



pentawards

TRENDS REPORT

2023-24



Having looked through over 2,000 entries from over 64 countries submitted into the latest competition, we've had the privilege to witness trends and developments in packaging design from around the world.

We've identified 10 key trends from these entries that are set to shape and influence packaging design in the year to come. Some have developed out of trends we observed in last year's report and others are emerging trends that we are set to see carve the way forward to future developments in packaging design.

We're delighted to share these insights with you here and hope you find them a useful guide to where the packaging design sector is today – and where it's headed to next!

The Pentawards Team



INTRODUCTION



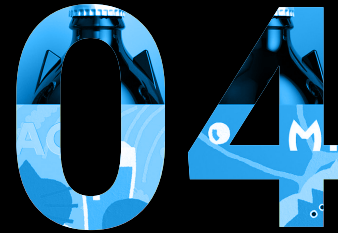
**Design With
Purpose**
Pages 4–5



Moving Parts
Pages 6–7



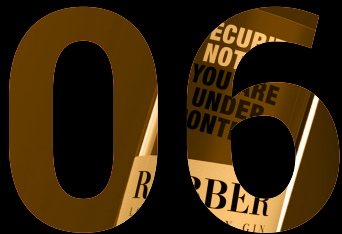
Back To Basics
Pages 8–9



**The Art Of Subtle
Details**
Pages 10–11



A Closer Look
Pages 12–13



Making A Statement
Pages 14–15



Shadow Play
Pages 16–17



Layering Up
Pages 18–19



Rock Textures
Pages 20–21



**All About The
Numbers**
Pages 22–23



BOSAI GIFT

drawrope, Japan

HOME, LEISURE & OTHER MARKETS - Household goods, GOLD



CAT FOOD

MYS GROUP CO., China

HOME, LEISURE & OTHER MARKETS - Pet products, GOLD

01

Design With Purpose

When design transcends aesthetics to carry meaningful messages, this not only captures attention, but also sparks awareness and encourages positive actions. It is an illustration of how design can be elevated to convey purpose, educate, and inspire action.

LA PITA's '**BOSAI GIFT**', designed for the Japanese earthquake-prone community, serves as more than just a product; it's a solution to a critical problem, promoting preparedness and care. The packaging goes beyond aesthetics by emphasising the significance of disaster prevention, and introducing a market where such gifts are given. The dual functionality of the packaging as a lantern during disasters adds a layer of purpose, ensuring that even the packaging contributes to safety and comfort.

The caption on **CAT FOOD**'s packaging speaks to empathy and understanding. Depicting the daily struggles of stray cats through illustrations, the packaging captures a heart-warming narrative, while the choice of colours and the empathetic tone of the caption convey the essence of the product, demonstrating a commitment to pet well-being and an understanding of their needs.



OMel
Omdesign, Portugal
SUSTAINABLE DESIGN - Branding & Consumer, GOLD

01

We also love **OMel's** packaging design, which comes alive with a story of sustainability and with a second purpose as a pre-built beehive. The caption 'Bee or not to bee? This the question', cleverly engages readers, inviting them to reflect on the importance of bees in the ecosystem, raising awareness of nature's balance and the need for conscious action.

What's next:

We're becoming ever more conscious of the materials we use, and brands will continue to strive to engage discerning Gen Z consumers seeking intention and authenticity that aligns with their core values. With this in mind, we see it as inevitable that packaging will increasingly serve not only its primary function of protecting the product - but also to engage consumers in meaningful messaging that has a wider impact.



“Packaging designed beyond the core purpose of protecting and selling a product. It’s a canvas to deliver a brand’s responsible values and connect on an emotional level. It can change how consumers think, feel and act. Creating more meaningful experiences in a world where connection is more important than ever.”

Anita Kuit,
 Branding & Packaging EMEA | Global Product
 Creation - The Walt Disney Company

Stereoscope

Olsson Barbieri, Norway

BEVERAGES - Tea and coffee (dry and capsules), CERTIFICATE



SOAPUME PAPIER

underline graphic.inc, Japan

BODY, HEALTH & BEAUTY - Health care, GOLD

02 Moving Parts

We're seeing more imaginative uses of paper packaging, adding value to the unboxing experience as well as introducing a more environmentally conscious way of delivering products to consumers - and sharing key product information.

