

Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy Canadian foodservice findings
for the week of Jan. 26, 2026



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Evaluating the evolution of cuisine category sales share

Analysis of Technomic's chain restaurant sales trending data reveals that chicken chains have gained the most sales share over the past decade, outpacing rival categories like burger, pizza and Mexican.

Led by the consistent growth of players like the homegrown Mary Brown's brand, as well as rapid expansion from top U.S.-based players, like Popeyes and Chick-fil-A, the chicken category is forecasted to account for nearly 6% of all Canadian

chain restaurant sales in 2025, compared to 3.6% share in 2015.

The burger and pizza chain categories continue to be winners as well, attaining sales share increases of 2.1% and 1.3%, respectively.

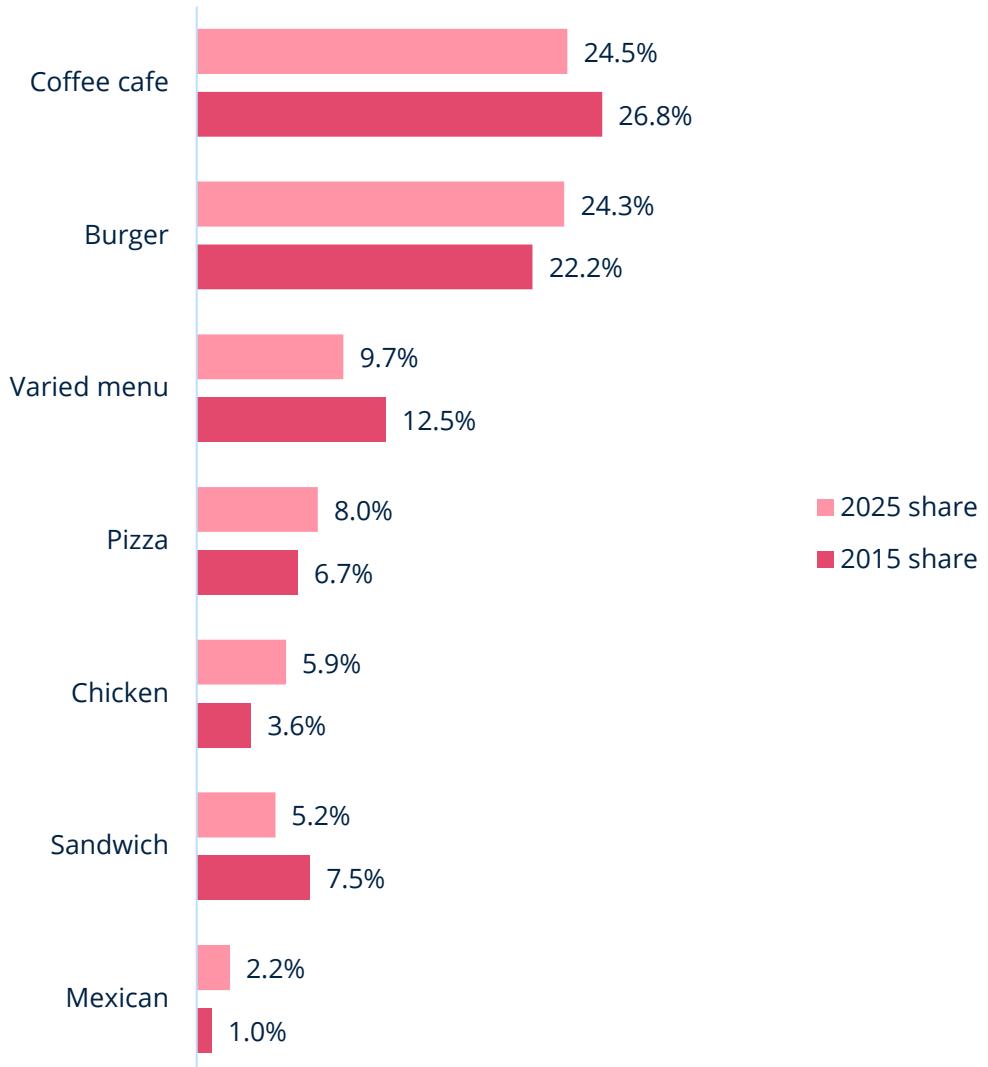
The Mexican category has more than doubled its market share since 2015 due to the success of rapidly growing players like BarBurrito and Quesada Burritos & Tacos.

Ignite Company clients: Click here for more

Source: Technomic Ignite Company

Note: 2025 sales information is preliminary and subject to change

TOP 250 CHAIN RESTAURANTS
SHARE OF TOTAL CHAIN SALES BY CATEGORY



Fastest-growing cheeses at FSRs

Canadian full-service restaurant operators are increasingly menuing a wide array of craveable and versatile cheeses, likely given that the addition of cheese has a 68-cent average impact on price.

