



**ABSOLUTELY  
CARIBBEAN**

VIRTUAL EXPO 2020

[expo.absolutelycaribbean.com](http://expo.absolutelycaribbean.com)

17-18 November 2020

# Unlocking the profit potential of the Caribbean





# Introduction

**From organic beauty products to aged rum and hot pepper sauce, Caribbean producers have a lot to offer the European market.**

In fact, there has been a growing trend for Caribbean food, beverages and natural products across Europe over the past few years and in the UK alone, Caribbean food is now worth almost £100m<sup>1</sup>.

In this report, the Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export) will offer readers a snapshot of the quality across several categories, including food, drinks and natural products. The Agency will also highlight the huge potential for Caribbean products across several European markets, ahead of its first ever virtual event in November.

Caribbean Export is the only regional trade and investment promotion agency in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group. Formed in 1996, the Agency supports producers in the 15 states of the Caribbean Forum: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Caribbean Export's role is to promote trade between the Forum's incredible small and medium enterprises regionally and internationally.



*"We've seen a huge rise in the popularity of Caribbean foods in the UK in recent years which is really exciting. The likes of Ainsley Harriott and Levi roots paving the way for Caribbean food, seeing staple Caribbean*

*ingredients more widely available, and also seeing our cookbook as best seller on numerous charts, and receiving TV & media recognition nationally. There is such a variety and so many flavours in Caribbean cooking which the British public are loving."*

Craig & Shaun McAnuff, Original Flava

**To celebrate the array of quality, artisanal producers, the Agency has launched the virtual expo event:**



**Unlocking the profit potential of the Caribbean.**

**Taking place on 17-18 November 2020, the event will bring together around 50 producers to showcase some of the best products the Caribbean has to offer.**

The online event is a joint venture between Caribbean Export, the European Commission and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, and has been launched off the back of a successful three-day trade show and conference, which took place in Germany last year.

This year, Caribbean Export has also partnered with the West Indies Rum & Spirit Producer's Association, International Trade Centre (ITC) Alliances for Action, and Shaun and Craig McAnuff of Original Flava, who have found great success with their Caribbean food and lifestyle platform and recently released their first cookbook of authentic Jamaican recipes. With an increase in demand for Caribbean sauces and condiments across Europe, the duo will host a live session to show how versatile these products are, including a cooking demonstration.

**To register for Absolutely Caribbean – unlocking the profit potential of the Caribbean, head to:**

**[expo.absolutelycaribbean.com](https://expo.absolutelycaribbean.com)**





# The Caribbean Market Overview

  
**x3**  
The number of Caribbean restaurants in the UK tripled in the 12 months leading up to August 2019.

Caribbean produce has huge potential across Europe, especially in the UK, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain.

## UK

The British love affair with Caribbean culture and flavours has driven huge growth for the region's products in restaurants, bars and retail outlets.

Over the past five years, the number of Caribbean restaurants in the UK has tripled and in the 12 months to August 2019 alone, the Caribbean restaurant count grew by 144%<sup>2</sup>. When it comes to locations, London and Central England are the two areas that over-index in terms of Caribbean foods<sup>3</sup>.

Meanwhile, foodservice wholesale giant Bidfood also singled out Caribbean food as a top 10 cuisine trend, while last year, retailer Tesco highlighted Caribbean fare as an 'emerging trend'.

### Brands

Grace Foods supplies around one third of the category<sup>4</sup> in the UK and the company, with global headquarters in Kingston, Jamaica, is one of the largest Caribbean enterprises worldwide.

Following its success back in 2007 on TV show Dragon's Den, the Levi Roots brand went on to be worth c.£35m just ten years later.

*"There is strong interest in authentic Caribbean food in the UK, not just from the ex-pat community but now also from those who have holidayed in the Caribbean and tasted the cuisine and want to enjoy those flavours at home. As people cannot currently travel so much or even eat out as easily, there is a great opportunity for flavours of the Caribbean. Things that work well are often ingredients that can be added to food we are already familiar with, for example a sauce or rub you add to chicken, or a seasoning to add to rice."*

Food Industry Expert, Jane Milton

  
  
Caribbean flavours are an emerging trend in sauces and spices in Spain

## Spain

Spain alone accounts for almost half of Europe's emigrants from Latin America-Caribbean countries – some 2.2m people – so it's no wonder Caribbean produce is of interest to Spanish consumers. In fact, 'foods from other countries' have grown a huge 105.9% since 2012<sup>5</sup> in Spain and Caribbean flavours are an emerging trend in sauces and spices in the country<sup>6</sup>.

