

# Corned beef? A matter of class

The middle class is less likely to open a tin of corned beef for dinner or even have bread for breakfast, and they prefer supermarkets to grocers – MaltaToday looks into Malta's consumption patterns. By JAMES DEBONO



THEY don't do corned beef and they prefer supermarkets – that's the middle class for you. And the working class likes it the other way round. They like bread in the morning and prefer grocers.

A MaltaToday survey in food consumption and recreational habits among 300 respondents held between 30 June and 3 July has revealed the class division in taste and preferences across Malta and Gozo. MaltaToday asked respondents the occupation of their family's breadwinner to determine class and social group.

The findings show that Lidl is the popular retail chain in Malta and Gozo, especially with the lower middle class; that most middle class respondents buy their clothes from Sliema, while working class respondents are more likely to buy clothes from Valletta and Paola; and that those aged 16-34 are more influenced by global consumer patterns and likely to eat at McDonalds and drink Coca-Cola, while older people prefer Kinnie and shun the Big Mac.

**Methodology**  
The survey was conducted between Tuesday 30 June and Friday 3 July. 487 persons were randomly chosen from the telephone directory. 300 accepted to be interviewed. The results were weighed to reflect the sex and age balance of the population. The survey has a margin of error of +/-5.7%.

## BREAKFAST

Waking up with cornflakes

OVERALL the majority of the Maltese start their day with a bowl of cereal. While older and working class respondents are more likely to start their day eating bread, younger or more affluent people prefer cereal packs.

### What do you generally eat for breakfast?

	All	By occupational group			By age		
		AB/C1	C2/DE	PE	18-34	35-54	55+
Cereal	44.8%	53.3%	47.9%	34.3%	56.1%	48.8%	34%
Toast/Bread	24.8%	15.6%	27.3%	132.4%	19%	20.9%	29.9%
Just Coffee/Tea	13.3%	9.9%	11.5%	12.5%	10.5%	5.8%	15.3%
Coffee with Biscuits/Cake	4.9%	5.6%	0	8.8%	1.8%	11.6%	5.6%
Fruit	3.5%	5.9%	1.5%	3.9%	3.6%	2.3%	4.2%
Nothing	3%						
Yoghurt	3%						
English Breakfast	1.7%						
Just Milk	1%						

Maltese breakfast table for 41% of Maltese respondents. Kellogg's Special K, a lightly toasted breakfast cereal styling itself as a low-fat cereal is the second most favoured cereal in Malta.

But a substantial 13% do not eat any breakfast, limiting themselves to a cup of coffee or tea and a further 3% simply skip their breakfast. Older people are more likely to start their day drinking their tea or coffee

and nibbled at a piece of cake or biscuits.

While 6% of professionals and managers eat fruit for breakfast, only 1.5% of working-class respondents do the same. Only 3% eat yoghurt for breakfast. But most respondents still buy the product. Only 18% do not buy any yoghurt at all. The Maltese brand Benna is more popular than any of its foreign competitors. And nearly 80% of Maltese prefer local to foreign milk.

### Which cereal brand do you eat most at home?

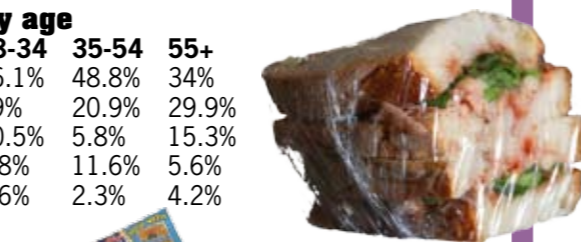
Cornflakes	40.6%
Special K	10.5%
Allbran	4.5%
Fruit 'n Fibre	4.5%
Fitness	4.2%
Weetabix	3.5%
Lidl brand	1.7%
Muesli	1.4%
Others	11.5%
None	17.5%

### Which yoghurt brand do you eat most at home?

Benna	56.3%
Danone	11.2%
Lidl	4.2%
Activia	2.1%
Muller	1.7%
Vitasnella	1.7%
Others	5.3%
None	17.5%

### Do you buy local or imported milk?

Foreign	79.2%
Maltese	16.6%
None	4.2%



## SUPERMARKETS

We like to shop cheap

ONE in every five shop at Lidl, the German price-busting multinational supermarket chain. While Smart Supermarket emerges as the singular most popular supermarket outlet in Malta and Gozo, put together the four Lidl supermarkets already command the largest share of the retail market two years after setting up shop in Malta.

Contrary to the widespread perception that Lidl's appeal is limited to low-income groups struggling to cope with the cost of living – the C1 occupational bracket – in Malta (clerical, vocational and technical workers) are the most likely to shop at Lidl. Even 27% of managers and professionals (AB) shop at Lidl.

A third of respondents still shun supermarkets and shop exclusively from small grocers, which happen to be the preferred choice of older and poorer respondents – an indication that these groups have a lower disposable income, preferring to buy on a daily basis from the grocer. It could also be an indication that pensioners lack the mobility enjoyed by other occupational groups.

While only 15% of the top occupational bracket shop from grocers, 44% of unskilled workers and unemployed people (DE) shop from these outlets. 40% of pensioners also shop from grocers.

