



APPROACHABLE ADVENTURE:

3 Steps to Create Continuous Innovation Through Flavor Pairings

By: Molly Zimmerman, Scientist

For me, there are three types of innovation: maintenance, transformational and continuous.

So let's say you've done well with chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry. You've developed a customer base that loves your product but is thirsty for a new experience. Your next move is critical and how you approach innovation will guide how you choose to move forward.

In many cases the next logical step is a line extension. This is an example of continuous innovation. Continuous innovation is simply doing more of what you already do well, like adding a new flavor profile to your line up or creating a new product that compliments a product you already have.

One way to create a recipe for success with a line extension is by creating unique flavor pairings. I like to call this "Approachable Adventure." If you look at a flavor pairing, half of it should be approachable and half of it should be adventurous. By doing this you are bringing comfort and excitement. You're pulling in consumers with something they already know that they like and exciting them with something different. Possibly the best example of this is Strawberry Kiwi. In the 90s, a kiwi was still considered quite exotic. Snapple paired this (at the time) unusual fruit with the ubiquitous strawberry to make consumers feel like they could try something different with relatively low risk.



STEP 1: TWO LISTS

The way I look at pairings when I'm developing a new profile is, I make 2 columns and I write out all of the flavors I think I might want to use in my product. One column is labeled "approachable" the other is labeled "adventurous." You can also look at this a "basic" and "trendy" or "simple" and "exotic".



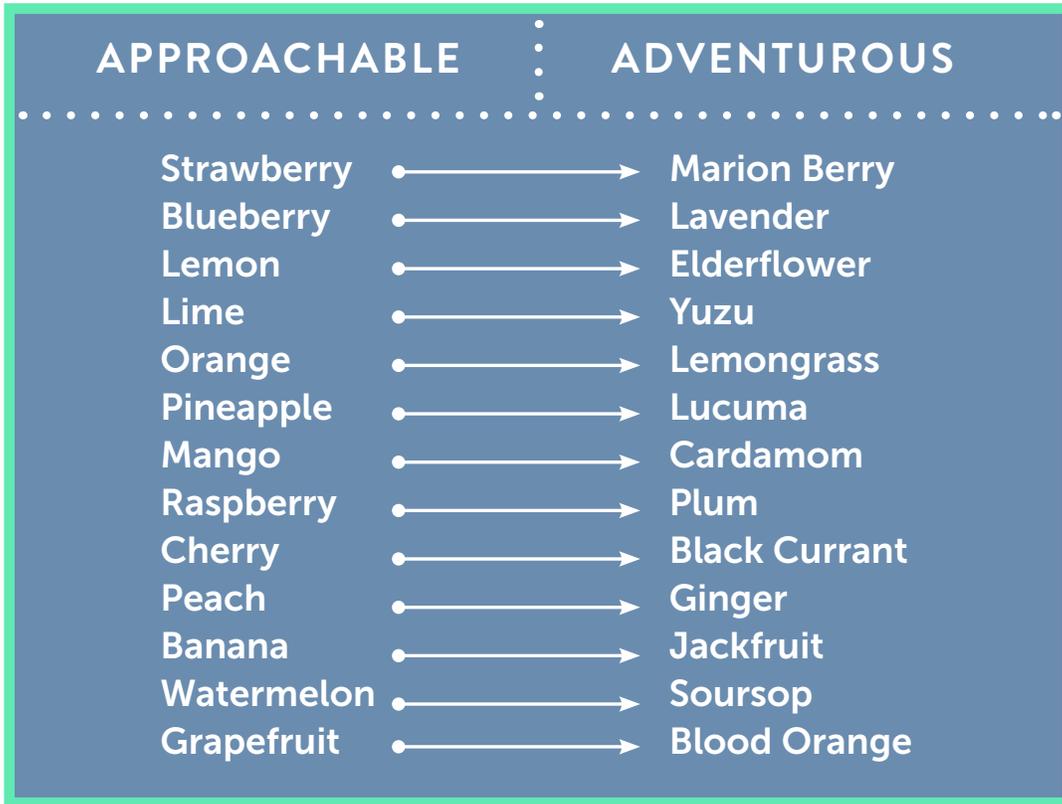
STEP 2: APPROACHABLE OR ADVENTUROUS?

Once I put down all of the flavors that I think I might want to try, I draw a line from the approachable flavor I think would pair best with the adventurous flavor. Sometimes you get some great and very interesting combinations this way and sometimes they don't taste good at all. But you'll never know until you taste them together in your specific application.



STEP 3. TASTE & REPEAT

Try it in your application, and then repeat. I typically repeat this process until I find the two or three combinations that I think are the best then share them with my team to make sure my personal bias isn't making me think something is better than it actually is.



We can help.

This type of rapid prototyping is one of my favorite ways to get to fun flavor pairings for continuous innovation. The best way to get this approach off the ground is to engage your flavor partner on your goals. My team and I love nothing better than to help our customers get to their "what's next." It's like creating the future! How can you use the Approachable Adventure strategy for your next line extension and how can we help?

At FONA, we're always looking to help you create what's next. No matter what stage of innovation you find yourself, we're ready. Let's talk and help you move forward.

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ABOUT MOLLY

With 10 years of experience in food and beverage, Molly brings a diverse skillset in beverage development, the culinary arts and consumer expertise. She serves as Scientist on FONA's technical team with an eye toward creating impact and growth for valued partners.