### Brands

Caribbean food and drink are of huge interest to Spanish consumers and in 2018, Grace Foods won a £1m contract to supply Caribbean Aloe Vera Drinks to supermarket chain Aldi.



### Focus on: Dominican Republic cuisine

In a quest to satisfy the demanding Spanish palate, Dominican gastronomy is gaining popularity, led by prestigious chefs including the award-winning Marte. According to Sabores magazine, flagship dishes such as sancocho, chicken or seafood asopa'o, Moorish, goat stew or mofongo have seduced many Spaniards.

2 CG, August 2019, 3 Nielsen 2016, 4 IRI 2018, 5 Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment 2018 6 Kantar 2018





1/3

Almost a third of Germans like Caribbean food



## Germany

Following a successful three-day trade show and conference in Germany last year, the market remains full of opportunity for Caribbean products. Almost a third (32%) of German consumers like Caribbean food<sup>7</sup> and the Caribbean remains a top-selling destination among long-haul travellers from Germany, according to travel agents FVW.

*"To us in Germany and Europe the cuisines and the lifestyle of the Caribbeans appear as appealing, colourful, multi-faceted and exotic as the islands themselves. Small taste bites of the products and cuisines could ignite the fascination even more and serve as a sensual entrance to this dream Archipelago. Even though I traveled the culinary world, I haven't made it to the Caribbean so far - time to change it. I am in and can't wait."*

Antje de Vries, (nomad) chef and author, Germany



### Focus: Jamaican cuisine

According to multicultural digital food, wine and travel lifestyle magazine Cuisine Noir, Jamaican Cuisine has a bright future in Berlin. The magazine highlights the longevity of restaurant Rosa Caleta in the capital city. The owners have created classic Jamaican dishes and merged them with "half European-fusion mashups" that pay homage to the venue's home city.



## The Netherlands

The Netherlands has very strong links to the Caribbean, with sovereignty over the islands of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba. In 2019, some 155,000 Dutch Caribbean people were registered, making them the seventh largest ethnic group in The Netherlands – accounting for 4% of the ethnic population in the country<sup>8</sup>.

*"More recently restaurant concepts such as Turtle Bay and Rum Kitchen, and street food vendors such as Fish, Wings & Tings have demonstrated that there are many variations to Caribbean cuisine and that it is eclectic, interesting, and fun. UK consumers have also become more accepting of hotter flavours and spices, for which Caribbean cuisine is well suited. In my future-casting I have identified Caribbean cuisine as one of the potential growth areas for hospitality in the UK as it fits well with a multi-cultural, globe-trotting, pleasure-seeking, experiential-desiring, spicier-eating UK consumer!"*

Strategic Adviser and Futurist Simon Stenning



### Food focus

Dutch chef Helmi Smeulders lived on Dutch Caribbean island Curaçao for more than twenty years. In June 2020, she released her first Dutch-language cookbook, The Caribbean Cookbook, highlighting the country's hunger for Caribbean recipes.

And for those that prefer not to cook, Caribbean ready meals are available in the largest Dutch retailer, Albert Heijn, under the brand 'Danitzah'.



155,000

Dutch Caribbeans were registered in the Netherlands in 2019



# Rum and other alcoholic drinks

The Caribbean is famous for rum and many of the islands produce brands with distinct styles. From sophisticated sippers to rums that mix perfectly with cola, the spirit has wide appeal.

Total rum sales in the UK, for example, were worth a massive £1bn<sup>9</sup> last year and Caribbean rum plays an important part, with more than half (51%) of the Top 10 Rum Brands sold in the UK produced in the Caribbean<sup>10</sup>.

