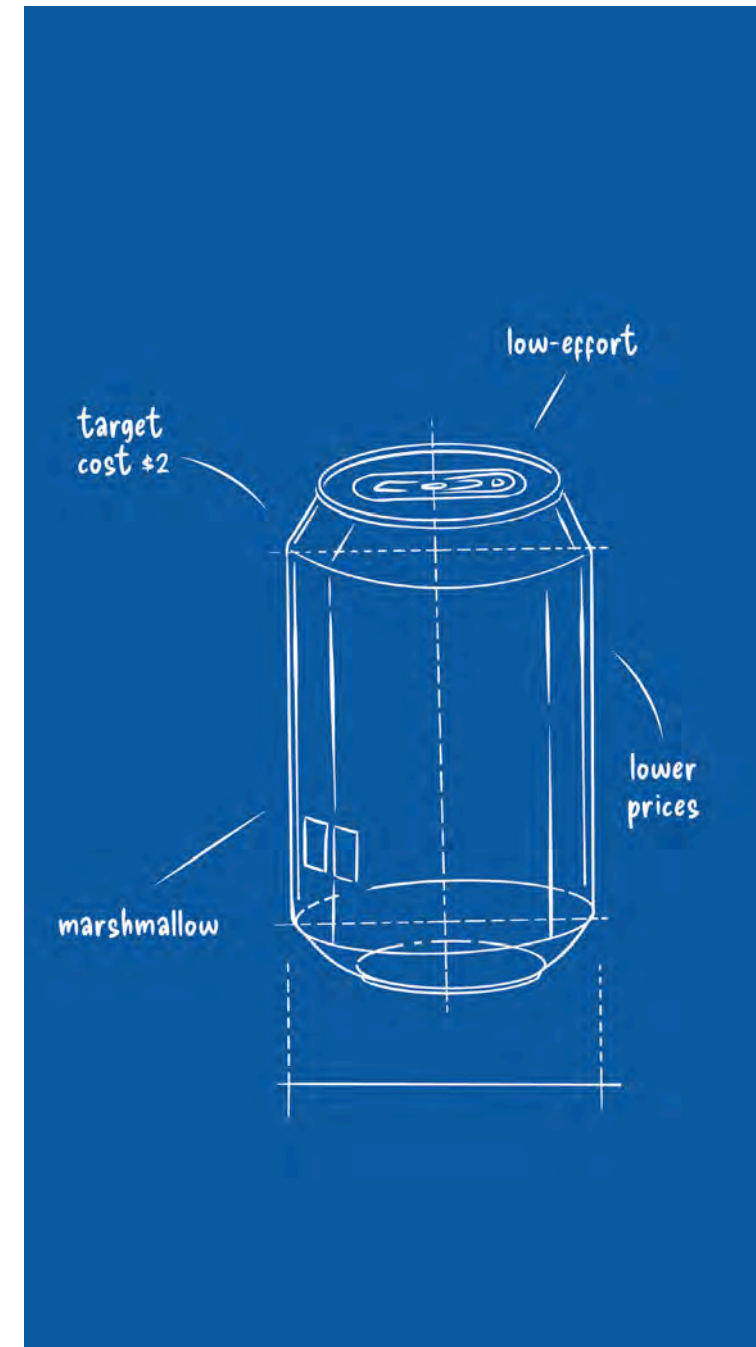
2) NOLA coffee:

As coffee prices reach unprecedented highs, national brands such as CoolBrew and Blue Bottle Coffee are

turning to a regional-favorite – New Orleans-style coffee, which combines coffee with more affordable ground chicory root. The result is a rich, dark coffee with nutty, toasted notes and a subtle sweetness. Once born out of scarcity, this heritage beverage is now a savvy solution to modern supply chain and pricing challenges.

3) Honey, I shrunk the drink:

With consumers rethinking their alcohol intake for both wellness and financial reasons – downsized drinks are making a splash. “Snaquiris” (miniature daquiris) and “tiny tinis” (extra-small martinis) are becoming increasingly ubiquitous on bar menus, offering a fun, scaled-down take on traditional cocktails. Starting at just 30ml and priced as low as £4/\$6US, these petite pours are designed to be finished in a few sips, offering lower calories, lower alcohol and most importantly, lower prices - a smart answer to current demand for both value and wellness.



Key Takeaways for Brand Owners

01 Small Swaps, Big Wins

When forced to be extra judicious with their spending, consumers look for low-effort, big-impact changes that don't disrupt their routines. It's imperative that brand owners consider where and how cost-effective substitutions can integrate seamlessly into existing habits. Smaller sizes that support moderation? The opportunity to transform your usual cup of coffee into a regional specialty? Understanding these low-effort, big impact changes and positioning them as exciting, not restrictive, can help brands win as they compete for an increasingly shrinking share of consumer wallets.

02 Understand Value

To win in today's competitive landscape, brands need a nuanced understanding of what their consumers truly value. Is your beverage part of a morning ritual? Does it provide the chance to catch up with friends? Or is it a holiday tradition? When developing alternatives, it is essential to understand not just what consumers are buying, but also why. Aligning innovation with emotional and functional value is a powerful way to turn trial into brand loyalty.



Megan Conceição
Insight Analyst at Finlays Solutions

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To win in today's competitive landscape, brands need a nuanced understanding of what their consumers truly value.”

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NEW DRINKS ON THE BLOCK

Sian Edwards shares five lessons
from insurgent beverage brands

Artwork by Nina Allen



The Big Idea:

Today's most exciting beverage brands are winning by breaking the mold. They're tapping into under-served audiences, especially younger consumers looking for products that reflect their values and lifestyles. Fun, bold branding, paired with natural ingredients, creates an irresistible sense of guilt-free enjoyment. Ultimately, it's all about balance — delivering health benefits, sustainability, indulgence, and convenience in one smart package. The takeaway? Success comes from staying nimble, culturally tuned-in, and never forgetting that consumers want it all!



NEW DRINKS ON THE BLOCK

1. Find Under-Serviced Audiences

Traditional beverage categories, such as energy drinks, have historically targeted a male audience, with links to gaming and extreme sports, but research by Nielsen indicates that women are expected to control 75% of discretionary spending globally by 2028 – highlighting a major gap in the market.

Brands such as Olipop, Alani Nu and Unwell are demonstrating the power of creating an offering to target upwardly mobile, young Millennial and Gen Z women, aligning their brands with an aspirational lifestyle.

2. Have Fun with Branding

One major commonality among all of the brands is fun, attention-grabbing and colorful branding. If you've seen our research on Gen Alpha consumers, you'll know that this is especially attractive to young consumers – driving sales and engagement with the brands.

Finding ways to pair natural ingredients with fun/different branding, as exhibited by Ted's Matcha, Loverboy and Liquid Death, gives consumers a sense of guilt-free fun.

3. Embrace the Low/no Movement

Several brands in this list, such as Juni, Spindrift and Trip are targeted toward alcohol occasions, offering a low/no option that promises an elevated experience – without the downside. Younger consumers are increasingly turning to flexitarian/sober-curious lifestyles, in a marked difference from older generations, and brands that can capture this social occasion have seen major success.

4. Innovate with Flavors

Flavor innovation and Limited-Time Offers (LTOs) have become essential tools for attracting consumers, encouraging brand switching, and generating buzz

online. Insurgent brands excel in this space — take Bones' 'Electric Unicorn' fruity cereal range, for example. It taps into pop culture, embraces bold creativity, and shows how playful, boundary-pushing flavors can capture attention and drive engagement.

5. Deliver guilt-free products

A standout theme among insurgent brands is the rise of 'guilt-free' offerings — products that deliver a satisfying experience without compromising on health goals or personal values. Today's consumers are looking for it all: natural ingredients, functional benefits, sustainability, indulgent taste, and convenience. Bloom is a great example of a brand that gets this balance right. With the tagline 'treat yourself to wellness,' they offer a range of functional powders that support well-being, while still feeling like a treat.



Siân Edwards

*Director of Strategy and Insights
Finlays Solutions*

WEATHERING THE STORM

Tom Blackwall and Chrishanth Ajitkumar
explore how buyers can
navigate the increasingly volatile coffee and tea
markets



The Big Idea:

The impacts of climate change are already being felt by growing communities, but the effects are increasingly reverberating down the supply chain. To weather climate-driven market volatility, tea and coffee buyers should take a long-term approach, by securing diversified supply networks, enhancing traceability and risk monitoring, and investing in supplier resilience.

WEATHERING THE STORM

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Rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, and the spread of pests and diseases are disrupting production and lowering crop quality. This is jeopardizing harvests and threatening the long-term viability of coffee-growing communities that rely on stable ecosystems and predictable weather.”

Jeisson Alonso Quintero, Expocafe, Colombia

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As a result of climate change, we have gone through several periods of drought, during which tea production has decreased in yield, significantly affecting the quality of the leaf.”

Anibal Rujodski, Tea Farmer, Misiones, Argentina

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Climate change is no longer a distant threat — it’s a daily reality for millions of farmers who grow the world’s tea and coffee.

