

Heritage Day: Quintessential South African products in the eyes of consumers

An online survey was undertaken by retailer Game ahead of Heritage Day to find out which products are viewed by consumers as most closely tied to our heritage as South Africans. Respondents were asked to identify the products they see as quintessentially South African, and the majority of respondents connected these products to their heritage.



Source: [Pexels](#)

The survey, which used a sample size of 1,200 respondents, found that the majority of South Africans are using food, beauty and household products that tie back to their experiences as children. The reasons for using these products versus newer ones were multi-faceted and often hard for respondents to articulate – usually linking back to a connection to their roots, and their childhood experiences.

Eating together emerged as an incredibly important way for respondents to not only honour, but also celebrate, their heritage. Most respondents agreed that the traditional braai is how they enjoy to celebrate and spend time with family – across demographics and age groups. Some respondents said they cook over the fire every weekend, while some kept this practice to special occasions only.

Top food products

When asked about the food products that really present them with a taste of home, however, the top five products were:

- Biltong
- Koo Baked Beans
- Ultra Mel Custard
- Amarula Cream Liqueur
- Nik Naks

Also featured in the top 10 products were:

- Castle Lager Beer
- Lay's Potato Chips
- Peppermint Crisp
- Fritos
- Flings

On their tables, and as an accompaniment to any meal, South Africans votes All Gold (76%) and Aromat (71%) as their most loved items, followed by Chakalaka (67%) and Mrs. Balls Chutney (65%). Stoney Ginger Beer was identified as the most popular drink for celebrating Heritage Day – interestingly, most loved by those in the Free State and Northern Cape – followed by Oros and Amarula Cream Liqueur.

Meanwhile, respondents from KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, the Free State and the North West were most likely to enjoy traditional *umqombothi* as part of their celebrations.

Respondents were clear about the importance of traditional products as part of their heritage, with one female respondent from Gauteng saying: “I use *impepho* and *umqombothi* to connect to my ancestors. Disregarding this tradition would make me lose the essence of my being”.

Other respondents said they still made use of traditional cookware (such as a three-legged pot or Hart pots) because that is what their grandparents and parents did.



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Personal care, health and homeware brands

Personal care brands like Ingrams, Nivea, Dove and Ponds were linked back to nostalgia around childhood experiences, while healthcare items like Caster Oil, Imbola and Amabele were identified as products that have been passed down over generations that still form part of our everyday lives as South Africans.

Many respondents tied this nostalgia to the past tightly to what they plan to pass on to their own children, highlighting the importance of their family names, recipes, tableware and even just the tradition of spending time together as a family on a regular basis.

With regards to the most popular homeware items that keep their heritage alive, respondents identified potjie pots, Weber braai's, and cast iron pots, along with appliances like meat and coffee grinders and a Kenwood Mixer. Homecare items like Jik, Handy Andy, Omo and Sunlight Soap also made the list.

“South Africa is a country steeped in heritage and culture, from so many different backgrounds. It is so interesting to see people from across the country come together to agree on their love for these products. Our survey respondents were passionate about their heritage, traditions and culture, and about the role that food and drink products play in celebrating these,” says Katherine Madley, vice president of marketing, Game.

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