In Spain, rum accounts for nearly 11% of all spirits consumed at home and the category is worth €42.3m<sup>11</sup>. Meanwhile in Germany, Rum, Arrak and Tafia form 10.9% of the spirits market<sup>12</sup> and cocktails are growing in popularity. Almost half of German consumers (47%) say that cocktails are their preferred style of serving when it comes to drinking spirits<sup>13</sup>. Across to The Netherlands and rum forms just over a tenth (10.2%) of the Dutch Spirits market<sup>14</sup>.

Total rum sales in the UK last year were worth:

**£1bn**

In Germany, Rum, Arrak and Tafia form

**10.9%**  
of the spirits market

In Spain  
Rum accounts for  
**11%**  
of all spirits consumed at home

## Producer spotlight



### Travellers Liquor Ltd

Founded in Belize by Omario Perdomo in 1953, this producer makes 21 different alcoholic products ranging from premium aged, gold, white and flavoured rums from molasses as well as liqueurs, rum creams, vodka, gin, wines and bitters. Travellers Liquor are the only ones in Belize to age rums to a significant degree.

[onebarrelrum.com](http://onebarrelrum.com)



### J&J Spirits

J&J Spirits was established by Jack Astacio in 2008 and the company produces a variety of liqueurs and spirits under private label brands. They also produce Mamajuana and were the first to export it to the USA and China. The company employs fair trade practices and uses only natural ingredients.

[kalembu.com](http://kalembu.com)



### Benedicta, S. A

Benedicta was created in 2005 in the Dominican Republic and it is the region's only producer of apple cider. Under the brand Chicharon, they also produce and sell the world's first cinnamon rum. This cinnamon rum is handmade in the Dominican Republic at 33% ALC/VOL, produced with aged rum, natural cinnamon and green chili extracts.

[labenedicta.com](http://labenedicta.com) | [chicharon.com](http://chicharon.com)

*"Consumers are becoming more aware of the unparalleled diversity of styles and flavours of Caribbean rum, and they love what it has to offer. This is why rum is the fastest growing spirit in the European market. We are excited to see where the future of rum will take us!"*

Benjamin Boothe & Kristoffer von Stedingk, Rum Spirits Academy Europe





*"Caribbean sauces and condiments in particular have become really popular in the UK as they are bursting full of flavour and add extra excitement to dishes you usually make at home."*  
Craig & Shaun McAnuff, Original Flava

*"Especially now, we are hungry for good and fresh taste, chill out times and big smiles which we connect with the Caribbean islands. The German gourmets are ready to welcome more cilantro, habaneros and sofritos. And we are really looking forward to coming over and visit."*

Jean-Georges Ploner, Consultant Hospitality industry and CEO and founder of F&B Heroes

# Sauces & Condiments

**Peppers, pickles, chillies and spices are popular the world over and the key markets of the UK, Spain, Germany and the Netherlands represent tremendous opportunities for sauces and condiments from the Caribbean.**

In the UK, total sauces and condiments are worth £1.12bn - growing by 16.8% vs last year<sup>15</sup>. The category in the UK leans heavily towards the grocery retail sector and hot sauces, including chilli sauces, are the big winners.

In Spain, Caribbean flavours are an emerging trend in sauces and spices<sup>16</sup>, while spicy flavours have seen strong growth in recent years. They are up around 55% to three million kilograms and over 29%

in value to nearly €19m<sup>17</sup>.

German consumers are also fans of chilli sauce, and the sauces and spices category makes up just over 2% (2.3%) of food and drink sales in the country<sup>18</sup>. It is during family dinners in particular that one finds more heat and spice on the table<sup>19</sup>.

Dutch consumers, too, like it hot and chilli sauces have shot up 125% in value since 2016<sup>20</sup>. People in the Netherlands are also increasingly open to incorporating greater variation into their cooking, including flavour combinations and the use of fresh and natural ingredients. This is leading to the rising interest in gourmet cooking, which is influencing sauces, dressings and condiments<sup>21</sup>.



**Caribbean flavours are an emerging trend in sauces and spices in Spain**



**125%**

**Dutch consumers, like it hot and chilli sauces have shot up 125% in value since 2016**

## Producer spotlight

### Aunt Sadies Belize Ltd

Aunt Sadie's Belize is on a mission to contribute towards the growth and development of Belizean agro-processing through fair and sustainable sourcing of ingredients from local farmers. They are proud to offer an ever-expanding range of gourmet sauces, pepper sauces and seasonal tropical fruit jellies.

