

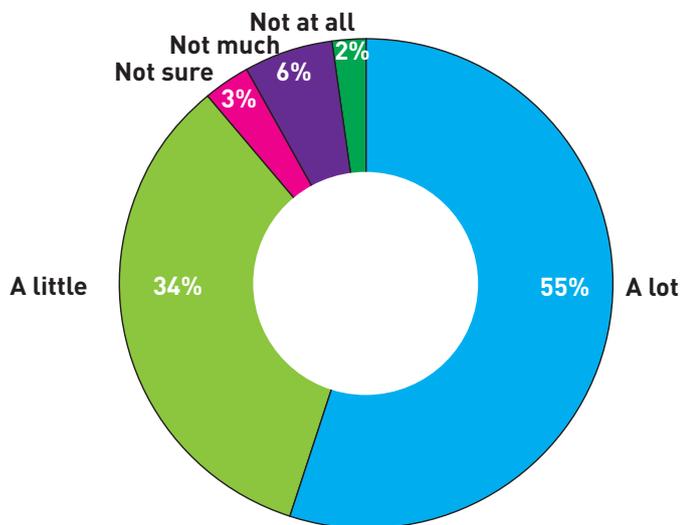
Great Expectations

This month's ShopperWatch study, produced in association with Behaviour & Attitudes, examines whether those surveyed enjoyed their overall Christmas experience, spending patterns, and the Brexit impact.

As this month's *ShopperWatch* from Behaviour & Attitudes illustrates, from a survey of 530 grocery shoppers, 84% revealed that Christmas lived up to their expectations. Some 43% of grocery shoppers had everything bought well in advance of Christmas, and a further 26% started their Christmas shopping at the start of Christmas Week.

It is interesting to note that 63% of grocery shoppers and 64% of home-alcohol shoppers revealed that their spending levels were on a par with Christmas 2015. In addition, 15% of grocery shoppers took a trip to Northern Ireland this Christmas.

DID YOU ENJOY CHRISTMAS?

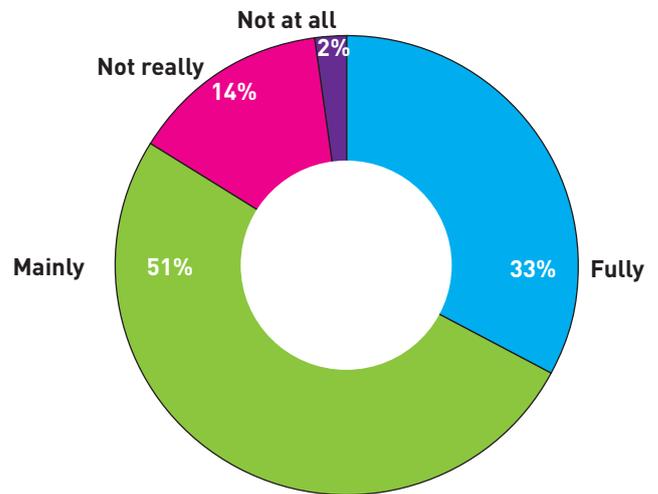


Well, it seems that Christmas 2016 went down a treat this year, as 89% of those surveyed said that they enjoyed Christmas overall. Over half of the respondents surveyed claimed that they enjoyed the festive season a lot, while a respectable 34% said that they enjoyed it a little.

On the other hand, it appears that 11% of participants weren't too keen on their Christmas experience. Allied to this, 6% said that they didn't enjoy Christmas much, 3% weren't sure, and only 2% admitted

that they didn't enjoy Christmas at all.

DID CHRISTMAS LIVE UP TO YOUR EXPECTATIONS?



Again, the overall feedback on Christmas 2016 remains very positive, as the vast majority – in fact, 84% of respondents – felt that the festive period did live up to their expectations. Over half of those surveyed said that Christmas mainly lived up to their expectations, while a third said that it fully lived up to their expectations. Some 14% didn't feel as enthused, saying that they didn't really enjoy Christmas, and 2% said that they didn't enjoy it at all.

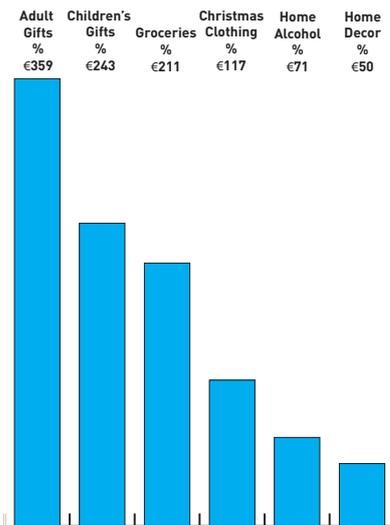
APPROACH TO CHRISTMAS SHOPPING



As the vast majority of the participants surveyed gave a very positive response to their Christmas experience overall, it is not surprising that, as grocery shoppers, we are a nation of Christmas planners, and only 11% left their Christmas shopping to the last minute. Some 43% of shoppers started early and had everything bought well in advance. Just over a quarter admitted that they started their grocery shopping when the celebrations began to get going, so that they, too, could get into the festive spirit. Some 21% felt that, despite the fact that they felt under pressure, they were still ready for the festive season early Christmas Week.

