

# 2021 Holiday Retrospective







# Methodology

Since 2019, Explorer has completed an annual holiday shopping study to understand how Americans are preparing, shopping, and celebrating the holiday season (Thanksgiving through to New Years).

Each year, the research surveys a representative sample of 500 Americans, and compare shifts in behavior year over year.



# HOLIDAY PLANNING BEGINS AFTER THANKSGIVING

Following Thanksgiving festivities, Americans begin to decorate their homes for the holiday. Planning also begins for social events and religious services they intend to host and/or attend.

Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday events tend to trigger holiday gift shopping, while the planning and budget setting is typically done earlier in November.

The timing of these holiday planning steps has remained consistent year over year.





# SUSTAINABILITY PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN 2021 HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS



## Ways Shoppers Were More Sustainable During the 2021 Holiday



33%

Felt that sustainability is even more important during the holiday season than other times of year



# FOOD IS CENTRAL TO THE HOLIDAYS

Shoppers primarily rely on family recipes to inform their holiday meals. Additional inspiration comes from online searches, family and friends, Facebook, and Pinterest.

In-store plays a role as well, with shoppers seeking inspiration from in-store resources like displays, recipes, and other POS.

These sources have remained consistent year over year.

## Top 10 sources of Holiday Recipe Inspiration

- |                           |                                     |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Family recipes (64%)   | 6. Pinterest (26%)                  |
| 2. Online search (39%)    | 7. Instagram (24%)                  |
| 3. Family & friends (33%) | 8. Magazines (23%)                  |
| 4. Facebook (32%)         | 9. Retailer holiday magazines (16%) |
| 5. In-store (29%)         | 10. Flyers/ circulars (9%)          |