All products are made using fresh ingredients, do not contain chemical additives or preservatives, and are also non-genetically modified, gluten-free, and vegan

[auntsadiesbelize.com](http://auntsadiesbelize.com)

### Jays Enterprise Inc

Barbados-based Jays Enterprise was founded in 1999 by Calvin Brathwaite. The company produces traditional and gourmet condiments, seasonings and sauces. Their Superb Blend brand has two ranges - Grandma's Traditional and Exotic Gourmet.

Based on traditional exotic favours 'as made by Grandma', Jays Enterprise uses only quality ingredients selected from the best sources.

[superbblends.com](http://superbblends.com)

### Pepper Products Ltd

Pepper Products was founded in 1985 by Dudley Eaton and the company is a leading producer in Jamaica.

Producing wholesome ethnic Caribbean foods, their first product was hot pepper sauce. Today, their flagship product is Jamaican Jerk Seasoning (in four varieties) and they also produce BBQ Sauces, Jams and Chutneys.

[eatonsjamaica.net](http://eatonsjamaica.net)

### Vincyfresh Ltd

Vincyfresh, based in St Vincent and the Grenadines, is one of three subsidiaries of Winfresh Limited. Vincyfresh was formed in October 2007 and produces authentic Caribbean products, including sauces and condiments.

All products are made from the highest quality local produce and ingredients are chosen from certified contracted farms, including family farms. They work closely with the Fairtrade Foundation to help protect the livelihoods and rights of farmers and suppliers.

### Naledo Belize Ltd

Naledo Belize was founded in 2016 by Umeeda Switlo and produces the world's first wildcrafted Turmeric Paste. Naledo produces a whole root Turmeric Paste in four sizes, and two flavours which are high value products in Belize. All their raw product is responsibly sourced from Toledo, Belize.

The producer is focused on community and the environment.

Naledo recently won the New Food Product of the Year Award for their Truly Turmeric paste with Black pepper at this years' Food Matters Live.

[naledo.com](http://naledo.com)

### Gom Food Industries

Gom Food Industries was founded in 1998 with the assistance of the Surinamese Chamber of Commerce and Industry. They produce eight marinated barbecue and pepper sauces under the Sishado Marinades brand.

Sishado's products are all family recipes that contain a mixture of different flavours passed on from generation to generation. The sauces are vegetarian.

[sishado.com](http://sishado.com)





# Health & Beauty

**The Caribbean is home to a bounty of natural ingredients, making way for top quality botanical, organic and natural health & beauty products from the region.**

Across the four key export markets, health & wellness is a big trend, with personal care forming key rituals in the UK, Spain, Germany and the Netherlands.

In the UK, total personal care including skincare, bath & shower products, shampoo, deodorants and hair products is worth a massive £6.34bn<sup>22</sup>. Certified organic and natural beauty products are worth £86.5m and growing 14% year-on-year, while vegan hair & beauty has seen a 175% increase in product launches in the five years to June 2018<sup>23</sup>.

In-home spa and beauty treatments are also growing in popularity in the UK, with female consumers spending an average of more than £150 per year<sup>24</sup>.

'Natural' is key to Spanish consumers and 72% of Spanish women claim to use little make-up and prefer a more natural look, as opposed to 62% of women

worldwide. Younger consumers aged 17 to 24 years old, associate a more natural look with a well-groomed appearance<sup>25</sup>. Quality is important and some eight million shoppers in Spain purchased a luxury beauty brand in the 12 months to April 2019 – circa one fifth of all Spanish beauty spend<sup>25</sup>.

German beauty consumers tend to be more traditional in their choice of product: 83% of beauty/personal care products are 'classic' as opposed to natural or organic, although natural products are demonstrating faster growth, suggesting these types of products are becoming more popular, especially in terms of facial care and hand & nail care<sup>26</sup>.

In the Netherlands, the health & beauty category is worth €2.4bn, growing by 1.5% in 2019, driven by fragrances and skin care<sup>27</sup>. The same research suggests younger Dutch consumers, aged between 14-21, believe their appearance is important and 56% believe a person's appearance can have a positive impact on their personality.

