

February 6, 2026

“Major sporting events like the World Cup are powerful demand catalysts for FMCG—but growth is not automatic. What separates winning retailers and brands is their ability to remove friction and anticipate demand before it hits. With one-third of World Cup viewers planning to shop a week or more in advance, readiness ahead of marquee matchups becomes critical. The most intense rivalries don’t just draw the biggest audiences—they drive the largest spikes in food and beverage demand.”



Chris Costagli
Vice President,
Thought Leadership
F&B Insights Lead,
NielsenIQ

Did you know...

- Younger consumers are more likely to watch World Cup games this year; Millennials are **1.4x more likely** to be watching?¹
- Hispanic households are **1.6x more likely** to watch World Cup games this year?¹
- Upper income households are **1.3x more likely** to be serving non-alcoholic beer at World Cup parties they host?¹



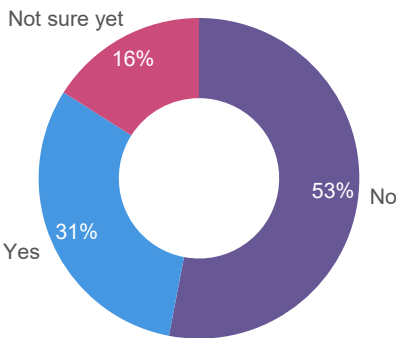
Rivalry on the pitch will drive demand

Implications for the Food & Beverage Industry

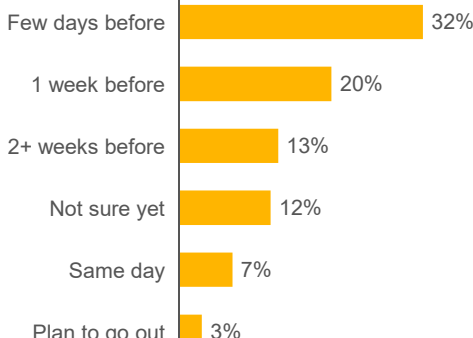
The World Cup rewards precision

The World Cup 2026 games represent a high-stakes consumption moment defined by precision. Nearly one-in-three households plan to watch, led by men, Hispanic households, and Millennials, with demand clustering around rivalries and highly-anticipated games. Demand will surge around marquee matchups, rewarding retailers and brands that anticipate when and where consumers gather, not just that they do.

WORLD CUP VIEWING INTENTIONS¹



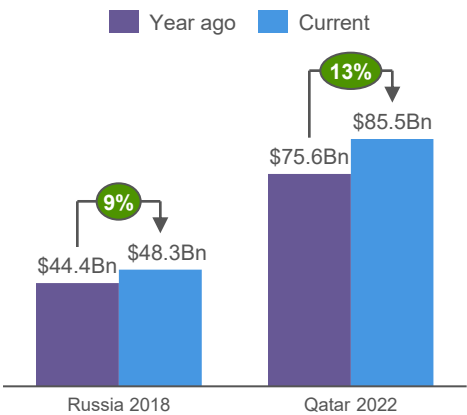
WHEN VIEWERS INTEND TO SHOP FOR THE WORLD CUP¹
(AMONG THOSE PLANNING TO WATCH)



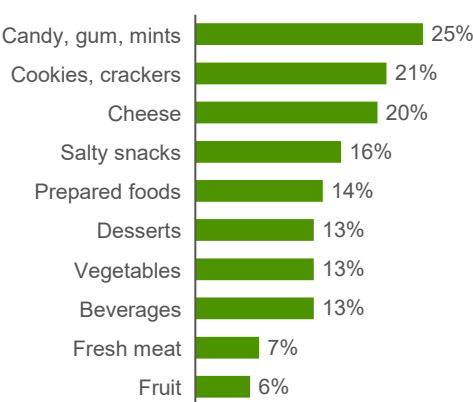
Health and hosting are the new growth engines to win World Cup 26'

The last two World Cups coincided with major U.S. holidays—Russia '18 over Independence Day and Qatar '22 heading into Christmas—periods when consumer spending was already elevated. Yet even against those holiday backdrops, year-over-year comparisons show how meaningfully the World Cup can influence purchasing behavior. Plan for this dual demand and be better positioned to convert intensity into incrementality.

F&B DOLLAR SALES CHANGE DURING PRIOR WORLD CUP GAMES²



DOLLAR GROWTH DURING QATAR '22 WORLD CUP VS. YEAR AGO²



Industry Analysis Sources: ¹NIQ, BASES Quick Question Omnibus Survey, n=2,006, January 2026; ²NIQ, Retail Measurement Services, 10-Year Database, Total US xAOC + Conv., Total Food & Beverage; Russia 2026 5-Weeks Ending 7/14/2018 Vs. Year Ago, Qatar 2022 5-Weeks Ending 12/24/2022 Vs. Year Ago; ³Reuters, (2025, November 19). U.S. tourism expected to score big with FIFA World Cup, <https://www.reuters.com/sports/soccer/us-tourism-expected-score-big-with-fifa-world-cup-2025-11-19/>

The takeaway...