Romano cheese, a classic hard cheese, is proliferating on menus. This salty option appears in pizzas and noodle entrees, including ravioli, carbonara, penne and lasagna. For a softer option to use in these Italian classics, operators are increasingly looking to fior di latte, a type of fresh mozzarella. Fior di latte also appears in salads and sandwiches.

Chevre, or goat cheese, is menued with both sweet and savoury dishes. Chevre is a very creamy option and pairs well with fruit in crepes or

pavlovas. It is also plated with salads, as well as hearty pastas.

Operators are spotlighting cotija, an aged Mexican cheese similar to feta. Cotija is plated mainly with Mexican-inspired fare, including tacos, burritos and guacamole. For a flavourful combination, operators are mixing cotija with chipotle aioli or hot sauce.

Paneer is also increasingly popping up across menus. This acid-set, high-protein cheese is commonly menued in Indian cuisine, such as curries, dosas (similar to pancakes or crepes) and as an addition to butter chicken dishes. For a plant-based option, butter chicken can be swapped for paneer, as this cheese holds its shape under high heats, similar to tofu.

FASTEST-GROWING CHEESES AT FSRS

Q3 2024-Q3 2025

Romano

+28%

Chevre

+26%

Paneer

+18%

Fior Di Latte

+14%

Cotija

+23%



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Source: Technomic Ignite Menu
Image Source: Shutterstock

Routine dining and the role of deal-based promotions

During occasions identified as routine visits, deals play a bigger role in the value equation. Consumers are often able to maintain their routine usage when the cost is offset or justified by coupons, discounts or loyalty program points/rewards.

Conversely, deals are less relevant when the occasion is spontaneous or unplanned. These visits tend to be driven by cravings, so consumers are often more focused on satisfying their craving rather than seeking deals or discounts.

Restaurants must tailor their promotional strategies to align with the motivations behind different types of

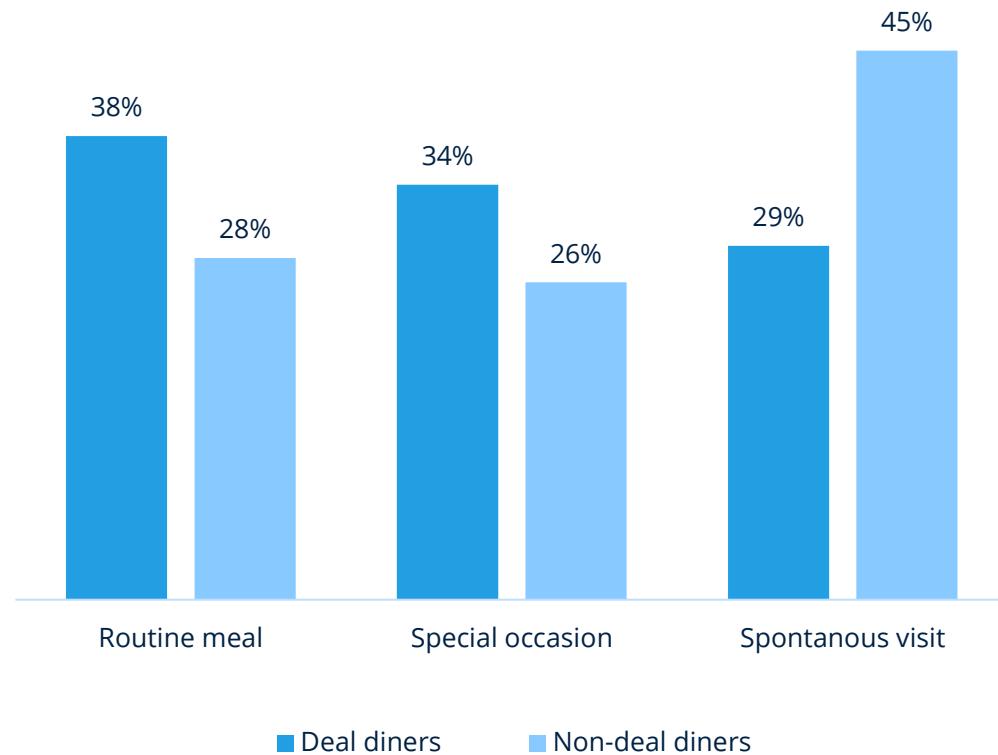
visits. For routine visits, restaurants can focus on offering loyalty programs, recurring discounts or targeted promotions that encourage consistent patronage. For example, discounts tied to specific days, times or meal bundles can help sustain steady traffic and build long-term customer relationships.