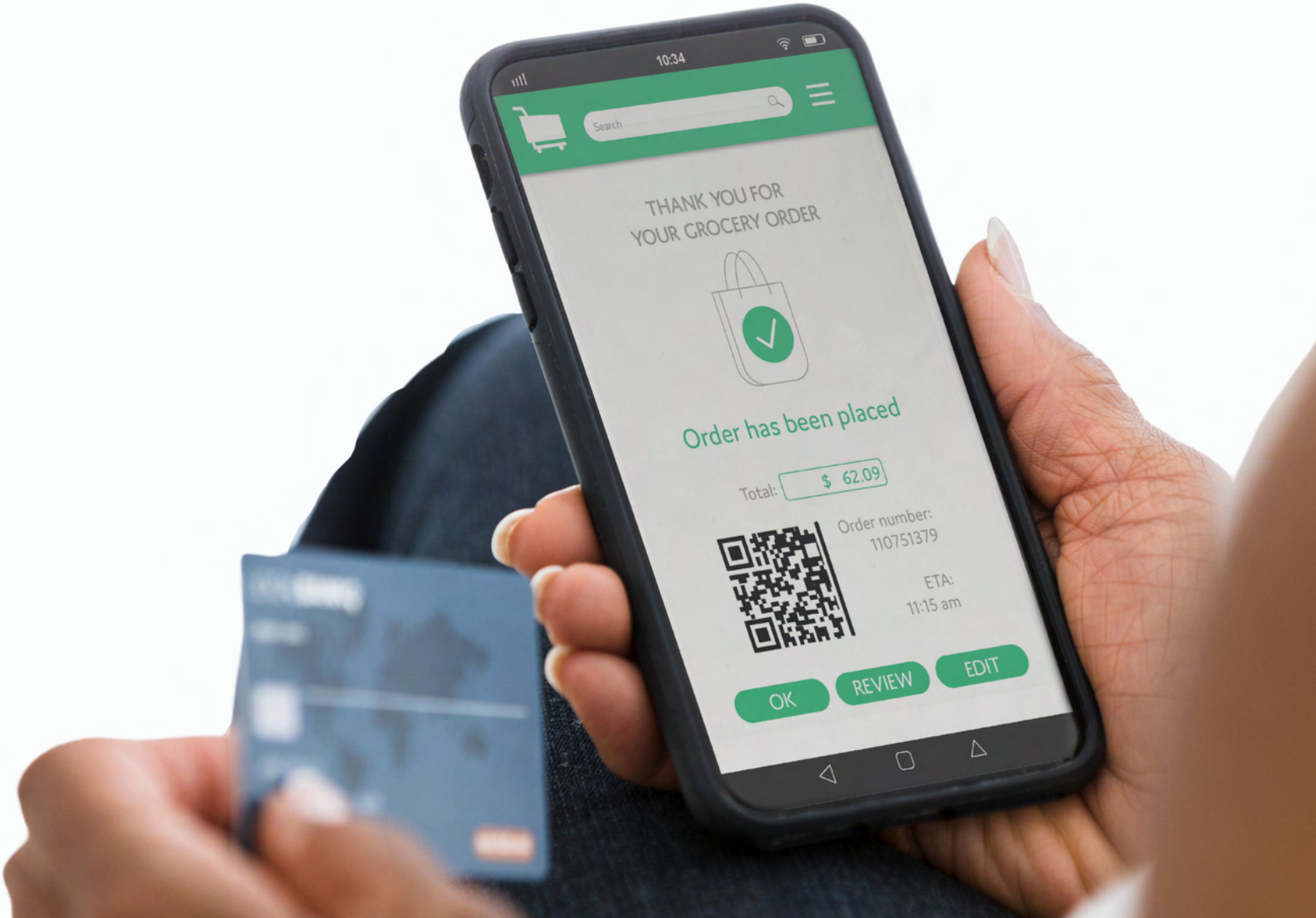