### From where we shop for our daily needs

Smart Birkirkara	10.1%
Pavi Qormi	7%
Lidl Luqa	6.3%
Lidl San Gwann	6.3%
Lidl Santa Venera	5.9%
Park Towers Santa Venera	4.6%
Chains Fgura	4.2%
Lidl Safi	2.8%
Chains Zabbar	2.8%
Carter's	2.1%
Tower Sliema	2.1%
Scotts Zabbar	2.1%
Others	16.1%
Grocers only	33.6%

(totals do not add to 100 as some respondents mentioned more than one supermarket)

### Favourite supermarket chains by social class (%)

	Lidl	Smart	Pavi	Chains	Park Tower	Grocer
AB	27.3%	18.2%	12.1%	0	12.1%	15.2%
C1	34.8%	6.9%	6.9%	6.9%	0	18.6%
C2	25%	16.7%	20.8%	12.5%	0	20.8%
DE	19.5%	14.6%	4.9%	4.9%	7.3%	43.9%
PE	13%	6.1%	2.6%	7%	2.6%	40%
SE	27.2%	9.1%	9.1%	13.6%	4.5%	27.2%

### Which brand of Pasta do you buy most?

Barilla	74.6%
La Rose	4.9%
Poiatti	4.6%
Buittoni	3.5%
Agnesi	2.1%
Misura	1.4%
Others	8.9%



### Consumption of corned beef

	All categories	AB	DE
Regularly	37.9%	18.2%	43.9%
Rarely	36.4%	39.4%	39%
Never	25.6%	42.4%	17.1%



## SOFT DRINKS

The new generation chooses Coke

WATER remains the favourite cold non-alcoholic beverage, but soft drinks emerge as the preferred choice of 35% of respondents.

Coca Cola, one of the most potent symbols of global capitalism, emerges as the most popular soft drink. But its dominance is still challenged by the local Kinnee brand which comes in second, only two percentage points behind the global brand.

While 29.5% of those over 55 prefer Kinnee, only 19.2% of those aged 16-34 prefer it. On the other hand while only 11% of those aged over 55 prefer Coca-Cola, 43.9% of those aged 16-34 prefer the American brand.



### Preferred non-alcoholic beverage

Juices	8.1%
Water	48.5%
Soft drinks	35%
Ice Tea	5.4%
Milk	1%
Coolee/squash	2%

### Favourite soft drink

	All	By age		
		18-34	35-54	55+
Coca Cola	25.4%	43.9%	21.4%	11%
Kinnie	23.4%	19.2%	21.4%	29.5%
7 Up	11.2%	3.5%	13.1%	13%
Sprite	10.5%	5.3%	11.9%	11.6%
Diet Kinnie	3.8%			
Diet Coke	3.8%			
Lidl	3.1%			
Diet Sprite	2.4%			
Pepsi	2%			
Others	4.1%			
None	10.3%			



## EATING OUT

Fast-food nation?

67% of respondents have not been to McDonalds in the past month, and 54% of the younger respondents have frequented the global burger outlet in the same period. Significantly 28% of young people aged 16-34 have eaten at McDonalds more than twice in the past month.

Cheesecake shops are also more popular among the young than the old. While 64% of the entire population claim not to have purchased pastizzi in the past month, only 54% of younger respondents have not bought our home-grown junk food.

The majority of respondents (52%) eat in a restaurant less than once a month. While 85% of professionals and managers eat out more than once a month, only 46.3% of unskilled workers do the same. The self-employed are also hard pressed with 49% claiming that they eat out less than once a month.

Professionals and managers are also more likely to frequent a greater variety of international cuisines and types of restaurants. A quarter of ABs has been to a Chinese restaurant during the past month while one-fifth have been to a buffet in a hotel.

Chinese restaurants emerge as the most popular international cuisine. But overall the most popular type of restaurant is the pizzeria. While only 2.1% have been eating sushi in a Japanese restaurant, 45% have been to a pizzeria in the past month.

### How many times a month do you have a meal in a restaurant?

	All	AB	C1	C2	DE	PE	SE
More than once a week	9.9%	15.1%	18.6%	8.3%	2.4%	5.2%	13.6%
Once a week	15.5%	30.3%	11.6%	12.5%	26.8%	6.1%	9.1%
Once every 7-15 days	11.3%	18.2%	14%	20.8%	12.2%	5.2%	13.6%
Once every 15-30 days	11.6%	21.2%	18.6%	4.2%	4.9%	7%	13.6%
Less than once a month	25%	9.1%	16.3%	29.2%	39%	25%	31.8%
Never	26.7%	6.1%	23.2%	27%	14.7%	51.5%	18.3%

### Frequency of visits to fast-food outlets during past months

	Never	Once	2-4 times	More than four
McDonalds	66.9%	17.3%	12.7%	3.2%
Burger King	92%	6.7%	1.4%	0%
Pizza Hut	92.3%	7.7%	0.7%	0%
KFC	93.7%	4.9%	1.1%	0.3%
Pastizzi	63.6%	17.7%	14.6%	4.1%
Turkish	88.9%	5.9%	4.5%	0.7%

### Frequency of visits to fast-food outlets (16-35 age group)

	Never	Once	2-4 times	More than four
McDonalds	45.6%	26.3%	21.1%	7%
Burger King	89.5%	7%	3.5%	0
Pizza Hut	82.9%	14.3%	2.4%	0
KFC	88.1%	7.1%	0	2.4%
Pastizzi	54.4%	21.1%	21.1%	3.4%
Turkish	73.7%	10.5%	12.3%	3.5%