For **Stereoscope's** coffee collection, for example, design studio Olsson Barbieri created boxes whose pyramid-like shape resembles mountains, symbolising the high altitudes where Coffee Arabica is grown. The design means the boxes can be easily interlocked for shipping, with the brand's '2-pack' subscription box in a leaning prism shape to optimise space. A glue-free card system for labelling different coffee variations further increases the sustainability of the packaging system and invites the consumer to learn more.

Next, we have **Soapume Papier's** compact and sturdy paper sleeves by Underline Graphic Inc., which replace conventional plastic soap cases and are designed with a sliding feature for an enjoyable unboxing experience. The sleeves are made using sturdy paper from Takeo Co. made from 100% recycled materials, strong enough to carry the soap. Vibrant colour palettes set various fragrances apart, enhancing visual appeal.



Lets Care
Shanghai Key Advertising Co., China
BODY, HEALTH & BEAUTY - Garments and accessories, SILVER

02

Let's Care's packaging design by Shanghai Key Advertising Co. Ltd uses two components to offer a unified packaging design across products: an all-purpose box, as well as an envelope with a cut-out design to reveal information on the product. This streamlines packaging inventory for the brand, reducing environmental impact without inflating packaging costs.

What's Next:

Paper offers an endless array of design possibilities. When used creatively in packaging it can invite a sense of play and interaction while serving as an efficient and streamlined solution. We're looking forward to seeing more imaginative glue-free paper packaging designs which make clever use of paper's structural qualities to create sturdy, tactile and environmentally friendly packaging.

"It's great to see the imaginative use of paper and cards as alternatives to single-use plastic. Some brands playfully combine paper and print processes with structure and die-cuts to create movement, enhancing the unboxing experience and engagement with product information."

Jon Marshall,
Partner at Pentagram



03 Back To Basics

One of the key trends we've picked up on this year is that of luxury brands minimising the use of materials in their packaging. This can be done as a way of making product packaging more sustainable, but it also helps create a clean, minimalist appeal for higher-end products. This aesthetic could evoke a sense of nostalgia - harking back to the 20th century when glass bottles with embossed designs graced the shelves - while embossed lettering and visuals on glass also add rich texture.

dMANNER's package design, crafted by T-Workshop, uses an angular label-free bottle to display their chilled white wine, while Denomination follows suit with a new design for **Crate**. Being the first brand to launch a label-less wine bottle and craft on lightweight, transitional glass, important elements such as the brand logotype, varietal, region, vintage, legal claims, barcode, brand messaging, and a QR code are added to the bottle without residual glue and ink.



dMANNER
T-Workshop, China
BEVERAGES - Wine light, GOLD



Crate
Denomination, Australia
BEVERAGES - Wine
dark, BRONZE





“It is clear to see that the luxury segment is embodying sustainability, but they are also bringing beauty, showing that sustainability and beauty are not two separate entities and together luxury, beauty and sustainability can work coherently to create minimalist design that is desirable to the consumer to help change the future of the planet.”

Jo Smith,
Design & Visual Identity Leader, Diageo

03

With craftsmanship at the heart of its design, the **Gotogin Tsubomi** bottle's mould was hand-carved over 100 days. Inspired by Nagasaki's Goto Islands, the Tsubomi bottle draws design elements from the camellia flower, the core ingredient found in abundance on the island, displayed on a clear glass bottle that envisions the ocean's hues and the aromatic elements of the flower. The bottle itself is crafted with local Goto Island ingredients.

What's Next:

This trend is a win-win for packaging: not only are you minimising materials used - you're also adding texture and visual intrigue to your product. It's important however to note that the choice of decoration technique needs careful consideration beyond the raw material alone to ensure a credible environmental footprint assessment. We look forward to seeing this trend more and more in higher end products - and beyond the drinks industry.