Tea and coffee - deeply sensitive to climate - rely on consistent growing conditions, which are becoming increasingly rare. This is not only a major threat to growing communities but is also wreaking havoc in supply chains and leading to unprecedented market volatility that is only set to intensify over time, sending shockwaves across supply chains.

How climate change is impacting coffee supply chains

Coffee prices have been a rollercoaster over recent years. Between 2021 to 2025, the coffee world suffered a cumulative 996m kg deficit where, due to extreme weather events, supply has been unable to keep up with demand. From May 2021 to May 2025, the New York Arabica market increased 188% as droughts and high temperatures in Brazil (which accounts for 38% of world

coffee production) had a dramatic negative impact on the prospects for upcoming harvests. Meanwhile, a drought in Vietnam pushed Robusta prices 262% higher during the same time period. The net result has been higher costs for brands and operators buying the coffee, and consumers feeling the pinch as well. While consumers have long seen coffee as an inflation-resistant treat, if prices continue to rise, this could have a long-term impact on demand.

How climate change is impacting tea supply chains

While the volatility of tea markets is less obviously dramatic than in coffee, climate change is having a similar impact. Increasingly unstable weather in the form of rising temperatures, heavy rainfall and drought is leading to shrinking growing regions and declining yields, and is also affecting quality. In fact, the Ethical Tea Partnership estimates that, by 2050, optimal tea-growing areas could decline by 26.2% in Kenya, 14% in Sri Lanka and 4.7% in China.

The inevitable consequence is that tea prices will become ever more volatile, with higher production costs and quality degradation potentially reducing availability, increasing competition and posing quality and regulatory risks.

The human cost of climate change

The human cost of climate change is inextricably bound up in its economic and supply-chain impacts. In both tea and coffee, climate change is having an enormous impact on the millions of people who rely on production for their livelihoods. The challenges posed by climate change not only threaten yield and quality, but also the economic sustainability of tea and coffee production as a whole, creating widespread insecurity for smallholder farmers. Adapting to climate change can be costly, and its impacts are therefore felt most severely by the most deprived communities. Joining together as a global industry, to ensure we are supporting and investing in these communities, isn't only the right thing to do, it's the only way we can protect the economic prosperity of our industry for the long-term.

Three ways brand owners and operators can weather the volatility

With market volatility here to stay due to climate change, how can brand owners and operators weather the storm? The answer lies in taking action today, for the beverages of tomorrow.

Here are three strategies to consider:

1. Explore long-term contracts and hedging. Work with a supplier who has the expertise and supply network to help you navigate market volatility. This might involve buying at the right time, establishing long-term contracts, and diversifying your supply network. As markets grow more and more volatile, it's always a good idea not to put all your eggs in one basket.

2. Enhance traceability and risk monitoring. Does your current supplier have a robust, publicly stated approach to Supplier Risk Management, supply chain transparency and climate change mitigation? If not, now's the time to review. Having a strong understanding of your climate-risk profile will support you to make strategic decisions about your supply chain.

3) Invest in supplier resilience today, and tomorrow. With the impacts of climate change already being felt, it's critical the industry finds ways to empower growing communities to sustainably solve these challenges, and to offer economic security. This might look like paying premiums, investing in climate-change-specific initiatives, or establishing long-term contracts. Doing so will help to mitigate the immediate impacts and how they reverberate down the supply chain, putting long-term solutions in place.

How Finlays is Addressing Climate Change

With over 275 years in the beverage industry, Finlays sees climate resilience as essential to business success. That's why our long-term strategy, Sustainable Future 2030, is science-led, collaborative, and regenerative, and aligns with a 2040 net-zero goal.



The human cost of climate change is inextricably bound up in its economic and supply-chain impacts.

Tom Blackwall & Chrishanth Ajitkumar

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Key to this is our Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) program, which identifies climate risks and strengthens supply-chain resilience. By working closely with suppliers and using data-driven tools, we help map vulnerabilities such as changing rainfall and pest pressures, and co-develop mitigation strategies like regenerative farming, soil and water conservation, and crop diversification. This not only strengthens the adaptive capacity of suppliers but also embeds climate resilience into sourcing decisions, ensuring long-term supply continuity and supporting producer livelihoods.

Our approach centres on scientific research into climate-resilient tea and coffee varieties; investing in collaborative platforms such as World Coffee Research to share innovation; data and traceability to guide environmental decisions; and regenerative agriculture to restore ecosystems, sequester carbon, and improve soil health.



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*Climate change is no longer
a distant threat - it's a
daily reality for millions of
farmers who grow the
world's tea and coffee.*”

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While climate change poses an existential challenge to the beverage industry, there is a clear way forward.”

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The pathway to resilience

While climate change poses an existential challenge to the beverage industry, there is a clear way forward.

Nahuel Tunon, Head of Sustainable Sourcing at The Fairtrade Foundation explains, “Despite steep climate challenges facing tea and coffee sectors, there is a promising pathway to resilience. Producers are already beginning to adopt innovative practices – such as agroforestry, climate-resilient crop varieties, and improved soil and water management.

Tea and coffee are not only everyday staples but also the economic backbone for millions worldwide. Building resilient supply chains requires investing in producer organizations and linking local farmer expertise with global climate insights, creating a virtuous cycle where secure incomes drive innovation and safeguard crop quality, biodiversity, and human health.”



Tom Blackwall

Head of Raw Materials, Finlays



Chrishanth Ajitkumar

Global Tea Manager, Finlays

The final word from tea and coffee growers:



**Anibal Rujodski, Tea
Farmer in Misiones,
Argentina**



**Jeisson Alonso
Quintero, Coffee
Farmer in Colombia**

“Investing in farmer training, access to sustainable technologies, and transparent value chains enables producers to adapt while contributing to broader environmental goals. Equally important is ensuring fair prices and long-term partnerships with buyers who value sustainability. Ultimately, protecting the future of Colombian coffee means addressing climate change – not just as a risk, but also as a catalyst for transformation toward a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient coffee sector.”

“Thanks to the support of Finlays, which provides us with training and assistance, we learned how to leverage green cover and protect native forests to mitigate climate change. They also cover the costs of implementing and certifying the Rainforest Alliance environmental standard, allowing us to continuously improve our crops”

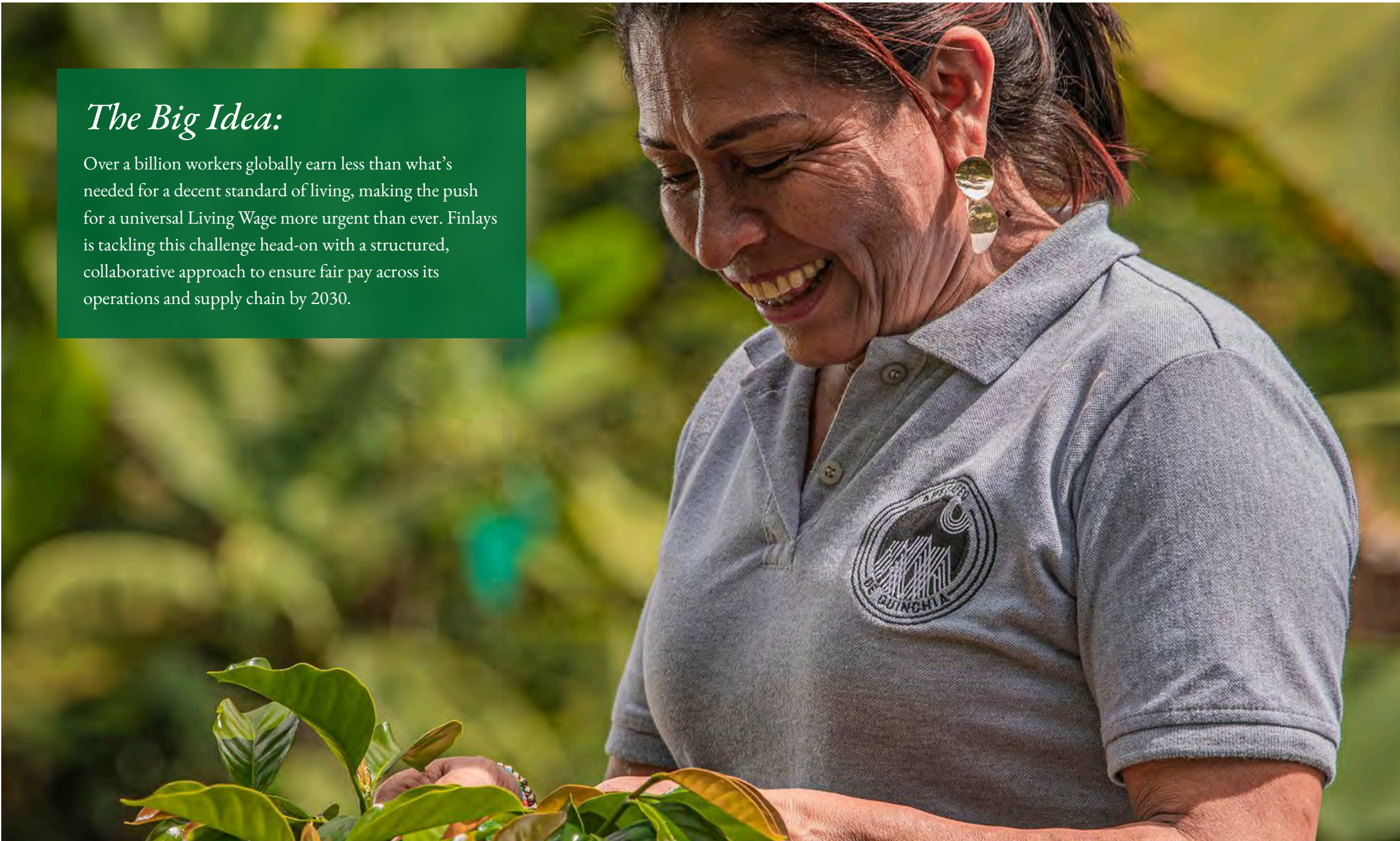
AGE OF THE LIVING WAGE

Paying a living wage is key to a fairer
future says *Rachael Steed*



The Big Idea:

