

Festive shoppers turn to discounters

BY LUKE TUGBY

Seven out of 10 people will shop at discount duo Aldi and Lidl over the Christmas period as consumers hunt for festive food bargains.

British shoppers are expected to spend £20.3bn on groceries between November 20 and December 26, a 1.4% uplift on last year.

And the German grocers, which now hold 10% of the UK grocery market between them, will capture about £1.7bn of that spend, according to forecasts from IGD.

Almost a fifth of shoppers said they planned to spend more on food and drink this year compared with last Christmas, but consumers are still visiting numerous stores in search of the best value.

Some 56% of shoppers told IGD they would visit two or more stores on the same trip to buy their Christmas groceries.

More shoppers are also expecting to do a 'big Christmas shop' online this year, while half of shoppers intend to buy some of their festive groceries on the web. IGD estimates that £1.2bn of grocery sales will be generated online during the Christmas trading period.



Discounters Aldi and Lidl are set to capitalise over the Christmas period as shoppers hunt for grocery bargains

IGD chief executive Joanne Denney-Finch said: "British shoppers are feeling more upbeat about Christmas spending this year.

"A growing number of shoppers are prepared to loosen their purse strings and yet this is counterbalanced by the widespread awareness of how to spend less, for instance by researching online and shopping around.

"People are increasingly expert at hunting down the best value. So although we expect a boost to Christmas food and grocery sales, we believe it will be just a modest one."

Denney-Finch said that shoppers were

turning to the discounters for a range of reasons.

"Beyond saving money, shoppers also cite the quality of products, the new products available and the opportunity to buy items unavailable anywhere else as reasons for shopping in discount stores," she said.

"Supermarkets will remain by far the most popular destination but discounters, specialist stores [such as butchers and off licences] and convenience stores are also favoured by many.

"People are shopping around and spreading their spending across a growing number of formats."