GOTOGIN
KAWAJI YOUSEI DESIGN OFFICE, Japan
BEVERAGES - Spirits clear, CERTIFICATE





MIAO
Left and Right
 Creative Design
 (Shenzhen) Co.,
 China
BEVERAGES - Beer
 and cider, **SILVER**



Carmenero
 Spazio di Paolo, Italy
BEVERAGES - Limited editions, **CERTIFICATE**

04 The Art Of Subtle Details

In drinks packaging in particular, we're seeing brands use subtle details to evoke a particular character or narrative around their products, creating a sense of depth, discovery, and personality.

The packaging for Ca' del Bosco's **Carmenero**: Rivelazione wine uses imagery of a wolf in lamb's clothing to illustrate how the 'revelation' wine - long confused with Cabernet Franc - is now asserting its identity. A blind embossed cloak, adorned with a stamped gold interior, symbolises the lamb's 'disguise'. When lifted, the cloak unveils the hidden wolf underneath, depicted with a stamped gold gaze against forest foliage.

More animal imagery can be found in **MIAO's** Craft Beer, this time with a cat-inspired brand identity to evoke a leisurely, playful and comforting feel for post-work beer drinkers. Colourful graphics on the label display cats in various states of relaxation, with distinctive cat ears added to the beer bottle itself.



Cutthroat Gin
 Mousegraphics, Greece
 BEVERAGES - Spirits clear, SILVER

04

And lastly - Mousegraphics' design for **Cutthroat Gin** emphasises the brand's distinctive identity and steam-punk attitude, steeped in darker 1880s influences, with a diagonal 'cut' across the bottle. The motif also implies the distinguished nature of the gin - a cut above others.

What's Next:

Everyone likes packaging with a bit of character. What these designs manage to do is maintain a certain subtlety and elegance - so they stay on the right side of fun versus gimmick. We look forward to seeing more of these clever, subtle details in packaging design to bring a sense of playful character, without going overboard and distracting from the product itself.

"In packaging design, always try to engage as many senses as possible. Incorporate unexpected and subtle details to create an even stronger emotional bond; use wordings, colour, hue and tactile elements to enhance the narrative."

Johanna Augustin,
 Managing Partner - Pond Design





Iwatale Pickles

Landor & Fitch Japan, Japan

FOOD - Ready-to-eat dishes and fast food, CERTIFICATE

05

A Closer Look

In another trend, colourful products are used as vibrant backgrounds to 'cut-out' graphics on pack - often giving away a richer story than meets the eye.

Inspired by the Japanese concept of onko-chishin, which means 'to explore the past deeply to birth wisdom and answers for the present', the packaging design for **Iwatale Pickles** features traditional Japanese paper cutouts as a recurring motif. The QR code on the packaging provides digital access to folktales that are being brought to life, as well as stories about the provenance, process, and community brought together by the humble pickles. In a special added touch, once the product has been used - the packaging can be used to hold tea-lights, casting shadows from the cutouts to provide the perfect storytime backdrop.

Nettle has been redesigned to reflect the brand's premium positioning and appeal to both food connoisseurs and those following a strict plant-based diet. The new marque is a nod to tradition, while the sharp, tangy nature of the product is communicated through the crafted, modern 'edge'. Touches of gold add extra premium cues, and a new tone of voice accentuates the artisanal nature of the product range.



Nettle

Lewis Moberly, UK

FOOD - Plant-based, vegan and alternative foods, CERTIFICATE



Casa Marrazzo 1934
Auge Design, Italy
Diamond – Best of Show

05

Inspired by the company's rich heritage and nostalgic appeal of **Casa Marrazzo 1934**, the oversized objects are screen-printed with an opaque finish on clear glass, using the colour of the ingredients as a background. The custom caps and elegant palette identify each product, while the simple and colourful gold-printed labels make the jars stand out on the shelf as design objects.

What's Next:

We love how this packaging style puts the product inside proudly on display, giving consumers a closer look at what they are buying. The simple and elegant design adds a superior feel to it, which also inspires the packaging's 'second life' aspect. We're intrigued to see how this could be pushed further with more diverse packaging solutions that highlight the product inside whilst also considering its purpose after use.



“Glass jar transparency transforms food into vibrant canvases for bold, impactful graphic elements. This distinctive solution adds an artistic voice, giving the jar a second life as a stylish, decorative design object that preserves elegance.”