Over a billion workers globally earn less than what's needed for a decent standard of living, making the push for a universal Living Wage more urgent than ever. Finlays is tackling this challenge head-on with a structured, collaborative approach to ensure fair pay across its operations and supply chain by 2030.



AGE OF THE LIVING WAGE

Now, more than ever, financial insecurity is a global challenge. The UN Global Compact estimates that over a billion working people worldwide – a third of workers – earn less than needed to afford a decent standard of living [Living Wage | Forward Faster].

The impact of financial insecurity is wide reaching. Not only does it impact on the individual, but it is also linked with societal issues such as gender inequality, poor health, crime and political instability. It is for these reasons that the United Nations has identified payment of the living wage as a human right.

The Living Wage is about providing workers with a fair wage and ensuring the right to work and live with dignity. The provision of a living wage provides workers with a path out of poverty and by extension, helps to address the societal impacts associated with financial insecurity.

Finlays' commitment to the living wage

As a member of the UN Global Compact, Finlays is committed to protecting and promoting Human Rights within our business and wider supply chain. This commitment is at the heart of the Our People Pillar of our Sustainable Future 2030 strategy, which includes workstreams dedicated to both Human Rights and the living wage.

Our living wage objectives are ambitious. Finlays has committed to paying all direct employees the relevant living wage for their location by 2030. We are also committed to working closely with our suppliers and customers to raise awareness of the living wage within our wider supply chain. Both these objectives are aligned with the UN Global Compact's Forward Faster programme, which is designed to drive progress against Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



A man wearing a green long-sleeved shirt with "ARGENT SA" on the chest, a straw hat, and a striped cloth draped over his shoulders is working in a tea field. He is using orange-handled shears to trim the tea bushes. The background shows a lush green landscape under a cloudy sky.

“

With the foundations now in place, we are in a good position to start delivering our living wage objectives.”

Addressing the challenges

Becoming a global living wage employer is not without its challenges. Currently, there is no universal living wage standard or global living wage accrediting body. Given that the aim of the living wage is to ensure that the worker can achieve a decent standard of living for the location in which they live, calculation methodologies also need to be adapted to reflect the wider social landscape – for example, average family size, cost of goods, and social infrastructure.

To address these challenges, Finlays has worked collaboratively with internal stakeholders and external organisations to develop a robust and sustainable approach to delivering our living wage ambitions.

Our Approach

We understand that becoming a living wage employer is about more than just hitting a number – it’s about doing the right thing for our people in the right way.

Using the UN Global Compact’s 10-Step Living Wage Implementation as a foundation, we have sought to create the strategy, policy and processes required to deliver our Living Wage programme in a structured and transparent manner.

From the outset, we recognized the importance of bringing subject matter experts to the table. In addition to consulting with global living wage organisations, we have worked closely with our business units to build our understanding of the living wage position in the regions in which we operate.

The outcome of these discussions is a framework and toolkit that aligns with living wage best practices, whilst also recognizing the varied nature of our business units. Within this process, we have also recognized the importance of embedding living wage discussions within our existing processes, for example, by incorporating living wage actions into our data reporting and budgeting cycles.



Looking forward

With the foundations now in place, we are in a good position to start delivering our living wage objectives. As a first step, we carried out baseline living wage assessments across 20 locations in January 2025. To do this, we worked with each of our business units to identify the correct living wage benchmark for their location and, by extension, the relevant calculation methodology.

Our preliminary assessment suggests that of the 1,538 employees included in our baseline assessments, over 70% are being paid the relevant living wage for their location. We are currently working with each of our business units to refine our baseline assessments and to develop

roadmaps, wage plans, and agree targets for objective delivery. Going forward, we will be carrying our annual living wage assessments to ensure that we are on track to deliver our global objectives.

We are also challenging ourselves to go one step further. In support of our commitment to build living wage awareness within our supply chain, work is underway to develop our understanding of this complex issue and the role we can play in building living wage awareness.

As we continue our living wage journey, we are committed to keeping our value of Acting for the Long Term at front of mind – doing the right thing today for a better tomorrow.



Rachael Steed
Head of HR

PURPOSEFUL POURS

Five ways U.S. brands are leveraging sustainability, by *Helen Hume*

A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of several people's arms and hands holding up glasses of beer. The glasses are filled with a golden, bubbly liquid. The background is a clear, bright blue sky. The people's faces are partially visible at the edges of the frame, looking upwards with smiles. The lighting is bright and natural, suggesting an outdoor setting during the day.

The Big Idea:

Tea and coffee brands across the U.S. are embracing sustainability by prioritizing social impact, fair sourcing, and environmental responsibility, without compromising on taste. From supporting farmers to reducing carbon footprints and rethinking waste, these companies are proving that purpose and profit can go hand in hand.

PURPOSEFUL POURS

Across the United States, tea and coffee brands continue to embrace sustainability, with increasing numbers putting it as a core value in their companies and products. Here are five ways U.S. brands are honoring people and planet while delivering amazing tasting products.

1. **People before Profits: Brewing with Purpose:**

Social Impact is a core driver of many brands. For some this means pouring their energies into a specific group. Black Rifle Coffee Company exemplifies this. Founded by veterans, Black Rifle is committed to supporting veterans, law enforcement, and first responders. For others meanwhile, it's about casting a wider net. Milo's Tea Company pledges 1% of its profits annually across three areas –education, protecting the planet for future generations, and community disaster relief.

2. **Supplier Partnerships: Grow Stronger Together:**

The success and resilience of every tea and coffee brand in the United States relies on a strong and

healthy supply chain, particularly the farms that grow our products. Peet's Coffee has recognized this for over ten years with its Common Grounds Farmer program. This program, through multi-stakeholder and multiyear projects, addresses local realities for coffee farmers from sustainable farming practices through to labor practices across the globe.

3. **Paying Premium Prices as a Principle:** Paying fair prices to farmers is just good business. Counter Culture Coffee was built on the conviction that everyone deserves to make a living wage. They therefore pay above 'market price for all coffees' and focus on forward contracts to give security to farmers. This is combined with rigorous transparency, publishing the price they pay for every coffee for all to see, so consumers have clear provenance of product and price.

4. **Carbon Consciousness:** Reducing Each Cup's Footprint: Climate Net Zero is a critical goal for us all... and it is a BIG challenge. But every step forward counts. Numi Tea introduced carbon footprint

labelling on its tea pack, helping customers understand the carbon impact of their purchases and making them feel good about their decisions. Many brands are organizing their supply chains more locally: Chameleon Coffee transitioned from importing glass bottles to American-made for a number of their key products, helping them to reduce their carbon footprint and strengthening local communities and economies.

5. **Waste Not, Want Not:** Reframing waste as an opportunity allows us to get creative: Milo's Tea Company 're-earths' its tea leaves by sending them to a topsoil company to compost and create nutrient rich soils. In 2023, Milo's re-earthed over 10,000 tons of used tea leaves. Or take Torque Coffee which embraces the opportunity to be part of the circular economy. Using 95% post-consumer waste that's been diverted from landfill, it can be home recycled or reused for their all-in-one mailer boxes of coffee.

WATCH: Helen Hume on US brands leveraging sustainability



Finlays
Solutions

Helen Hume on US brands
leveraging sustainability

1.
How are US
beverage brands
embracing
sustainability?

A Shared Vision: Finlays and the Future of Sustainable Beverages

At Finlays, sustainability is not a destination—it is a journey shared with our partners. Through our Sustainable Future 2030 strategy, we support customers in achieving their environmental and social goals by offering responsibly sourced ingredients, reducing emissions across our value chain, and investing in regenerative agriculture. Whether it's helping brands secure long-term sustainable sources of tea, coffee and botanicals, or the development of lower-carbon products, Finlays is proud to be a trusted partner in building a beverage industry that is as sustainable as it is flavorful.