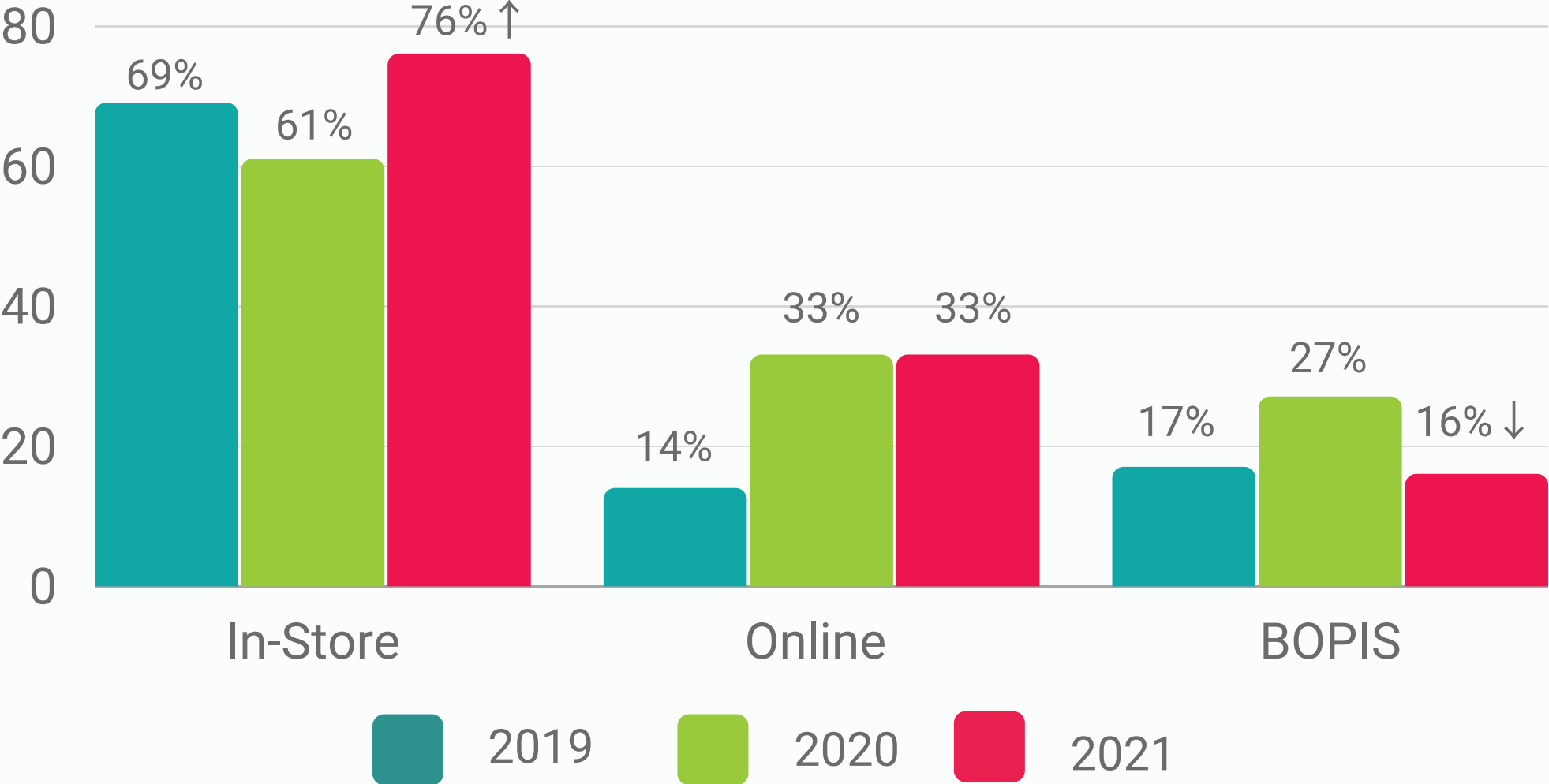


