

Starbucks Beverages in the Trend of Healthy Diet

Nutritional content analysis and recommendations

Recent years, people are increasingly aware of the importance of healthy diet in prevention of diabetes and other diseases (Euromonitor International, 2016). Pursuing low-calorie food and drinks has already become a notable trend. As one of the most popular beverage suppliers in the world, Starbucks should constantly update its menu to adapt to this trend. The report analyzes the current nutritional content of various types of Starbucks beverages and makes recommendations on how to adapt them to the needs of a healthy diet.

Data Analysis & Visualization

The dataset explored in this brief was [Nutrition facts for Starbucks Menu](#) (obtained from Kaggle), containing information about the Starbucks beverage menu with ingredients.

Currently, Starbucks beverages can be classified into 9 categories. Each category has a variety of beverages. Figure 1 shows the distribution of all beverages, the “Classic Espresso Drinks” category and the “Tazo Tea Drinks” category include the most diverse kinds of beverages.



Figure 1. Starbucks Beverage Categories

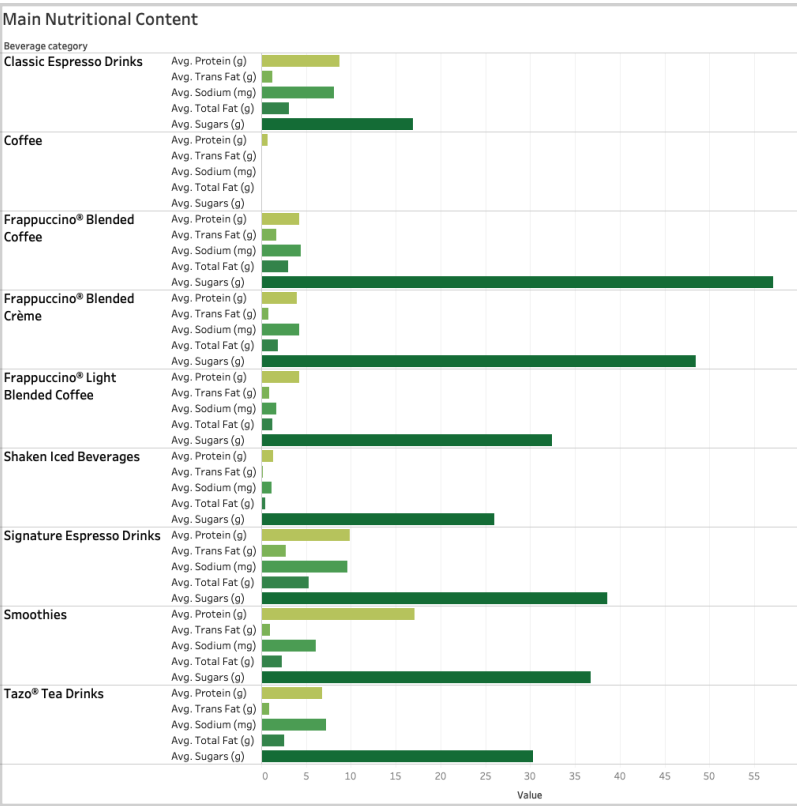


Figure 2. Average amount of nutritional content in each beverage category

Sugar is the most added nutrient in Starbucks beverages

When looking at the main nutrition content of each beverage (Figure 2), sugar apparently accounts for the largest proportion and its amount is usually multiple times of the other nutrients.

Most Starbucks beverages exceed the recommended sugar intake

According to NHS, adults should have no more than 30g of free sugars a day (NHS, 2020). However, 66.7% of all Starbucks beverages exceed this recommendation (Figure 3). Beverages in the Frappuccino Blend Coffee category even almost reaches twice this amount. Therefore, in order to make beverages healthier for consumers, Starbucks should pay attention to the added sugar in beverages.