Helen Hume

Vice President of Sustainability, Finlays Solutions

FAIR'S FAIR

Inside Sainsbury's Bold Move to Fairtrade Tea



The Big Idea:

UK retailer Sainsbury's has transitioned its entire own-brand black tea range to Fairtrade certification, boosting support for global tea producers through an additional £1million in annual Premium that will help to improve farmers' and workers' social, economic and environmental conditions. This move, inspired by first-hand insights from Kenyan farms, reflects a broader push for industry-wide collaboration to build resilient and sustainable supply chains.

FAIR'S FAIR

In 2025, the U.K.'s second largest retailer Sainsbury's announced its entire own-brand black tea range was becoming Fairtrade certified. The move, made with the partnership of Fairtrade and long-time supplier Finlay Beverages, is expected to generate an additional £1 million in Fairtrade Premium annually (on top of the £6 million Sainsbury's contributed in 2024 through sales of its own-brand products).

To understand the motivations behind this shift, I sat down with Helen Buckley, Sainsbury's Director of Technical - Grocery and General Merchandise, who shared her insights into the journey to this landmark move, and why she's calling on the wider industry to follow their lead.

The light-bulb moment

Sainsbury's is one of Fairtrade's largest retailer partners, contributing over £6m per year in Fairtrade Premium across its own-brand range. But until this year, this didn't

include black tea, which had been Rainforest Alliance certified since 2021.

The seeds of change were planted during a Finlays-hosted visit to Kenyan tea farms in 2024, where the Sainsbury's cross-functional team saw what an impact Fairtrade can have with the producers.

"Seeing first-hand the challenges within the supply chain was a real lightbulb moment, where we realised how we could do more through Fairtrade," Helen explains. "You can hear about these issues from the U.K., but nothing substitutes seeing them on the ground." The visit helped solidify the tangible benefits a move to Fairtrade could have and highlighted the need for a multi-stakeholder, long-term approach to supporting tea producers, not just in Kenya, but globally.

Facing the Challenges Head-On

When it comes to the need for greater resilience, there are many areas to choose from in the tea industry – from

climate change and fluctuating commodity prices to gender inequality and child rights. "Climate change is a big one," Helen notes. "Producers need to think more long-term, but are often focused on immediate challenges. And gender rights are a major concern – tea is a predominantly female workforce, and that comes with its own set of challenges. There are some big challenges which we can't fix overnight."

Fairtrade certification offers a framework to address these issues more holistically, empowering producer groups to decide how best to invest the Premiums they receive. "The producer groups need to be driving that decision," Helen says. "We can support them by helping to highlight the salient risks, but the autonomy must be theirs." The additional £1 million in Fairtrade Premium that growers will receive each year represents a significant investment in the future of tea-growing communities. "We know that we can drive significant impact on the back of that additional Fairtrade Premium," Helen adds.

Building Resilience

The bigger picture to Sainsbury's move to Fairtrade for tea comes in the form of its Resilience Building Initiative (RBI), set to launch in 2025. This will bring together producers across tea, coffee and bananas to help create more robust and sustainable supply chains, and ensure the benefits of Fairtrade drive long-lasting, positive impacts. "It's a new concept", explains Helen "that we developed with Fairtrade – and Finlays have been instrumental as well. Through the RBI we're trying to work across key supply chains to share knowledge, insight, and learnings. By working together, we can help build a more sustainable and resilient food system."

Over a century of partnership

Sainsbury's Red Label tea has been enjoyed by people across the U.K. since 1903, and is still on shelves today. Finlays Beverages have been a partner for even longer, supplying Sainsbury's since 1902, something Helen sees as an asset when it comes to ensuring greater resilience in supply chains. "The length of partnership is such a strong

foundation to leverage," she says. "We wouldn't have been able to move to Fairtrade without Finlay Beverages. Their knowledge of supply chains in tea and coffee is essential to what we're doing." Helen also notes the importance of working with suppliers whose sustainability strategies align with their own. "There's a real commonality with the positions of Sainsbury's and Finlays on sustainability, which is exactly the way you want it to be. These are challenging things to work on, so you need to be collaborative to really drive the right level of positive change."

A transformative impact

Thinking to the future, Helen is keen to encourage other retailers and brand owners to follow Sainsbury's lead in moving to Fairtrade. "We want more of the market moving to Fairtrade," she says. "We can't do this alone. But if others step up with us, the impact on the tea industry could be transformative. There's always more we can do and by joining together, we can make a bigger impact through synergies in our supply chains. Through collaboration, we can create a more sustainable and resilient food system."



**BY SAINSBURY'S BLACK TEA
IS 100% FAIRTRADE**

QUALITY TEAS

SINCE 1903

**RED
LABEL**

• RICH & REFRESHING •

by Sainsbury's

80
TEA BAGS



“

We wouldn't have been able to move to Fairtrade without Finlay Beverages. Their knowledge of supply chains in tea and coffee is essential to what we're doing.”



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Business with purpose stands at the core of everything we do and that we stand for as a responsible, progressive organisation. Sainsbury's moving its tea to Fairtrade will have a huge impact on the day-to-day lives of our growing community, both now and into the long-term. It's a move I am personally incredibly proud to be part of.”

Sally McCarthy, Acting Head of Sales, Finlay Beverages



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Through our partnership, the Fair-trade Premium that farmers and workers will earn will increase by an estimated £1,000,000 annually, having a huge impact on the people behind the Sainsbury's tea we love, their families and communities. Sainsbury's commitment is incredibly significant because it contributes towards creating more sustainable and resilient food systems, ensuring that farmers have security, are paid a fair price and are supported to build more sustainable production processes and communities. We now call on other companies to join Sainsbury's, alongside M&S, Co-op, Waitrose, Greggs and Clipper, by choosing Fairtrade certification for tea and collaborating with us to build a more sustainable tea sector. Through our partnership with Sainsbury's, farmers and workers will also be supported to invest in long-term approaches to address critical environmental and social risks affecting them and their businesses.”

Kerrina Thorogood, Partnerships Director, Fairtrade Foundation





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Helen Buckley - Biography

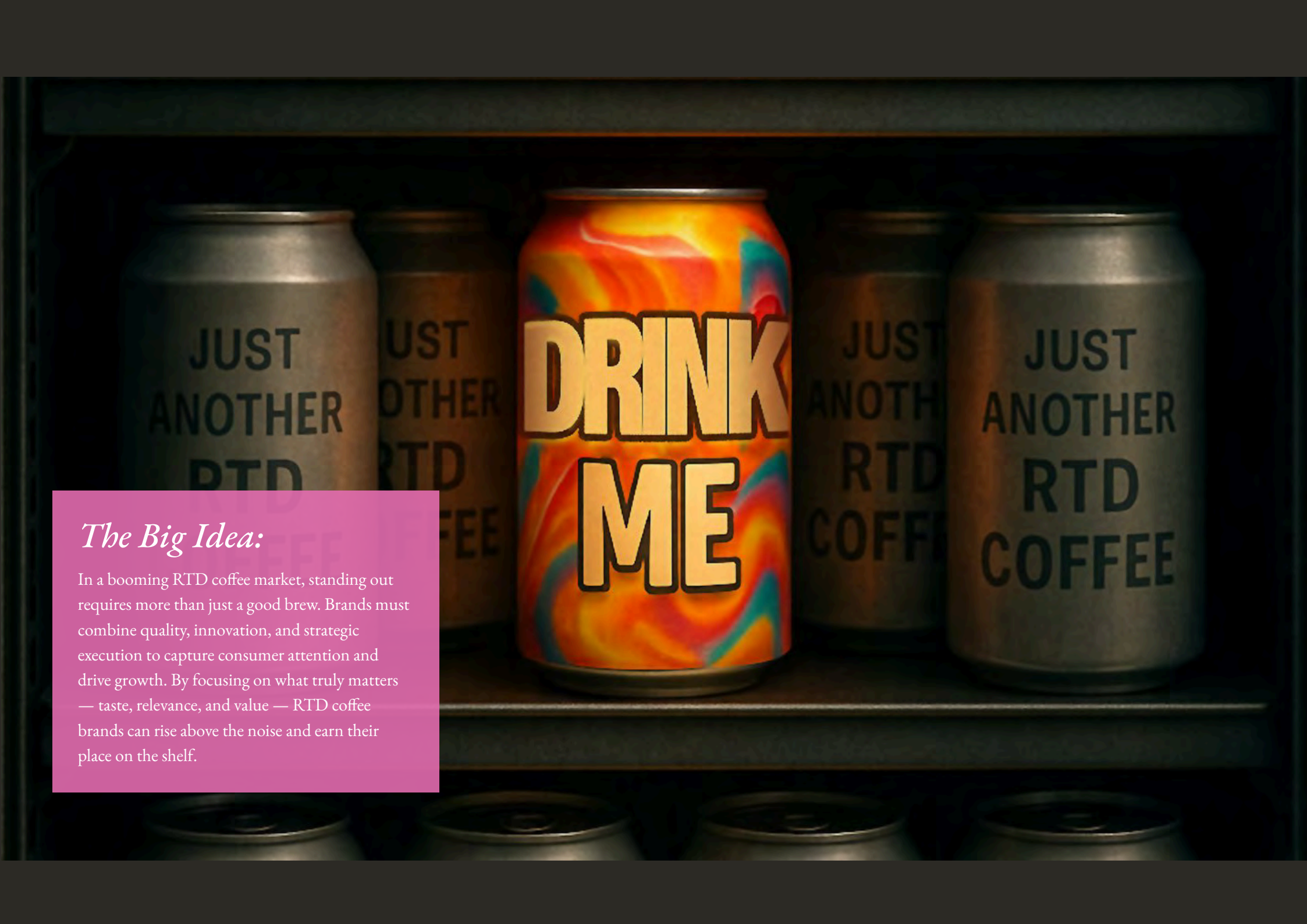
Helen has over 24 years of experience in retail and manufacturing across various product areas. Passionate about food, she's committed to sourcing products responsibly and understanding supply chains. For the past 15 years, she has held several roles at Sainsbury's and is currently the Director of Technical for Grocery and General Merchandise. Before that, she worked in technical roles at Tesco and in chilled food manufacturing. Outside of work, Helen enjoys time with family and friends, cooking, eating out, and skiing.”