The UK's  
certified organic  
and natural beauty  
products are worth

**£86.5m**

▲ 14%  
(year-on-year)

The Dutch health  
& beauty category  
is worth

**€2.4bn**

▲ 1.5%  
(in 2019)

## Producer spotlight



### bahamaSpa

Founded by Indira Weech-Krug in 2004, bahamaSpa produce premium, luxurious, handcrafted spa products including soap, body whipped cream and sea salt scrubs.

Only the finest ingredients are used, harnessing the healing power of ocean water, sea salt and premium edibles. Each product uses up to six ingredients only and they are paraben, formaldehyde and palm oil free. The packaging is eco-friendly, and recyclable.

[thebahamaspa.com](http://thebahamaspa.com)

### Irie Rock

Irie Rock was founded out of an appreciation for all things natural and it was cultivated by Chief Executive Officer Raquell Brown, while she was spending time in her grandmother's fruit and herb garden. The range includes body butter, body scrub and massage oil as well as the Irie Rock Tea Tree & Witch Hazel Facial Line, Irie Rock Serum and Irie Rock Bodycare.

The products are made with all-natural ingredients such as cocoa butter, coconut oil and shea butter and infused with Caribbean fragrances including papaya, mango, coconut, vanilla and citrus.

All products are Organic EU and FDA certified.

[irierock.com](http://irierock.com)

### Herboo Botanicals

Set up by Javin Williams in Jamaica, Herboo Botanicals develops and manufactures sustainable, organic personal hair and skincare products using only the finest of herbs and spices.

The products have been developed for individuals who choose to live a healthy lifestyle and they contain only the highest quality ingredients, all of which are clearly listed on the packaging.

[herboobotanicals.com](http://herboobotanicals.com)

### Natmed Ltd

Natmed has been making health and beauty products as well herbal extracts and remedies in St Lucia since 1997.

The products are marketed under two brand names. Caribbean Blue Naturals includes natural sunscreen, suncare, skincare, soaps and massage oils. Natmed Herbals includes all-natural herbal extracts, remedies and products for common health complaints.

All products use only natural, high quality ingredients and are doctor formulated. Ingredients are sourced through fair trade, ethical and sustainable practices to minimize the company's carbon footprint.

[CaribbeanBlueNaturals.com](http://CaribbeanBlueNaturals.com)

### Sugar Town Organics

Sugar Town Organics was established in 2004 and it is operated by a mother and daughter team. The duo wanted to craft edible goods, as well as cosmetics, using Caribbean ingredients, particularly from their home of St. Kitts and Nevis.

The company is built on a family legacy of healing through nature, utilising food to aid continued health and healing from diseases. The range today includes hair care, skin care, body care and food products from jams, salad dressings, infused hot sauces, dips and fruit drinks.

The company uses traditional techniques when crafting their all-natural products, some of the raw ingredients for which come from their own garden, allowing them to employ a sustainability focus.

[Sugartownorganics.com](http://Sugartownorganics.com)



# Natural Products

From chocolate to tea and gluten free flours, natural products are big business for the Caribbean, with potential for further growth in key export markets.

## Chocolate

In the UK, chocolate is a £4.3bn category<sup>28</sup> and according to Kantar, plain and dark chocolate is growing 14.5% year-on-year.

Chocolate in Spain is worth €1.5bn and it increased by 3.6% in 2019<sup>29</sup>. The country also imports significant quantities of cocoa beans and Spanish consumers prefer high quality dark chocolate.

In Germany, environmental concerns are important to chocolate and confectionery consumers, with 72% of confectionery sold being sustainably produced<sup>30</sup>.

Meanwhile, the Netherlands in 2018 was the largest importer of cocoa beans and home to the largest cocoa grinding industry in the world<sup>31</sup>.

## Tea

The UK is famous for its love of tea and the category is worth £561.3m<sup>32</sup>. Fruit and herbal teas are showing promising growth, up 10.5%, according to Kantar, with further success being driven by health and immunity interest during the pandemic.

Spanish consumers also drink natural and herbal

teas, and Chamomile tea forms 8.8% of the category in the country<sup>33</sup>.