# ONLINE GROCERY SHOPPING IS HERE TO STAY

The need to buy online and pick up in store (BOPIS) returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2021, as shoppers preferred going in-store to buy their groceries if they were already making the trip.

Despite shoppers returning to brick and mortar, online holiday grocery shopping maintained its 2020 popularity

### Holiday Grocery Shopping

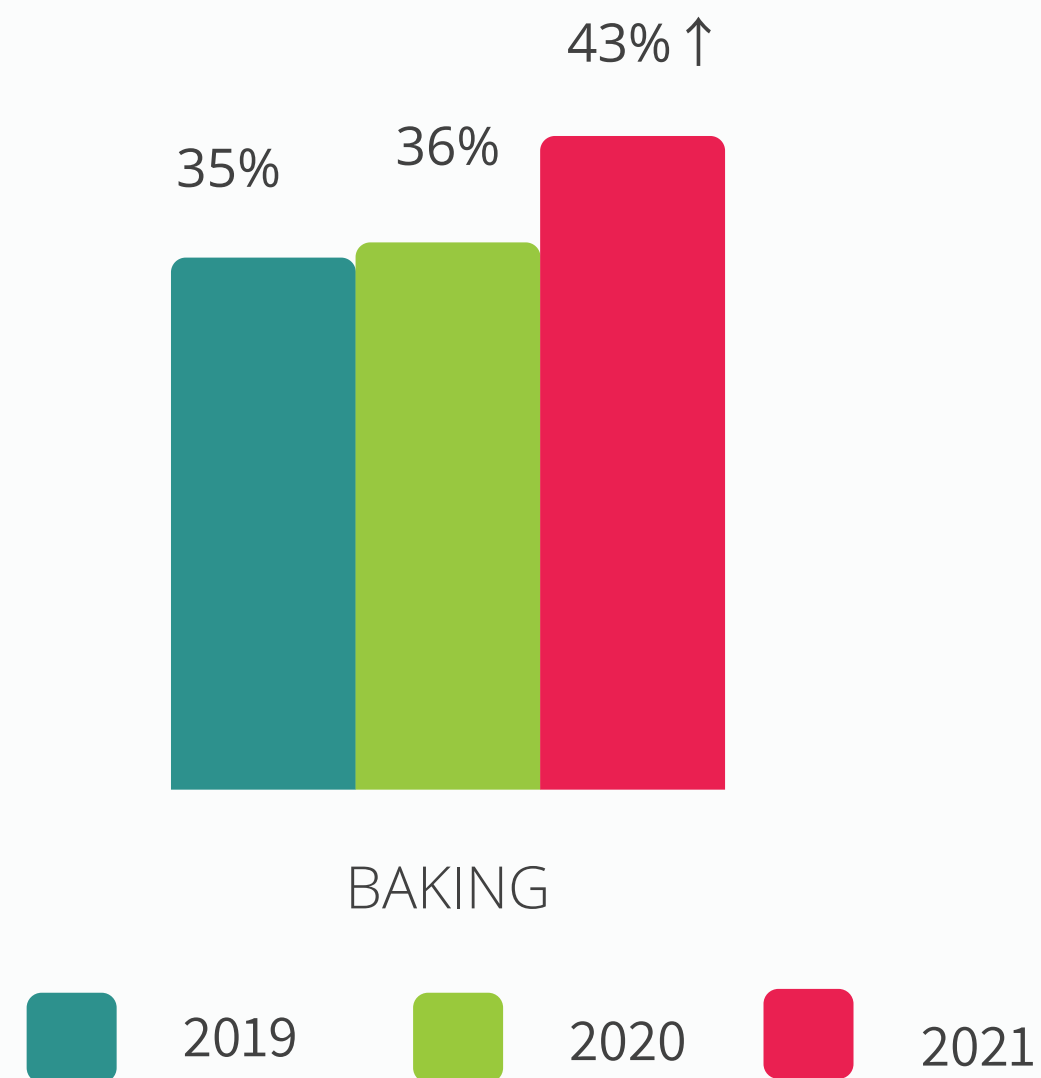




# INDIVIDUALS MAY HAVE "KNEADED" TO RELAX OVER THE 2021 HOLIDAY SEASON



## Participation in Holiday Activities, 2019-2021



42%

Reported baking "more than usual" during the 2021 season





# SHAREABLE DESERTS SUCH AS CAKES, SHORTBREADS, AND PIES WERE MOST POPULAR DURING THE 2021 HOLIDAY SEASON

**45%**

OF RESPONDENTS  
BAKED CAKES.

**43%**

OF RESPONDENTS  
BAKED SHORTBREAD  
OR SUGAR COOKIES.

**42%**

OF RESPONDENTS  
BAKED PIES.

Sharing is caring. Respondents seemed to agree with the most popular desserts being treats to delight and entertain others this holiday season.