DRINK ME

Amid the noise of the RTD Coffee Category, *Erika Fiadeiro* offers seven ways brands can win on the shelf



A photograph of a refrigerator shelf filled with cans of Ready-to-Drink (RTD) coffee. In the center, a can with a vibrant, multi-colored (orange, yellow, red, and blue) abstract design and the words "DRINK ME" in large, bold, yellow-outlined letters stands out. It is flanked by several identical, plain silver cans with the text "JUST ANOTHER RTD COFFEE" in black. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the central can against the darker background of the others.

The Big Idea:

In a booming RTD coffee market, standing out requires more than just a good brew. Brands must combine quality, innovation, and strategic execution to capture consumer attention and drive growth. By focusing on what truly matters — taste, relevance, and value — RTD coffee brands can rise above the noise and earn their place on the shelf.

DRINK ME

Walk down any beverage aisle and you'll see it: a sea of ready-to-drink (RTD) coffee options, vying for your attention. From single-serve cans to multi-serve bottles, the category has exploded, and retailers are racing to keep up.

According to Nielsen [EPOS Scan Data, 2025], the **U.S. RTD coffee market has grown dramatically from \$2.6B in 2019 to \$3.7B in 2024** equating to +7% CAGR. With this growth, it is harder than ever for brands to cut through and many are asking, "In such a crowded landscape, how can we truly stand out?"

At Finlays Solutions, we have a long track record of partnering with some of the best loved RTD coffee brands, and from our experience, here are the key factors that separate the winners from the rest.

1. A unique value proposition

A standout RTD coffee product begins with a clear and compelling value proposition. Whether it's a bold new

flavor, a sustainability story, or a unique brewing method, brands must offer something unique that resonates. Consumers are drawn to products that tell a story – especially one that aligns with their values or lifestyle.

2. Target market fit

Is your product designed for busy professionals, health-conscious millennials, or indulgent treat-seekers? The most successful RTD coffees speak directly to their target market's preferences, habits, and aspirations. A tailored proposition and packaging make all the difference.

3. Expert formulation is key

Flavor and quality are non-negotiable. With so many options available, consumers won't settle for mediocre taste, however good the packaging looks. Brands that invest in premium ingredients, innovative brewing techniques, and balanced flavor profiles are more likely to earn repeat purchases. Whether it's a smooth cold brew or a creamy latte, taste is king.

4. Functional Benefits

Today's consumers want more from their beverages. RTD coffee products that offer functional benefits such as added protein, adaptogens, or energy-boosting ingredients are becoming mainstream. These added features not only enhance the product's appeal but also allow brands to tap into wellness trends and expand their reach.



At Finlays Solutions, we have a long track record of partnering with some of the best loved RTD coffee brands, and from our experience, here are the key factors that separate the winners from the rest ”

5. Even the best product needs visibility

Strategic marketing campaigns, in fluencer partnerships, and in-store sampling can drive awareness and trial. Sampling, in particular, is one of the most effective ways to convert curious shoppers into loyal customers. Creative storytelling and engaging visuals also help build brand identity.

6. Placement matters

Brands that secure prime shelf space and build strong relationships with retailers have a competitive edge. A well-executed distribution strategy ensures that products are available where and when consumers want them — whether that's grocery stores, convenience outlets, or online.

7. Pricing Strategy

Price positioning can make or break a product. Premium pricing may work for artisanal or functional RTD coffees, while value pricing appeals to mass-market consumers. The key is to align pricing with perceived value and ensure it fits within the competitive landscape.



Success Stories from 2025

Two standout products from this year illustrate these principles in action.

International Delight's "Bridgerton" and "Love is Blind" themed RTD coffees leveraged pop culture appeal and indulgent flavors to drive strong sales, particularly among Gen Z and millennial consumers.

Meanwhile, STōK Decaf Cold Brew filled a gap in the market for high-quality, caffeine-free options, earning praise for its smooth taste and clean label.



Erika Fiadeiro
Director, Coffee Marketing
Finlays Solutions

BEYOND THE BEAN

Ashan Perera explores coffee's
strategic rise in the Middle East



The Big Idea:

The Middle East is rapidly emerging as a major market for premium coffee, driven by evolving tastes and ambitious governments. Finlays is helping brands in the region to leverage this momentum by offering sustainable, innovative coffee solutions tailored to regional needs.



BEYOND THE BEAN

The Middle East is witnessing a rapid transformation in its coffee industry, underpinned by a deep-rooted coffee culture and accelerating demand across both traditional and modern formats.

The region, historically associated with qahwa (Arabic coffee), is now one of the fastest growing markets globally for premium and speciality coffee. According to Mordor Intelligence, the Middle East and Africa coffee markets are projected to grow at a CAGR of +7% between 2024 and 2029, driven by shifting consumer preferences and increasing urbanization.

Countries such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar are leading this growth. The UAE alone has over 4,000 coffee related outlets, while Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 includes direct investment in local coffee farming and roasting as means to diversify the economy.

Changing tastes

Consumers in the middle east are becoming more discerning, increasingly demanding traceability, ethical sourcing and new product formats and portfolios – from cold brew, ready-to-drink to functional blends infused with adaptogens and botanicals. Think cardamom-infused brews, date-sweetened elixirs or saffron botanicals paired with natural caffeine, alongside health focused functional coffees blending natural botanicals with ginger, moringa or hibiscus.

A strategic inflection point

For Finlays, this is more than just a trend – it's a strategic inflection point for innovation, collaboration and sustainable growth. With over 250 years of experience in natural beverages and a robust global supply chain with

expertise across multiple origins and extract facilities, Finlays is uniquely positioned to support and collaborate with Middle East brands, retailers and manufacturers in developing high-quality differentiated coffee products.

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Our Middle East office, located at the Dubai Multi Commodity centre is ideally placed to help customers in the region capitalise on the growth in coffee. Finlays' strong presence across Kenya, Sri Lanka, North and South America ensures consistent access to ethically-sourced green coffee, while our extraction and R&D capabilities in the U.K., Africa, USA, China and East Asia allow us to co-create bespoke solutions in cold brew, soluble and botanical infused coffee.

Sustainability remains at the heart of our operations, aligning closely with the Middle East's increasing commitment to environmental responsibility, product differentiation and premiumization.



Ashan Perera

Business Development, Finlays Dubai

Unlocking growth

As the Middle East reshapes its beverage landscape, Finlays invites partners to unlock the next chapter of growth where quality, safety, care, trust, innovation and purpose converge. Be it supporting local roasting initiatives, expanding RTD portfolios, collaboration with major brands or developing custom blends, we bring deep industry expertise and a collaborative mind-set to fulfilling every opportunity.





COLD RUSH

Megan Conceição explains how clean energy drinks are redefining the category



Product
Focus

The Big Idea:

A new wave of energy drinks made with natural, functional ingredients is reshaping the category by attracting young, health-conscious women. The products are centered on wellness benefits such as hydration, mood, and focus—moving beyond just a caffeine boost.

COLD RUSH

Energy drinks have long been favorites of exam-weary college kids and Huber-man-inspired gym enthusiasts alike. But as the functional beverage space continues to heat-up, a new wave of energy drinks is breathing life into the category, bringing with it a broader, more diverse consumer base.

Traditionally, energy drinks have delivered exactly what's promised on the label: a quick boost of energy, powered by high doses of synthetically sourced caffeine, paired with sugar and artificial flavorings. However, their short-lived surge often comes with a cost: jitters, the infamous crash, and growing concerns over adverse long-term health effects.

Consumer perceptions have reflected this. A 2019 Mintel study found that 66% of female consumers viewed energy drinks as both unhealthy and unnatural, compared to 45% of male consumers. This disparity in perception is mirrored in consumer demographics, with the category traditionally attracting a predominantly male audience.