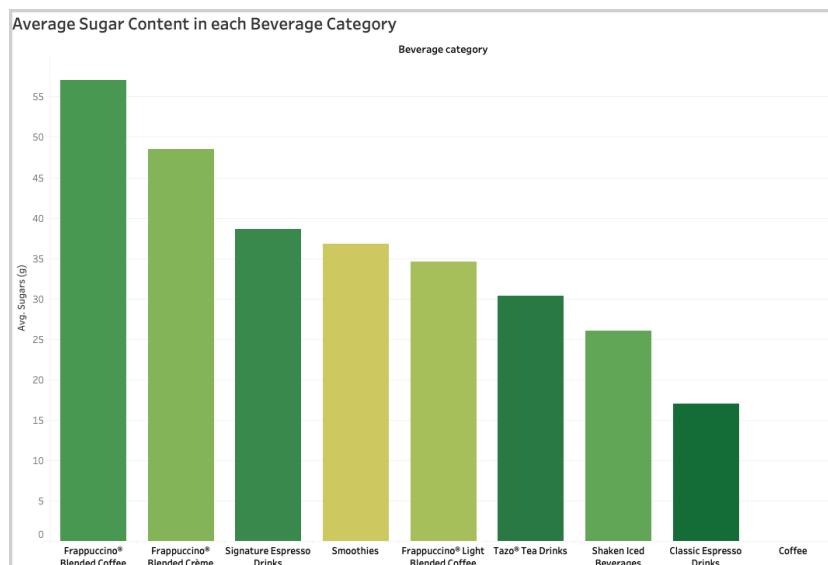


Figure 3. Average sugar content in each beverage category

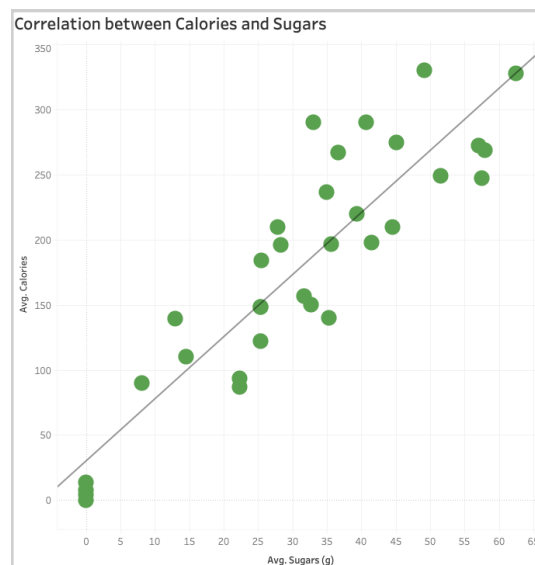


Figure 4. Correlation between Calories and Sugars

Sugar is highly correlated with calories

After mapping all Starbucks beverages onto the Calories/Sugar matrix, it can be easily seen that there is a positive related relationship between calories and sugars (Figure 4). In another word, the more sugar added, the higher calorie the beverage contains. So, reducing sugar would be an efficient way to keep beverages low in calories.

Starbucks has few effective low-calories beverage options

There is only 1 beverage named "skinny" out of the total 33 Starbucks beverages. However, this "skinny latte" beverage is not obviously different from regular latte in terms of calories and sugar content. As Figure 5 shows, comparing to the regular Coffee Latte, the calories of the Skinny Latte is reduced only 20% while the sugar content even increases 7%.

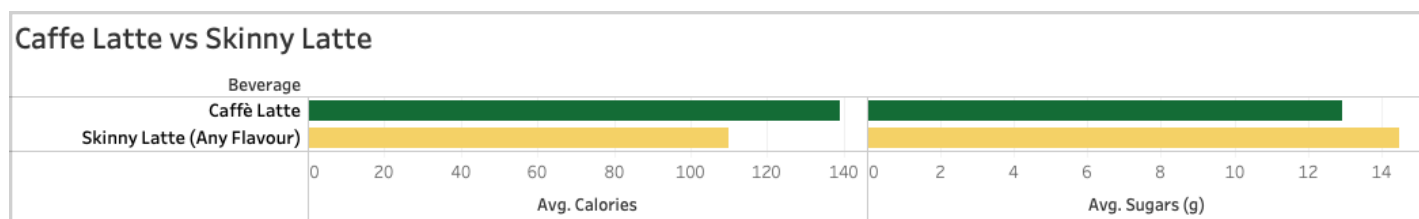


Figure 5. Calories and sugar in Coffee Latte and Skinny Latte

Recommendations

Reduce sugar or use low-calorie sweeteners

Calorie reduction ranks high among the most important factors for a healthy lifestyle worldwide (Austria Juice, 2020), and there is an increased demand for low-calorie diets (Transparency Market Research, 2019). Starbucks should take this heated trend as a great opportunity to reevaluate the beverage nutritions and innovate the menu.

Most current Starbucks beverages contain too much unnecessary sugar, which makes them detrimental to customers' health while keeping the beverages high in calories. Since people want lower-calorie options that still feel like they're having a little celebration (Everyday Health, 2021), low/no-calorie sweeteners would be an excellent substitute for sugar. According to Medical News today, there are many types of healthy sweeteners such as Stevia, Sucralose, Aspartame, etc.(Medical News Today, 2019), Starbucks can use them to replace sugars added in beverages.

Develop more low-calorie and low-sugar beverage options

Driven by the growing demand for low-calorie foods and beverages, the healthy beverage market is expanding rapidly (Transparency Market Research, 2019). Therefore, by providing healthier drinks, Starbucks can increase the sales revenue in the health beverage market while satisfying the preference of calorie-conscience customers.

Now is the time for Starbucks to develop healthier and “skinny” beverage products. The new healthy beverages should not only include this concept in their names, but also ensure that the nutritional ingredients are indeed low in sugar and calories.

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