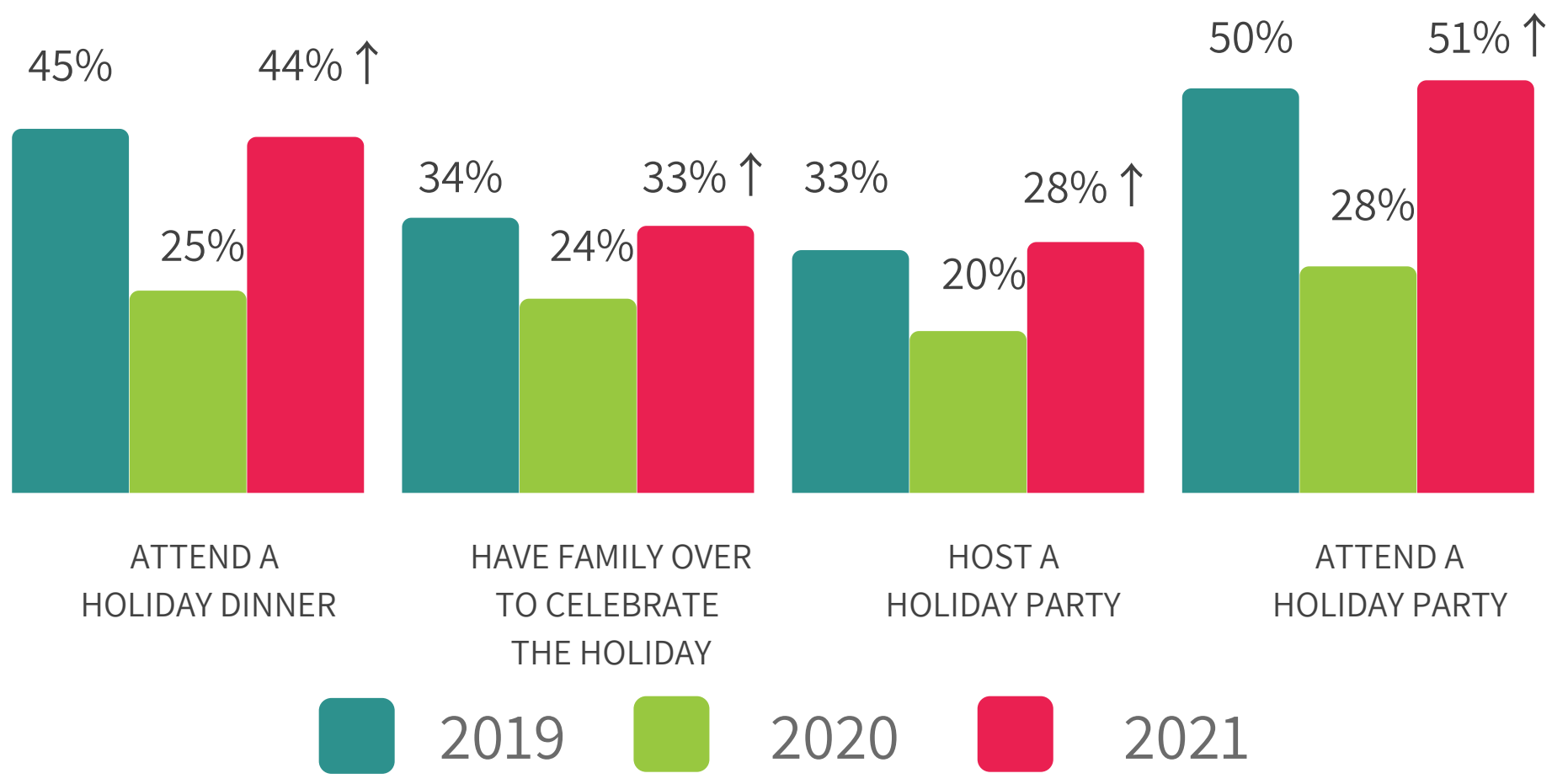


# 2021 SAW A RESURGENCE IN HOLIDAY GATHERINGS



As pandemic restrictions eased, 2021 holiday gatherings returned to the pre-pandemic levels of 2019.