Next generation

Today, a new generation of energy drinks are reshaping both the product landscape and consumer perceptions. Formulated with better-for-you ingredients such as natural caffeine and coconut water, and functional ingredients like ginseng and ashwagandha, these beverages offer a more holistic approach to fighting the mid-afternoon slump, focusing on hydration, mood improvement, and mental focus. In doing so, they are redefining what an energy drink can be. These better-for-you alternatives are quickly establishing themselves as category mainstays – this segment of energy drinks has seen the biggest increase in consumption between January 2023 and 2024, driven largely by the entry of young women into the category (Mintel, 2025).

Brands such as Alani-Nu are leading the charge. With sleek, social media friendly packaging, 200mg of caffeine, and added biotin (a vitamin that promises to support healthy hair and nail growth), the brand has become a viral success amongst millennial and gen-Z women. Similarly, Bloom Sparkling Energy - the new energy drink spin-off of the

popular supplement powder brand with a strong social media following – features natural caffeine from green coffee extract, along with prebiotics, and apple cider vinegar. It touts benefits for mental focus and metabolism to cater to its young, health-focused, and mainly female demographic.

What's Next

Younger women are poised to drive the next wave of growth in the energy drink category. To resonate with this audience, brands should continue to focus on flavor and functionality from natural, recognizable sources. According to recent Mintel GNPD data, brands targeting this demographic have found success with hybrid formats - particularly energy drinks that blend tea and coffee (Mintel, 2025). As specialists in the botanical and natural caffeine space, Finlays are well placed to support the next generation of energy drinks.



Megan Conceição
Insight Analyst at Finlays Solutions

WATCH: Megan Canceicao on the evolution of the Energy Drink Category

Finlays
Solutions



Megan on clean
energy drinks

1.
How is the energy
drink category
evolving?

The background of the entire image is a photograph of a vast tea plantation. The tea bushes are in the foreground, filling the lower half of the frame. In the distance, a line of trees separates the plantation from a body of water, possibly a lake or a wide river. The sun is setting or rising in the center of the horizon, creating a bright orange and yellow glow that spreads across the sky and reflects on the water. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds, and the overall atmosphere is peaceful and scenic.

THE RISE OF ARGENTINE TEA

Diego Solleveld explains why Argentine Tea
is the perfect fit for European markets

A wide-angle photograph of a tea plantation at sunrise. The foreground is filled with rows of lush green tea bushes. In the background, rolling hills are visible under a sky with soft, wispy clouds. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and lens flare effects across the scene.

The Big Idea:

Led by Finlays Argentina, Argentine tea is gaining traction in Europe due to its consistent quality, versatile flavor profile, and strong supply-chain resilience.

THE RISE OF ARGENTINE TEA

When you think about the origin of tea consumed in Europe, you probably think about Kenya, India or Sri Lanka. But, thanks to its quality, consistency and environmentally responsible production, Argentina is a growing country which is quickly gaining ground.

With European consumers increasingly prioritizing natural and ethically produced goods, Argentina has emerged as a competitive supplier, which meets the growing demands of this market.

Three reasons behind this surge

There are several benefits of Argentine tea for European customers. Firstly, despite being a seasonal tea-growing country, Argentina offers excellent consistency of production, ensuring that you get the same tea, to the same specification, all year round.

Argentine tea also offers excellent versatility of flavor profile for the European market. While it is traditionally

associated with RTD beverages, thanks to its clarity when iced, Argentine tea in fact pairs well with milk, making it a good fit for blends for the European market – or indeed anywhere else where tea is drunk with milk.

Finally, Argentina offers strong supply chain resilience by offering a direct, unencumbered route to European markets, avoiding the Red Sea shipping channel which has been experiencing issues since 2020.

Argentine tea at scale

As the largest global supplier of Argentine tea, Finlays Argentina is leading the charge to bring the benefits of the product to European brand owners at scale. Not only do we offer exceptional consistency of production, but also trusted Finlays quality and sensory excellence, to provide an expert approach to flavor matching. We are also responsive and agile to our customers, working closely with them to develop products and configure production processes to meet their needs.





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Not only do we offer exceptional consistency of production, but also trusted Finlays quality and sensory excellence, to provide an expert approach to flavor matching.”

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Clean tea

Thanks to Finlays, Argentine tea has a growing reputation as a “clean tea” due to our minimal use of agro-chemicals. One example of this is Pyrrolizidine Alkaloids (PA) – compounds that can be introduced during mechanized harvesting, when weeds are unintentionally collected with tea leaves. Finlays has been able to control and significantly reduce contamination risks through improved harvesting techniques and weed management strategies, ensuring our products meet EU standards for PA in a controlled way.

One such innovation is the introduction of livestock – such as sheep and cows – into tea plantations. These animals naturally manage weed growth, as they feed on them, reducing the need for herbicides while simultaneously improving soil coverage. We also compost organic waste from our processing plants, creating nutrient-rich material that regenerates the soil and decreases reliance on chemical fertilizers.

This approach reflects a broader commitment to regenerative agriculture, improving biodiversity, soil structure, and long-term productivity factors increasingly

valued by environmentally conscious consumers and international markets.

A Promising Future

With its combination of high-quality and responsible production, effective residue management, limited use of agrochemicals, and focus on sustainability, Argentine tea is well-positioned to expand its presence in Europe. Companies such as Finlays Argentina demonstrate how ethical, innovative practices can meet both regulatory demands and consumer preferences.

As European demand for clean, responsible, and flavorful tea continues to grow, Argentine tea stands out — not just for what it is, but for how it’s made. It offers a product that satisfies strict safety standards, while supporting the environment and local communities.



Diego Solleveld
*Commercial Director, Finlays
Argentina*

BREWING A LEGACY

Judith Jason sits down with Ceylon Tea legend Nishan Wickramaratna

BREWING A LEGACY

With a career spanning nearly four decades, Nishan Wickramaratna is a venerable bastion of the Sri Lankan Tea industry. Joining Finlays Colombo in 1986 after spotting an advert posted at his school, today Nishan is an Executive Director and the company's most senior Tea Taster, while also serving as a mentor to many young people as they embark on their careers in tea.

Nishan's is an inspiring story of hard work, dedication and loyalty, and of course, the proud heritage of Ceylon Tea. To find out more, we sat down with him to learn more about his role at Finlays, his achievements and the future of Ceylon Tea.

What has changed in the world of tea over the last 40 years?

So much has changed. The new generation of tea consumers is looking for health and wellness benefits, sustainable sourcing and packaging, as well as detailed

information about the ingredients. This has given rise to beverages such as bubble tea and fruit and herbal teas recording tremendous growth compared to the consumption of tea in its traditional form.

While Ceylon tea is loved the world over, it is always seeking to grow new markets. For example, in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, the U.K., Egypt, and Pakistan were amongst the top three buyers of Ceylon Tea, but this has now shifted more to the Middle Eastern region.

What makes Ceylon tea so special?

Ceylon tea is special because of the unique aromas and flavors imparted to the teas, which are grown and produced across Sri Lanka's diverse agro climatic regions. This yields teas with distinct characteristics, ranging from the low-grown teas with their strong liquor and taste, to the high-grown teas with their delicate aromas and flavor, including the exquisite flavory teas from the Nuwara Eliya region, which are renowned as the 'Champagne of Ceylon Teas'.

What advice would you give to someone starting out a career in tea today?

Be prepared to get your hands dirty, learn about all the intricacies of manufacture, production and export, put yourself in the shoes of the customer/consumer, and be ready for an interesting journey. Make every day count and think of ways and means of continuous improvement and how you can delight the end consumer.

What are you most proud of?

Handling the flagship brand of the company – Alwazah Tea – for over two decades, and seeing it growing from 2 million kilograms to 4.5 million kilograms by 2013.

I'm proud of my involvement in the launch of the Istikan brand in Syria when that market opened after liberalisation of imports in 1990, and achieving a volume of 1.3 million kilogrammes over a span of 10 to 12 years - a significant achievement.

More recently, our customer Suntory has used the words 'Ceylon Tea' on a product in their Craft Boss range, the largest growing RTD brand in Japan. This was only possible due to the trust and strong partnership Suntory has with Finlays Colombo.

What excites you about the future of Finlays Colombo?

The foundation for growth has been laid, and our energetic, young team is raring to capture a larger share of the value-added tea market globally. The launch of our multi-origin tea blends to target the premium segment is another exciting prospect for us, helping us achieve substantial growth over the coming years. Finally, I'm pleased to say that Finlays Colombo is poised to take advantage of its state-of-the-art machinery, the world-class printing and packaging facilities available in Sri Lanka, and the country's ideal geographical location to capture a large volume of trade.



Judith Jason

Executive Secretary, Finlays Colombo

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For its growth and development, Ceylon Tea must capitalize on its unique taste, flavor and aroma characteristics”.

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Thinking forward another 40 years, what place will Ceylon Tea have in the world?