Miriam Frescura,
 Associate Creative Director - Auge Design



Please Don't Buy Our Capsules
Design Bridge and Partners, UK
SUSTAINABLE DESIGN - Branding & consumer, BRONZE

06 Making A Statement

In several packaging designs this year, we've seen the use of bold statements in punchy lettering to create immediate impact and grab attention, delivering key brand values, messaging and product features.

Nespresso, a B-Corp since 2022, aims to put sustainability at the heart of its brand - and its recyclable coffee capsules play a critical part in this. But what's the use in a recyclable product if it doesn't get recycled? A clear statement on Nespresso's capsule recycling bag urges consumers to help close the loop: 'If you're not going to recycle, please don't buy our capsules.'

Next up, inspired by the Italian wordplay around 'Rapina' (meaning 'robbery') and the home of its manufacturing company in Rapino, **ROBBER GIN** stands out with its red packaging. The design's focus is the surveillance statement 'YOU ARE UNDER CONTROL', rendered with invisible paint that transforms under UV light into 'YOU ARE OUT OF CONTROL', capturing a sense of liberation and rebellion.



“Bold typography makes a lasting impression in packaging design. Crafting statements with punchy lettering elevates brands, instantly communicating values, messaging, and product features. In a world of visuals, make your statement unforgettable. Be bold, never regular!”

Paul Roeters,
 Creative Director, Studio Kluif

06



ROBBER GIN
Spazio Di Paolo, Italy
BEVERAGES -
Private labels,
CERTIFICATE

Finally, our hearts were warmed by **SuperRebel** Agency's packaging for their seasonal gift, the knitted SuperRebel brand sweater. The product's multifunctional packaging doubles as insulation material for various uses, with a playful message 'This is for the knit wits' evoking a fun and playful brand attitude.

What's Next:

This trend for direct call-to-actions on pack is one we've picked up on in recent years; unsurprisingly, as sustainability continues to grow as a priority, brands have been employing this technique to urge positive consumer behaviour. Aside from these sustainable CTA's, however, we also envisage more brands using bold statements as opposed to just bold colours to create product standout and catch people's attention.



This is for the
Knitwits
SuperRebel
Agency,
Netherlands
BRAND
IDENTITY &
CONNECTED
PACKAGING -
Self promotion,
SHORTLISTED



Quadraft Brewing
After Path Design, China
 BEVERAGES - Beer and cider, GOLD

07 Shadow Play

This year, we've seen several examples of silhouettes being used to express visual elements of packaging design - to convey themes, stories and brand values in a minimalist but bold way.

Prosperous Chang'an, a tea brand promoting Shaanxi tea culture, uses modern graphics in silhouetted form to convey the traditional story of how its tea is harvested and made. Inspired by gold and silver tea sets from the Tang Dynasty, the packaging design uses silhouettes creatively to bridge the gap between contemporary and traditional, showcasing the brand's historical roots and its vibrant products.

Meanwhile, **Quadraft Brewing's Zoo** wild ale packaging design embraces the natural world with an emphasis on animal silhouettes. The design aims to capture the essence of nature's vitality, utilising rough silhouettes against a black-and-white palette employing a fresh, innovative visual system.



**SHENG SHI
 CHANG AN**
IDEAFINE, China
 BEVERAGES - Tea
 and coffee (dry
 and capsules),
 SILVER

Enrico Toro Liquori
Spazio Di Paolo, Italy
BEVERAGES - Private labels, GOLD



07

A similar theme is to be found in **Enrico Toro Liquori's** packaging, which uses silhouettes of indigenous animals from the Abruzzo National Park on the labels, adding a retro and rustic charm reminiscent of straw coverings, while also highlighting the brand's commitment to local resources.

What's Next:

With a quality reminiscent of shadow theatres from the 18th and 19th centuries, for us, these silhouetted visuals have a strong nostalgic narrative power - and their mysterious quality invites intrigue and a sense of imagination. We'd like to see more examples of designers incorporating these darkened images to tell stories around brand and product history and manufacture.



“This technique takes us back in time to the beginnings of graphic design, where attention to content, especially in advertising posters, was enhanced by this technical minimalism, increasing attention to the communication itself. The elimination of shades and three-dimensionality combined with a distinctive colour contrast makes it extremely effective also in today’s packaging design.”