## Participation in Holiday Activities, 2019-2021





# HOSTING WAS IN SEASON

32%

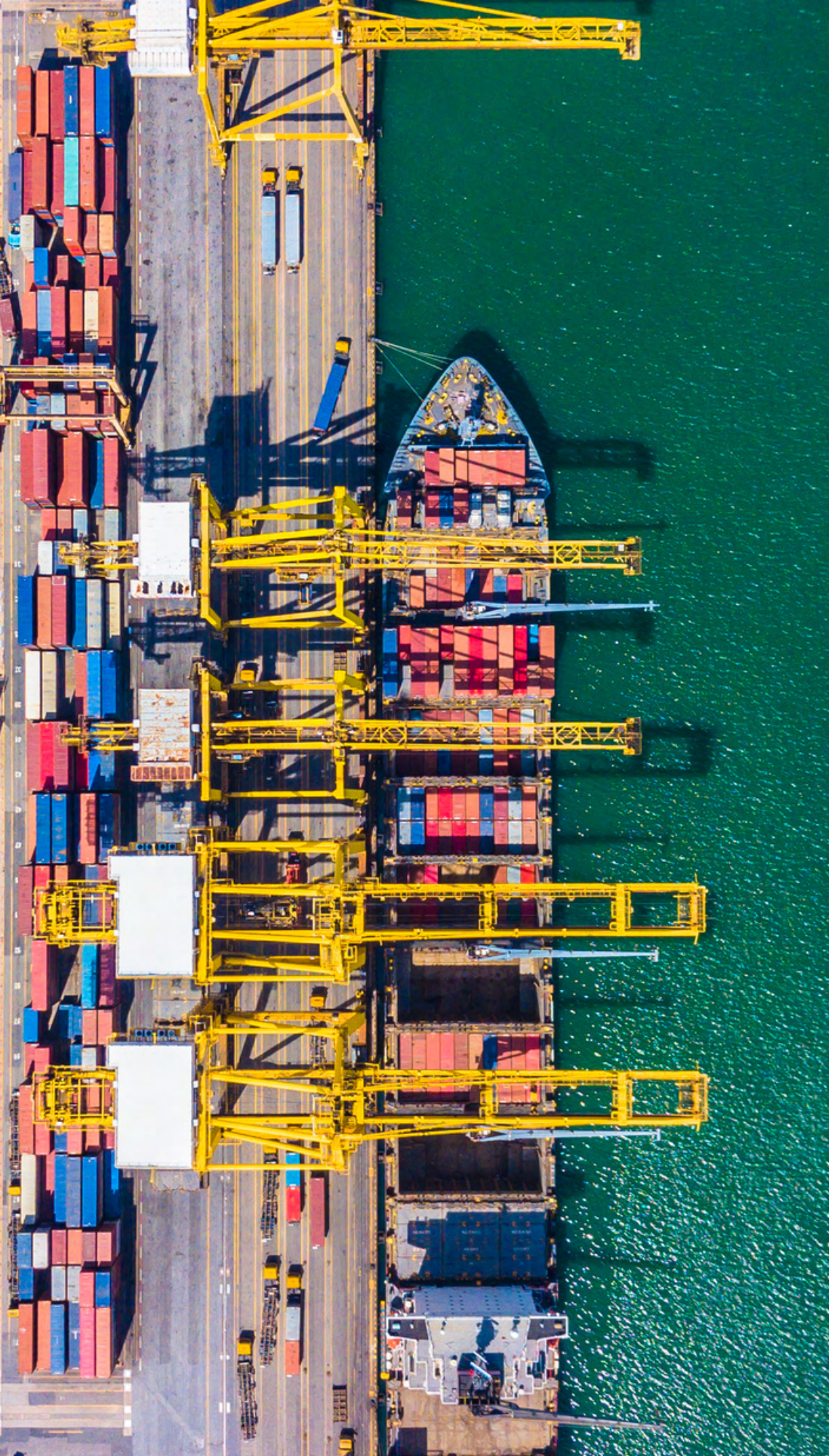
of respondents hosted **one** holiday party in 2021 compared to 22% in 2020.

30%

of respondents hosted **two** holiday meals in 2021, up from 24% in 2020.







# THE IMPACT OF SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES & INFLATION WERE TOP OF MIND THIS HOLIDAY



79%

were Somewhat or Very Concerned about **supply chain** issues impacting their holiday



82%

were Somewhat or Very Concerned about **inflation** impacting their holiday



# HOLIDAY DEAL SEARCHING BEHAVIOR INCREASED IN 2021



Many shoppers planned to spend less on gifts for the 2021 season to ensure they could maintain the same breadth of gifting as in previous years. For others, they reduced the amount of gifts and spend this year.

## Impact of Inflation Concerns on Holiday Spending





# WHILE SHOPPERS WERE REDUCING THEIR SPENDING IN SOME AREAS, HOLIDAY FOOD AND BEVERAGE WAS STILL AN INDULGENCE

## Top 10 Premium Holiday Food & Bev



1. Meat (59%)
2. Alcohol (54%)
3. Cookies (54%)
4. Coffee (49%)
5. Frozen Desserts (47%)
6. Dairy (38%)
7. Produce (34%)
8. Crackers (34%)
9. Confectionery (31%)
10. Salty Snacks (23%)