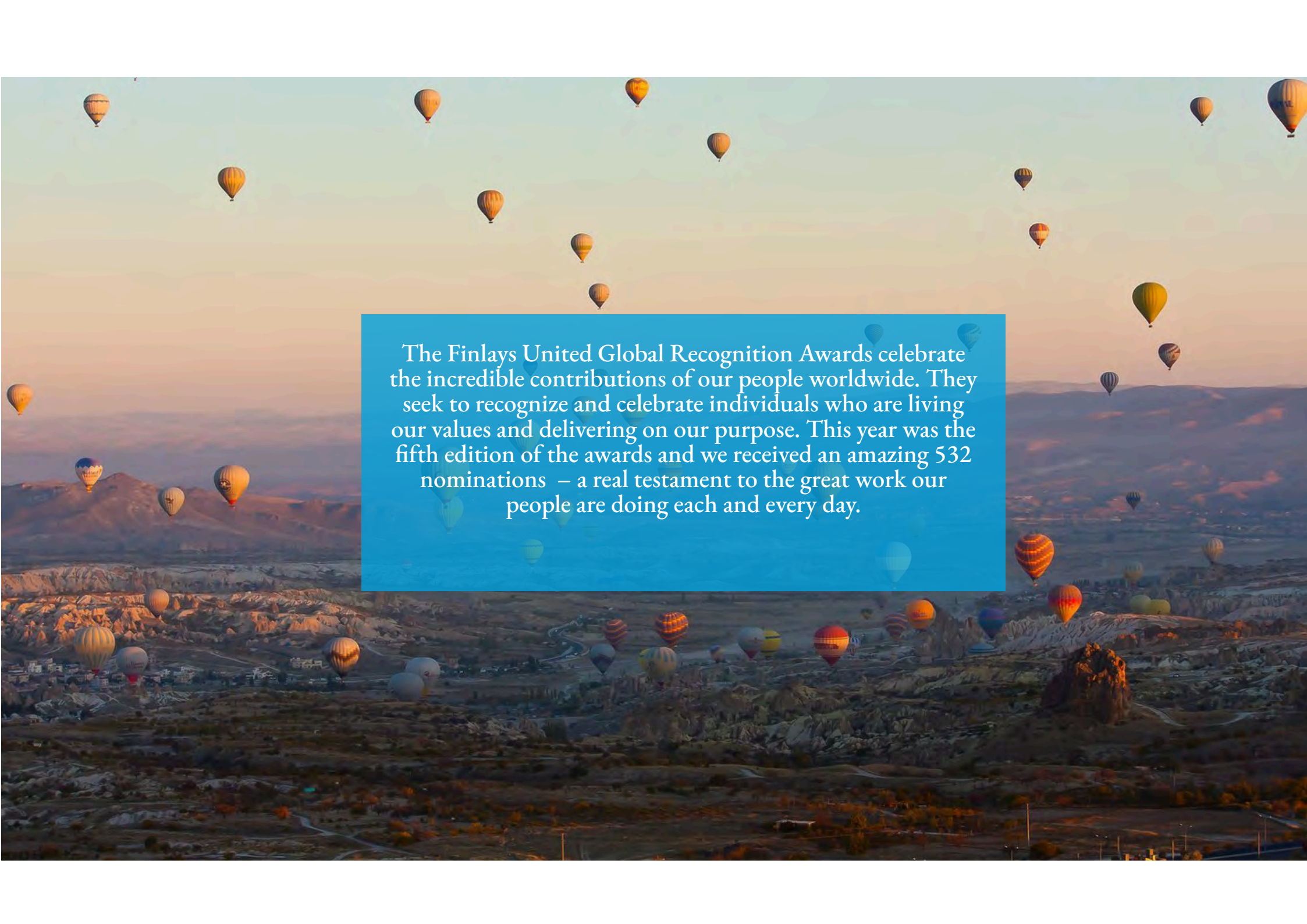
For its growth and development, Ceylon Tea must capitalize on its unique taste, flavor and aroma characteristics, while looking to cater to emerging consumer segments to ensure its continued popularity. Consumers in the Middle Eastern region will continue to love and favor Ceylon Tea for the next 40 years and more, and it will be up to the marketers to come up with innovative and appealing packaging, whilst capitalizing on the romance associated with consuming Ceylon Tea.



The background of the entire image is a photograph of a vast valley filled with hundreds of hot air balloons. The balloons are in various colors, including orange, yellow, blue, and white, and are scattered across the sky at different altitudes. The valley below is rugged and rocky, with some small settlements visible. The sky is a clear, pale blue, suggesting a bright day.

HIGHER PURPOSE

Rachael Steed introduces the winners of the Finlays United Awards

An aerial photograph of a vast valley filled with numerous hot air balloons. The balloons are in various colors, including orange, yellow, blue, and white, and are scattered across the sky. The landscape below is rugged and hilly, with some small settlements visible. The sky is a mix of soft orange and pale blue, suggesting the time is either dawn or dusk.

The Finlays United Global Recognition Awards celebrate the incredible contributions of our people worldwide. They seek to recognize and celebrate individuals who are living our values and delivering on our purpose. This year was the fifth edition of the awards and we received an amazing 532 nominations – a real testament to the great work our people are doing each and every day.

HIGHER PURPOSE



ACTING FOR THE LONG-TERM AWARD

This award celebrates people who have “done the right thing today for a better tomorrow”. This means ensuring we look after our people, the planet, and always seek to make Finlays and our partners stronger for the future.

Winner: Tom Blackwall, Finlay Beverages

Tom Blackwall was recognized for his leadership on La Celia, a low-carbon coffee produced solely by women. His dedication over the past four years has led to this coffee being stocked by Sainsbury's, one of our biggest U.K. customers. Tom is continuing to build La Celia's success by increasing the number of farmers involved from 16 to 32, with a view to using this project as a blueprint for our wider business.



TAKING ACCOUNTABILITY AWARD

This award is for those who have taken ownership of their words, actions and results. It recognizes people who have done what it takes to get the job done, delivered for our colleagues, customers or partners, and, who are accountable for their actions.

Winner: Paul Houlker, Finlay Beverages

Paul Houlker was recognized for winning business with one of the U.K.'s biggest supermarket chains. Starting from scratch, Paul worked with the customer and internal stakeholders to build engagement and showcase the benefits of partnering with Finlays across Tea and Coffee.



SAFETY CHAMPION AWARD

This award is for those who have demonstrated excellent safety leadership and exemplify our Always Safe ethos.

Winner: Kapila Navaratna, Finlays Colombo

Under Kapila's leadership, our Haldummulla team in Colombo maintained a 100% safety record, completing 295 safe days out of 295. Kapila's focus on safety and risk management fostered a culture of accountability and responsibility.

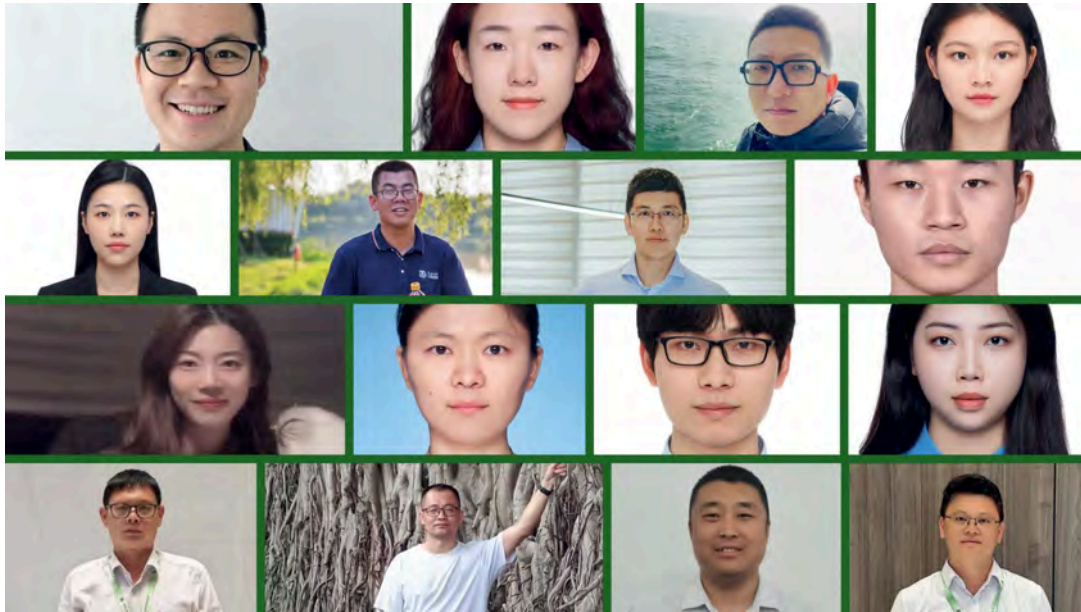


DELIVERING OUR PURPOSE AWARD

This award recognizes those who have delivered on our Purpose of "Empowering our customers to create a world where every sip brings joy".

Winner: Sally McCarthy and Tom Blackwall, Finlay Beverages

Sally and Tom supported Sainsbury's, one of our largest U.K. customers, in moving its tea offering to Fairtrade, representing a significant step forward for the industry. Their efforts contribute to a world where every sip brings joy across the supply chain.