Mario di Paolo,
Founder & Creative Director, Spazio Di Paolo

Clos du Val Bernard's Cuvée
CF Napa Brand Design, United States
BEVERAGES - Wine dark, SILVER



08 Layering Up

Layering offers a kind of metaphor in packaging, inviting consumers to uncover stories, histories, and messages as they encounter a product. Packaging is more than protection; it's a canvas for storytelling, and here, we see that layers have been used to indicate transitional processes, stories and layers of ingredients.

Clos du Val Bernard's Cuvée's historical layers merge to honour the winery's 50th year and its pioneer, using overlapping labels to create a collage of Bernard's journey and iconic moments in three layers of historical artefacts and photographs to deliver a visual mosaic.

Terroir 41° N, 0° E: The Art of Blending is a harmony of diverse grape varieties, echoing the intricate practice of wine blending. The label is an assemblage of four distinct papers symbolising four grape varieties, each characterised by different hues and weights, unified by a single label.



“In the realm of packaging design, ‘Layering Up’ emerges as an artistic storyteller. Labels become canvases, revealing narratives through clever overlays. The label material isn’t just a medium; it’s a gateway to a world of hidden tales and discoveries.”

Stefano Pistoni,
Senior Manager, Business Development, Wine
& Spirits, Beverage - UPM Raflatac



08

And finally, "**As One with the Olive**" olive oil tells a story of a daughter's reverence for her father, a farmer. The father's transformative journey is told through layers, from rugged hand to delicate olive branch - challenging stereotypes around farmers' work relating to lower social status, and instead emphasising mastery of and connection to the land.

What's Next:

Tactile and visual layering in packaging is doubtless an effective way of adding depth to a design and inviting consumer curiosity. As brands work to minimise materials used, however, we think layering is likely to stick to the visual, rather than physical layering of packaging.

As One With The Olive

Design Bridge and Partners, UK

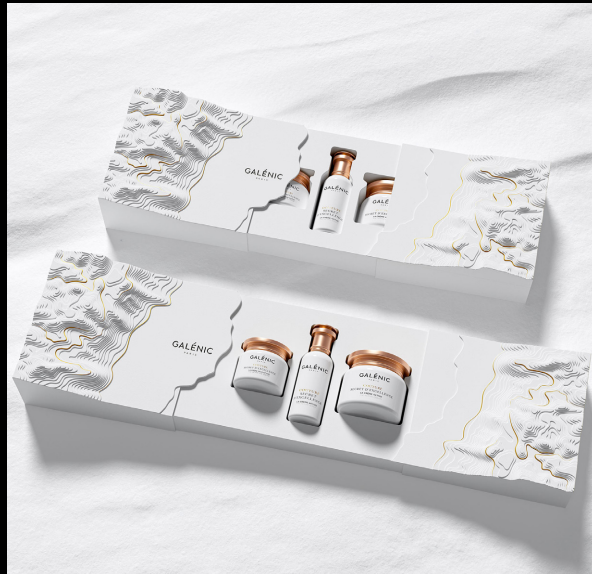
FOOD - Spices, oils, sauces and spreads, GOLD



Terroir 41° N, 0° E
Vamos Estudio, Spain
BEVERAGES - Wine dark, GOLD



Snow Algae Essence
*Shenzhen Red Pony
Design Co., China*
**BODY, HEALTH &
BEAUTY - Skin care,
CERTIFICATE**



Fontecalada
Estudio Pablo Guerrero, Spain
BEVERAGES - Wine dark, BRONZE



09 Rock Textures

These packaging designs get down to earth. We've seen several examples of brands and studios incorporating rock and earth-like textures in their packaging designs, adding visual and tactile richness while reflecting the natural origins and inspiration behind products.

The label for Mencía Red Wine cleverly echoes the mineral-rich **Fontecalada** region; with a real tear on the label to emphasise elements of the terrain, similarly, Shenzhen Red Pony Design's packaging for **Snow Algae Essence's** beautiful sculptural contours replicate the snowfields where snow algae flourishes.