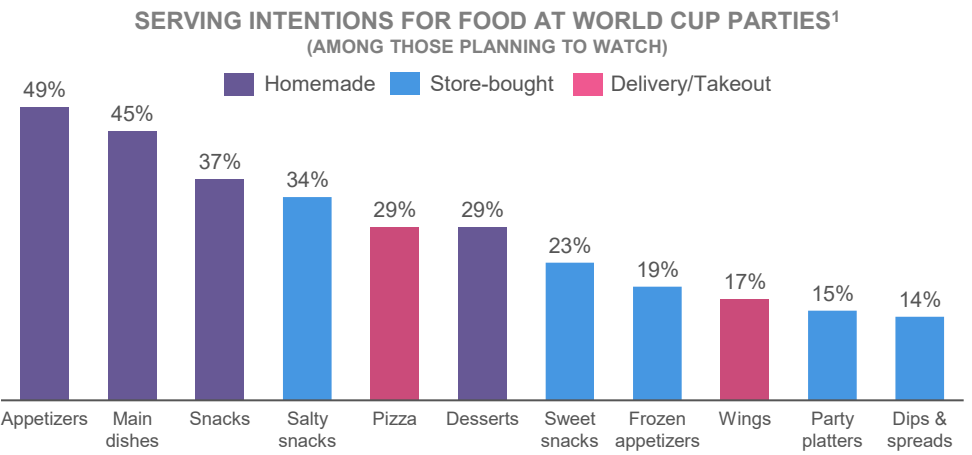
- Assortment and availability will determine the retailers and brands that win World Cup shopping occasions
- Demand will arrive in compressed, high-velocity bursts tied to match schedules, rivalries, and the most highly-anticipated matches
- Party hosts will define the “success” of their event by how well it accommodated different needs; it’s less about how much is offered and more about how thoughtfully the options are assembled

Your next move...

- Treat World Cup host cities as distinct markets, tailoring assortments, displays, and promotions to the teams being hosted as well as relevant cultural preferences
- Align inventory and messaging for advance stock-up and quick replenishment
- Plan for intentional consumption whether its ingredients or ready-made, alcohol or alcohol-free, or indulgent or benefit-forward BetterFor™

World Cup party spreads will feature homemade creations

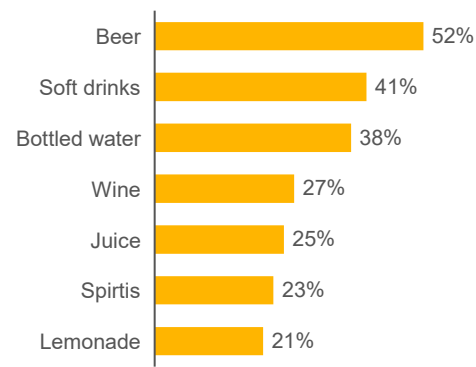
World Cup consumption will be anchored in at-home preparation, driven by both economic pressure and a clear behavioral shift toward control and intention. Packaged foods will still play a role, but as shoppers lean into homemade creations, growth will favor ingredient, component, and complement brands. The opportunity for manufacturers and retailers lies in enabling the occasion—activating shoppers with the building blocks they need.



Choice defines the World Cup pour

Although alcohol will remain a key driver of World Cup beverage consumption, shoppers are planning more diversified beverage assortments for game-day gatherings. Functional beverages, enhanced water, and non-alcoholic options will be part of the mix, reflecting a desire to accommodate varied preferences. Gen Z is 1.9x more likely to be serving non-alcoholic spirits or mocktails, reinforcing the need for an inclusive beverage strategy.¹

SERVING INTENTIONS FOR BEVERAGES AT WORLD CUP PARTIES¹
(AMONG THOSE PLANNING TO WATCH)



Demand localization defines brand performance

Following a meaningful decline in international tourism to the U.S. in 2025, the World Cup is expected to drive renewed global travel tied directly to host markets. With 11 U.S. cities hosting matches, demand will be highly localized and closely linked to game schedules. For retailers in these markets, having the right assortments and inventory levels in place ahead of key matches will be critical to capturing incremental spend.



Questions?

Chris Costagli
VP, F&B Thought Leadership
Chris.Costagli@NielsenIQ.com

For retailers and manufacturers, World Cup-driven success will hinge on precision—having the right products in the right places at exactly the right moments. While food and beverage demand will rise nationally, the true epicenters of consumption will be the 11 U.S. host cities, where residents and international visitors converge. These markets will experience outsized, uneven surges tied to match schedules, rivalries, and travel patterns. Winning the World Cup opportunity will require moving beyond national playbooks and executing with city-level clarity, anticipation, and agility.