

# Packaging design trends for 2021

By Adam Ryan, Head of Pentawards

There is no doubt that 2020 will be a memorable year for all the wrong reasons. However, in these times of struggle and hardship, we have seen creativity and innovation soar in the world of packaging design.

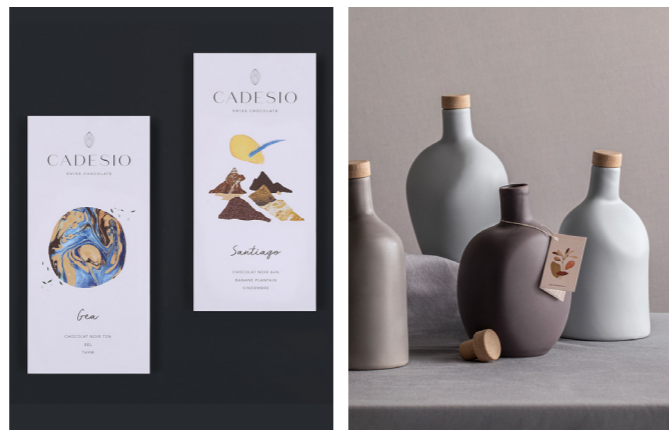
With the rise of e-commerce and digitalisation, this has been particularly clear across many categories and in particular in the food sector. Here are the trends I expect to see carry over into 2021, and beyond:

## PACKAGING AS ART

This is a trend we are starting to see in many luxury products but that will certainly follow into mid-level products as well. With packaging becoming more precious and respected by the consumer, many designers and brands are being influenced and inspired and transferring this onto their packs.



Take a look at this bottle of wine by Codice, for example, wrapped in a detailed oil painting to help invoke texture and depth. This box of chocolates by Cadesio is created with beautiful illustrations which, if they were prints, you would frame and put on your wall at home. Another example is Figlia, with its beautiful



hand-crafted olive oil bottles created by a ceramic artist. You certainly wouldn't throw them away.

## PACKAGING WITH CHARACTERS AND PERSONALITY



One thing is for sure, if we could all go back to our childhood we would, it makes us feel nostalgic, playful and youthful. In the last few years there has been an influx of packaging featuring cartoon

drawn characters, especially animals. Storytelling has always been a powerful way of connecting with consumers, using vibrant, interesting and intriguing characters that not only make you want to pick up a piece of packaging, but that make you want to learn more about the brand.



With the rise of connected packaging, I predict that more and more brands will use these characters and personalities to tell their stories and strengthen that connection with the consumer.

**Top & bottom left:** Códice, Estudio Maba. **Top right:** Cadesio, Cadesio SA & Figlia, Superunion. **Middle right:** Dong You Ji, Shenzhen Oracle Creative Design. **Bottom right:** ANI Dairy, Backbone Branding & Other Widows, Studio Kempen.

## NEW CONSTRUCTIVE FORMS OF TRADITIONAL PACKAGING



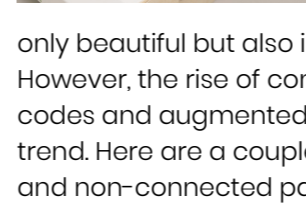
Something which really stood out during this year's Pentawards competition was seeing new forms of traditional packaging. I expect that over the next 12 months brands will consider more innovative forms to grab the attention

of the consumer both instore and online. These new forms will strengthen their branding and storytelling of their product. I love the impact of seeing a unique piece of packaging and questioning whether or not it's real.



## INTERACTIVE PACKAGING DESIGN

Packaging which can turn into a game, not only for children but adults too is uber cool. As our packaging choices are evolving, brands are starting to be more creative than ever. Consumers are craving something different, wanting something they can share on social media, and brands are really taking this on board.



Designers have a tough job because designing something which is not only beautiful but also interactive can be challenging. However, the rise of connected packaging with QR codes and augmented reality will also really help this trend. Here are a couple of examples of connected and non-connected packaging: By scanning the



label for Mrgastan, which means "The Land of Fruit", the illustrations come to life so that you can discover where the ingredients have come from.

## PRODUCT NAME TAKES CENTRE STAGE

Minimalism has always played a role in packaging but certainly as consumers have more choices, simplicity will play a role in helping choose their preferred products. With this in mind, allowing the product name to take centre stage has allowed designers to be more playful with vivid colours and typography. There is no doubt what the names of the products below are getting all the attention:



Packaging will play a huge role for brands in 2021 and will be one of the most powerful assets they have to help connect to consumers. With the rise of digitalisation, there will be more businesses selling directly to the consumer; this means the packaging needs to deliver an experience when it arrives. Story telling will be an extremely important element to consider for packaging sold online and instore.

The brands that have a real purpose are using ecommerce in an immersive way, that understand the consumer's mindset and the shifting model of how packaging will be presented, will be the ones that succeed in the future.

**Top left:** Jonah's, SGK Anthem. **Left middle:** Nongfu Wangtian, ShenZhen BOB design & Happy Ghost, Pavla Chuykina. **Bottom left:** Yinong, Shantou Datianchao Brand Planning & Brachia KIDS, Design Bureau Izvorka Juric. **Top right:** Mrgastan. **Bottom right:** Raw Halo, B&B studio & Ritz, Bulletproof & Yo&Go, Depot branding agency.