Estudio Maba's design for **Nan Madol's** vodka bottle evokes the effect of water on rock, the lower half of the label making the bottle appear semi-submerged. When placed in an ice bucket, the top layer of blackened paper disappears to reveal symbols telling the story of Nan Madol - an ancient city in micronesia built atop a coral reef.

Nan Madol
Estudio Maba, Spain
BEVERAGES - Spirits clear, GOLD



ISTRIANA
Studio Tumpić/
Prenc, Croatia
**PANTONE - Best
Use Of Colour,
GOLD**



09

Istriana's olive oil bottle design represents integrated fragments of old amphorae, once used for storage and transport of olive oil in the Roman era. Just like the clay that was used to make these, red Istrian earth from olive groves was mixed into the color pigment of the bottle, with cracks in between made of glass, allowing the consumer to glimpse inside the bottle.

What's Next:

As the fragile state of our planet increases our appreciation of the natural world, we can see packaging design taking more direct inspiration from nature's textures and processes in order to engage consumers. We think we'll be seeing more techniques for mimicking behaviours of natural materials to encourage consumer interaction with the packaging.



“Texture: what better way to convey the provenance, origin or natural ingredients of a product? Its presence on packaging, whether in 2D (labelling) or 3D (container/ case), conveys authenticity, honesty and a sense of natural craft. It also caresses, awakens and stimulates our senses, especially touch... and sight”

Jokin Arregui,
Founding Partner and Project Manager -
SERIESNEMO



10 All About The Numbers

These packs creatively incorporate numbers as a core aspect of their label design - whether it's to convey transparency in sourcing, portion guidelines, commemorating milestones, or expressing a brand's character and mood.

The packaging design for **Natural Coordinates'** dried fruit gift box revolves around the concept of '0 agricultural residues'. The visual symbol of 0% is used, incorporating the coordinates of origin, weight, and category on the symbol itself with a dash of humour - 'Have some good fruit to eat,' to promote healthy food choices and lifestyle awareness.

Beast's 35g, the can for Furry Tails 'Tail Life' brand's cat food, highlights the weight of the product. The design tackles the issue of overfeeding by providing smaller packaging portions and clear labelling of quantity. The graphics underscore the 35g weight, while the use of bold colours differentiates flavours.

Beast's 35g
Hangzhou Furrytail
Technology Co., China
HOME, LEISURE &
OTHER MARKETS - Pet
products, CERTIFICATE



Younihaoguozi
Shenzhen Chushan Design
Culture Group Co., China
FOOD - Health and diet
foods, SILVER



Curious Potion
Creative Platform
Pty, Australia
**BRAND IDENTITY
& CONNECTED
PACKAGING -
Self promotion,
CERTIFICATE**

10

Meanwhile, Creative Platform's packaging design for their very own **Curious Potion** gin commemorates the brand's 10-year milestone and client partnerships. The idea revolves around the concept that consuming just the right amount, around a blood alcohol level of 0.075, enhances creative cognition indicated in a design that embraces creativity, fun, and evolving craftsmanship.

And lastly, **MOMENTEN's** sugar-free sparkling wine design focuses on the brand name's significance - the right moment to drink. The bold, generous typeface paired with a vibrant background reflects the founding team's quirky and fun personality.

What's Next:

As health and sustainability become key drivers in brand communications, we can see emphasis on numbers widen to incorporate further credentials for products - whether that's percentage of CO2 emissions or highlighted dietary benefits.



“In a data-driven world, integrating numbers on packaging enables brands to engage with modern consumers in a relevant way, supporting their storytelling with facts. It transforms data into an artful expression, enriching narratives about origins, craftsmanship, and achievements.”

Olivia Estrella,
Omnichannel design strategy manager, Nestlé
Purina

MOMENTEN
E2W Studio, China
BEVERAGES - Low and non-alcoholic drinks, CERTIFICATE



Founded in 2007, Pentawards is the leading global platform and community for packaging design.

Committed to recognising excellence in design, Pentawards provides a source of inspiration and connects people from across the world through its annual competition, gala ceremony, international conferences, digital events, books, social platforms and more.

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64+

Countries take part annually

2,000+

Entries in 2023, of which 20% won a trophy

50+

International Jury Members

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