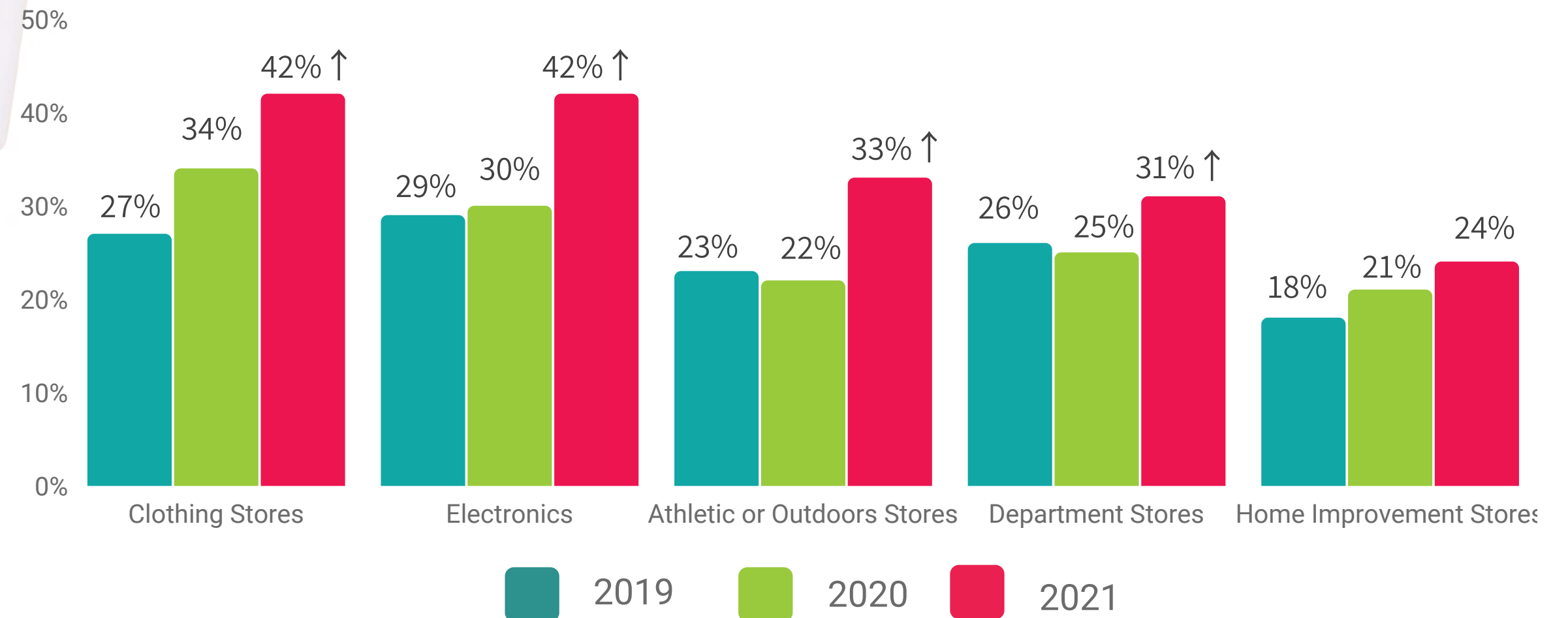


# MOST HOLIDAY SHOPPING WAS PURCHASED ONLINE

52%

of purchases for the holiday season were reportedly purchased online, consistent with 2020. A significant increase vs. pre-pandemic (39%)

## Online Holiday Shopping, 2019-2021





# CHOCOLATE, CANDY, GIFT CARDS, & TOYS RANKED HIGHEST FOR 2021 STOCKING STUFFERS

Stocking stuffers were popular this year amid decked-out halls with 83% of respondents including purchasing them in their holiday activities.



72%

OF RESPONDENTS GIFTED CHOCOLATE COMPARED TO 49% IN 2020.



69%

OF RESPONDENTS GIFTED CANDY COMPARED TO 53% IN 2020.



56%

OF RESPONDENTS GAVE GIFT CARDS COMPARED TO 37% IN 2020.



36%

OF RESPONDENTS GIFTED TOYS COMPARED TO 23% IN 2020.



# MOST AMERICANS (58%) PLAN TO MAKE A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION



66%

PLAN TO EAT HEALTHIER

52%

PLAN TO EXERCISE MORE

48%

PLAN TO SAVE MONEY

These trends are consistent with previous years. Other resolutions include: losing weight, eating more vegetables, increasing self care, and spending more time with friends and family.





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