Meanwhile, an average of 129m cups of tea per day are enjoyed in Germany and the German Tea & Herbal Tea Association says consumers drink large amounts of herbal and natural teas.

In the Netherlands, consumers drink an average of 3.2 cups of tea per day, with 71% of consumers drinking tea at least weekly. Some 52% of Dutch consumers drink green tea and 39% enjoy fruit and herbal teas<sup>34</sup>.

## Gluten Free Flour

The Free From market is growing across Europe as awareness of food intolerances rise. Not only do those with intolerance seek out alternative products but many are choosing Free From products as part of their lifestyle.

The total Free From market in the UK is forecast to grow to £670m in 2020 and Gluten Free makes up a large proportion of this<sup>35</sup>. Gluten Free Flours in particular are growing in popularity, increasing by 19.9% in 2019 compared to the year before<sup>36</sup>. In Germany the Gluten Free market was worth £174m and grew by 30% in 2017<sup>37</sup> and in the Netherlands, 50% of Dutch consumers are now familiar with Gluten Free diets which influence food choices and consumption in the country.<sup>38</sup>



The Netherlands was the largest importer of cocoa beans in 2018



UK is famous for its love of tea and the category is worth:

**£561.3m**



Gluten Free Flours are growing in popularity

**▲19.9%**  
in 2019 vs 2018

## Producer spotlight



### Caribbean Cure Ltd

Caribbean Cure is a natural health and wellness company founded by Sophia Stone, who developed a passion for the vast amount of healing plants, herbs and preventative natural health practices commonly used in the West Indies.

Producing both natural loose-leaf tea and teabags, this is one of the few tea companies in the Caribbean using these herbs in tea blending. Caribbean Cure uses only high quality, natural ingredients, with no preservatives or additional flavourings in their teas. The products are crafted using eco-friendly processes and Caribbean Cure works closely with farmers to promote the use of natural farming methods as well as being very supportive of micro farmers.

[caribbean-cure.com](http://caribbean-cure.com)

### Shavuot International Holdings Company Limited

Shavuot International was established in 2014 and offers naturally grown produce including tea blends, natural skin and hair treatments and spices.

Shavuot International uses all-natural, non-genetically modified ingredients in their products and employs the best farming and agro-processing practices, while being socially and environmentally responsible. The company also invests within their surrounding communities.

[shavuotfarms.com](http://shavuotfarms.com)

### Montanos' Chocolate Co Ltd

Montanos' Chocolate Co is a Trinidadian family-owned and operated chocolate producer. Made from local cocoa, these products do not contain dairy, preservatives, emulsifiers or mould inhibitor. Positioned as a smart, healthy, vegan choice, this producer has plans to add five further products to their range in the near future.

[montanoschocolate.co](http://montanoschocolate.co)



### One One Cacao

Specialists in 70% bars that are plain and packed with health benefiting antioxidants as well as white and dark alternative milk bars that have the added boost of super foods sourced right here in the Caribbean. They also use their chocolate in a range of drinks, nut butters and chocolates for home and professional baking.

[oneonecacao.com](http://oneonecacao.com)

### Cocoa Sainte Lucie

Founded in 2011, at Cocoa Sainte Lucie is passionate about creating a truly indigenous artisan chocolate company. They work with Saint Lucia's top-rated organic cocoa, world renowned for complex flavour profiles and maximum levels of health-giving antioxidants and minerals.

The team at Cocoa Sainte Lucie's create a delicious range of organic gourmet dark chocolates and cocoa nibs, milk chocolate, truffles and chocolate coated nuts.

[cacoasaintelucie.com](http://cacoasaintelucie.com)



Caribbean producers have a lot to offer the European market and we have seen a growing trend for Caribbean food, beverages and natural products across Europe in the last few years. In 2018, more than €26 billion worth of goods and services were exported worldwide from the Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM), of which 17.6% were exported to Europe.

*"This presents a real opportunity for us and we are really excited to be organising our first virtual expo at this time,"*

Dr. Damie Sinanan, Manager of Competitiveness and Export Promotion from Caribbean Export.

To register for Absolutely Caribbean – unlocking the profit potential of the Caribbean, head to:  
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