SUCCEEDING TOGETHER AWARD

This award recognizes those who have collaborated to deliver excellence and have valued each other's contributions. This value is all about teamwork, support, encouragement, recognition and leveraging the wealth of expertise that exists at Finlays.

Winner: A Cross-Functional Team from Damin

This team, including Yang Yuanwang, Wang Xiangyue, Zhang Shuguang, Chen Yizhen, Zhang Li, Xu Huiwen, Liu Jia, Liu Bohu, Zhang Yalan, Zhu Wenjia, Zhou Zhichao, Gao Zhumin, Zheng Huoxiong, Huang Nanhu, Zhang Xiaoliang, and Cai Yongyu, delivered a remarkable revenue increase with a key customer. They worked tirelessly on new projects, including innovative offerings and competitive flavor profiles.



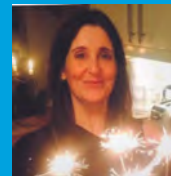
DOING BETTER EACH TIME AWARD

This award is for those who have challenged themselves and others to build a stronger Finlays. It recognizes people who have found better ways to do tasks, who have delighted our customers or stakeholders, and who have been ambitious in their goals.

Winners: Commercial Team from Finalys Solutions

The team, comprising Ryan Collins, EJ Sousa, Mike Dascoli, Marisa Bouley, and Don Noah, secured new business with a key customer. This achievement marked the first sale of a finished solution from the tea extract portfolio, setting the stage for future successes.

Congratulations to all the winners, finalists, and nominees for their outstanding achievements and contributions to Finlays!



Rachael Steed
Group Head of HR



SUCCESSING TOGETHER

Tamie Hutchins explores how Finlays' Women in Business Networks are empowering all and creating a sense of belonging



The Big Idea:

Since 2018, Finlays Women in Business Networks program has gone from strength to strength. By focusing on community, listening, and especially practical action, FWIB has created a sense of belonging and empowered women at all career stages to thrive and lead.

SUCCEEDING TOGETHER

My journey with the Our People pillar of Finlays' Sustainability Strategy began with a milestone moment — setting the first target for women in leadership and taking ownership of the plan for its achievement.

In support of this, the concept of setting up some kind of Women in Business group came up quite early in discussions, and started in earnest in 2018 with the launch of the U.K. Finlays Women in Business (FWIB). Since then, FWIB networks have grown around the world, and have proven to be one of the most significant elements of the progress we have made.

So I'm delighted to share our FWIB story with you, not only to celebrate the progress we have made, but in the hope of inspiring others to follow suit.

Local roots

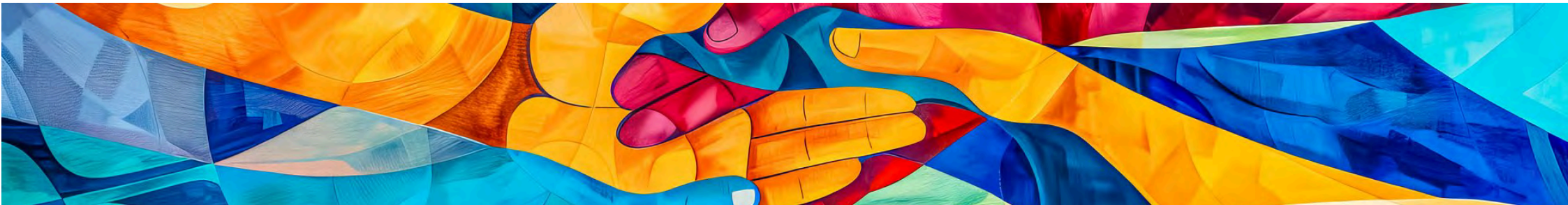
The first Finlays Women in Business (FWIB) network launched in the U.K. in 2018 with the ambition to attract, develop, and advance women in the business. We set out to challenge established norms, build a strong network of women and allies, and drive practical improvements beyond day-to-day operations.

Guided by employee feedback and informed by industry best practices, the U.K. group took swift, impactful action. Early successes included enhanced maternity provisions and the introduction of a menopause policy and support group — key milestones that signaled not just process improvements, but a cultural shift grounded in empathy, care, and listening. These changes reflected a deepening understanding that supporting women through all life stages is essential to building a workplace where everyone can thrive.

Going global

Based on its success in the U.K., FWIB is now a global movement. A group formed at Finlays Argentina in 2023, building on the company's milestone of welcoming the first women into tea factory roles in Argentina. Their focus is on reflection, training, and awareness around gender equality within the workplace.

The U.S. network launched in 2024, with strong engagement and support. Building on that momentum, new initiatives for 2025 include the launch of the "Women in Production Training Club"—a pilot program focused exclusively on women working in production and warehouse roles. Participants are nominated by their managers and HR teams and will take part in training designed to develop business acumen and leadership skills, helping to pave the way for new career opportunities.



These events help strengthen networks, build confidence, and provide tools for career development. As a result, participation more than doubled, and the proportion of women in leadership roles also rose - demonstrating the network's growing influence. Meanwhile, in Kenya, women from two Finlays sites are coming together to launch their own support structure — sharing insights, shaping policy, and contributing to global efforts. This cross-site collaboration further demonstrates how FWIB has become a platform for shared purpose, not just local action. A consistent strength across all regions has been the focus on community, learning, and listening. In the U.K., a biannual survey



FWIB has become a growing global community, rooted in belonging, where people work together to shape a workplace that uplifts everyone.

Tamie Hutchins



ensures that FWIB priorities reflect what people truly need, and activities such as focus groups, external speakers, and skills workshops help build knowledge and connection.

Looking ahead

In 2025, the first global International Women's Day (IWD) celebration brought all regions together – offices and shopfloor alike – in a unified recognition of progress and purpose. It was a landmark moment that captured the inclusive ethos at the heart of FWIB: that every employee, no matter their location or role, deserves to feel seen, supported, and empowered.

Looking ahead, FWIB is shifting focus to women's leadership development, mentoring, and career progression – ensuring that a more representative leadership pipeline is built, and that women at all stages of their careers have the support they need to grow. This initiative is a testament to what's possible when employees lead change from within. While it began with the goal of gender fairness, FWIB has become something far more impactful: a growing global community, rooted in belonging, where people work together to shape a workplace that uplifts everyone.



Tamie Hutchins
HR Director



THIS MUCH I KNOW... WITH COKI FISSEHA

Words of wisdom from *Coki Fisseha*





Coki Fisseha has been with Finlays for 12 years. After a long career in R&D, she moved into a commercial role in 2020. Here she shares her pearls of wisdom including her passion for creation, the power of the pivot, and why you never know where the next beverage innovation will come from....

THIS MUCH I KNOW...WITH COKI FISSEHA

- 01** **Living in other cultures shapes you as a person.** I was born in Ethiopia, and because my dad was a diplomat, I lived in lots of other countries growing up, including India and North Korea. Moving around so much shaped me as a person and taught me so much about how to celebrate life and celebrate culture.
- 02** **I believe in the power of the pivot.** My first degree was in engineering, but I realised it wasn't for me and switched to study culinary nutrition. And after a long time working in R&D roles, around five years ago I moved into a sales role. It was overwhelming at first, but I love my new role so much now. I get to work with wonderful people and customers, travel the country... and nothing beats seeing a product out on the shelves that you have worked on. The best advice I've been given is "You'll figure it out" and my career is testament to this!
- 03** **An R&D background is extremely useful when it comes to supporting our customers.** Having technical product knowledge makes it so easy to talk to customers, and I can leverage my passion and experience to help them solve challenges and provide expert guidance. If any product developers out there are thinking of making the switch, I'd highly recommend it!
- 04** **Product developers are the unsung heroes of the beverage industry.** I'm always in awe of product developers, and what they're bringing to market. There're helping to drive our industry forward and I'm always excited to see the next big innovation.
- 05** **You never know where the next innovation is going to come from.** These days ideas for beverages can come from anywhere. There's so much freedom of expression on social media and anyone, anywhere can create a product in their kitchen that takes off and shares their culture and values with the world. It's an incredibly exciting and dynamic time in beverages.

06 I've always had a passion for creation. I've always loved experimenting with new flavor combinations in my kitchen and trying them out on people. I think that's why I started an Instagram channel called Bevies for Foodies with my colleague Stephanie Thornton. This is all about us sharing the latest trends and product launches with the wider world. Make sure you drop us a follow @BeviesForFoodies.

07 Finlays has always been so supportive of my career. I've been with Finlays for 12 years, and whether it was when I was in R&D, or since I made the switch into sales, I've always felt so supported. I love the community and culture here – and once you're in, it's hard to leave!

08 I'm a big believer in learning from your neighbors and seeing where it takes you. There are so many cultures around us, it's easy to forget how many wonderful things there are in the world that we can learn from. I was in South Korea last year and noticed how big matcha was, and now almost overnight in the US, everyone wants matcha. I love how globally, we're emerging as one.



WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED READING THIS EDITION OF 1750

Please send any comments and feedback to the Editor:
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