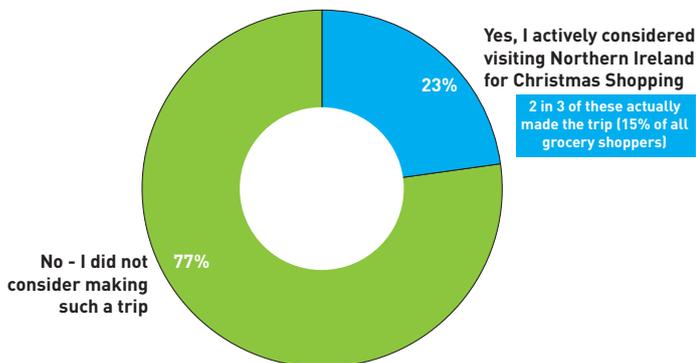
HOW MUCH DID YOU SPEND ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS THIS CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR?

As this survey indicates, 23% of shoppers admitted that they spent



more on groceries this Christmas/New Year than last year, and 21% spent less on home alcohol this Christmas. Shopping trends in general, for, notably, groceries and off-trade alcohol, appear to be on a par with Christmas 2016, as 63% and 64% revealed that they allocated the same budget as last year to those categories, respectively. Some 14% of grocery shoppers said that they spent less than they did last year, and a fifth of those surveyed said that they spent less on home alcohol for Christmas 2016 than they did the previous year.

BREXIT IMPACT: CROSS-BORDER SHOPPING THIS CHRISTMAS X DEMOGRAPHIC



In the run-up to the festive period, a lot of emphasis was placed on cross-border shopping. Some 28% of young shoppers and 26% of the ABC1 grocery shoppers were most likely to actively consider making a trip to Northern Ireland for their Christmas shopping, this survey reveals. However, of the 530 respondents surveyed, over three quarters revealed that they did not consider making the trip to Northern Ireland.

Taking age into consideration, 86% of respondents aged 55+ top the list as the least likely to be tempted by cross-border discounts during the festive period. Demographically, the research shows that urban and rural shoppers were on a par, as 77% of each shied away from making a trip north last December.



*Focused
Festive
Planning*

BY DONNA AHERN, NEWS EDITOR,
CHECKOUT MAGAZINE

As this month's *ShopperWatch* indicates, we are very well organised when it comes to Christmas. Some 43% of shoppers had practically everything bought well in advance of the big day.

With Christmas shopping out of the way, we had more time for play and, of course, the obligatory festive catching-up and spending time with friends and family. Perhaps that influenced some people's early-shopping habits, just a little bit. It hardly comes as surprise, then, that 84% of those surveyed revealed that Christmas 2016 lived up to their expectations, and, thankfully, 89% collectively said that they enjoyed it.

Surprisingly, with Brexit and cross-border shopping at the fore of the shopping agenda, it was interesting to see that shopping habits in the run-up to Christmas 2016 pretty much echoed that of the previous year. Some 63% of those surveyed said that they allocated the same spend towards their grocery shopping, and 64% said that they spent the same amount last Christmas as they did in 2015. In total, 15% of grocery shoppers took a trip to Northern Ireland.

As the survey shows, home alcohol was an especially prominent purchase. For 61% of those who cross-border shopped, wine was at the top of the list. From a grocery perspective, spirits were next on the list, for 51%, and beer, for 44% of shoppers, who could not resist the lure of the north. Confectionery, such as biscuits, snacks and crisps, was the most popular category therein.



*Carefully Planned
Extravagance*

BY JOHN O'MAHONY, DIRECTOR,
BEHAVIOUR & ATTITUDES

Got rid of the Christmas tree yet? Our results suggest that you have.

Thankfully, we generally enjoyed ourselves this Christmas, and it certainly wasn't a case of it simply turning out 'all right on the night', after a madcap last dash to get things ready.

Some 43% of grocery shoppers had everything bought well in advance, and a further 26% started their Christmas shopping when the celebrations got going – at the start of December, I guess – and there is little variation in these patterns, by either age or social class.

In addition, 15% of grocery shoppers took a trip to Northern Ireland this Christmas, and the list of what they bought could hardly be broader. So – as if our retailers weren't concerned enough about online shopping in general and Amazon in particular – almost one in six headed north to cash in on Brexit.