On the other hand, for spontaneous visits, restaurants should emphasize the appeal of their unique menu items or signature dishes. Marketing efforts that highlight crave-worthy options through social media, digital ads or in-store displays can effectively capture the attention of impulse-driven consumers, even without the need for discounts.

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Base: 6,500 Canada consumers ages 18+
Source: Technomic Ignite Consumer

OCCASION SETTING
SHARE OF DINERS WHO REDEEMED A DEAL DURING RECENT OCCASION VS. DINERS WHO DID NOT



How global consumers try new foods

Trying new and unique foods is a key visit occasion for many consumers worldwide, with these offerings often serving as a major driver for consumers to visit one brand over another, especially when released as LTOs.

Here are some insights into how frequently global consumers order new foods when visiting a restaurant:

Sixty percent (60%) of consumers in China and India state that they always or often order a new or unique menu item when dining out—the highest percentages of any countries surveyed and well above the global average of 33%.

Forty-seven percent (47%) of

consumers in the Middle East try new foods when visiting foodservice—8% higher than the nearest regional competitors (Asia at 39%) and easily topping those in North America (27%) or Europe (23%).

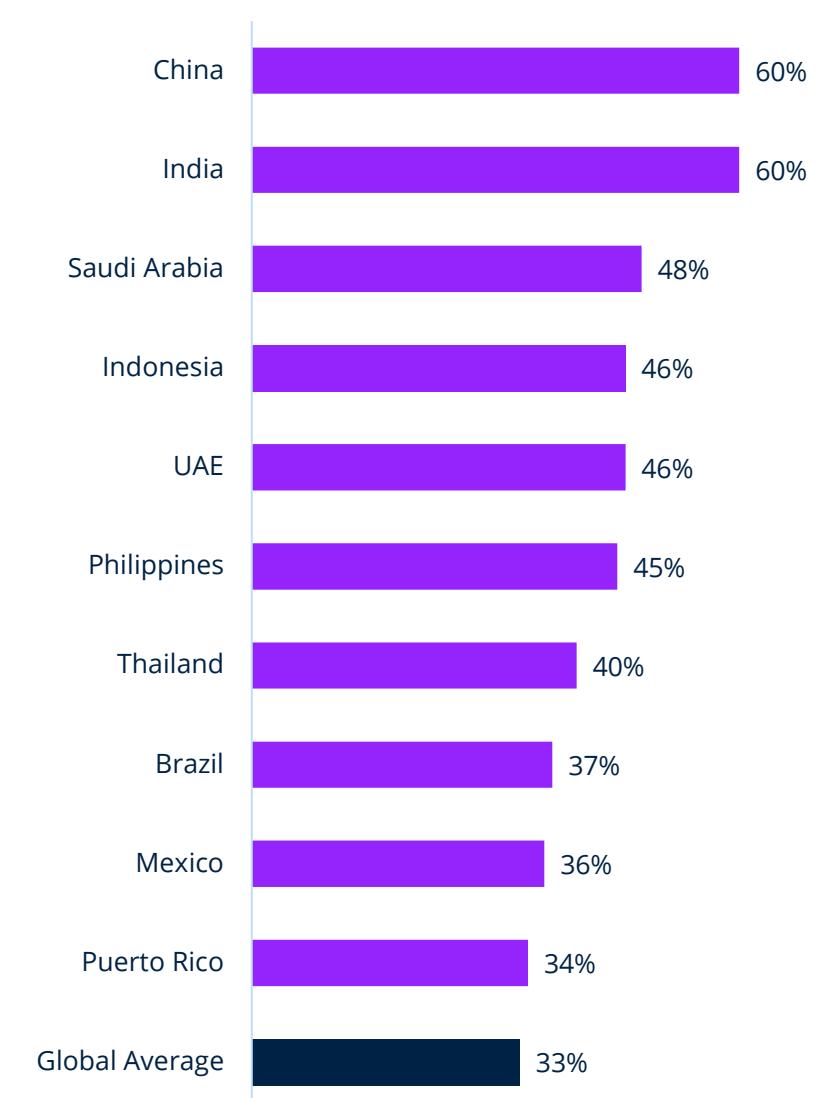
Forty-seven percent (47%) of consumers worldwide at least sometimes order a new or unique dish at foodservice, with this figure showing only minor regional variation (about 50% in Europe Latin America, North America and Asia, and about 40% in the Middle East).

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Source: Technomic Global Foodservice Navigator Program

% CONSUMERS ALWAYS OR OFTEN ORDERING A NEW OR UNIQUE MENU ITEM AT FOODSERVICE



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Our team of experts helps leaders in the industry make complex business decisions, set strategy and stay ahead of the curve.

Have questions?
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312-876-0004
info@technomic.com
technomic.com