

Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy Canadian foodservice findings for the week of February 9, 2026



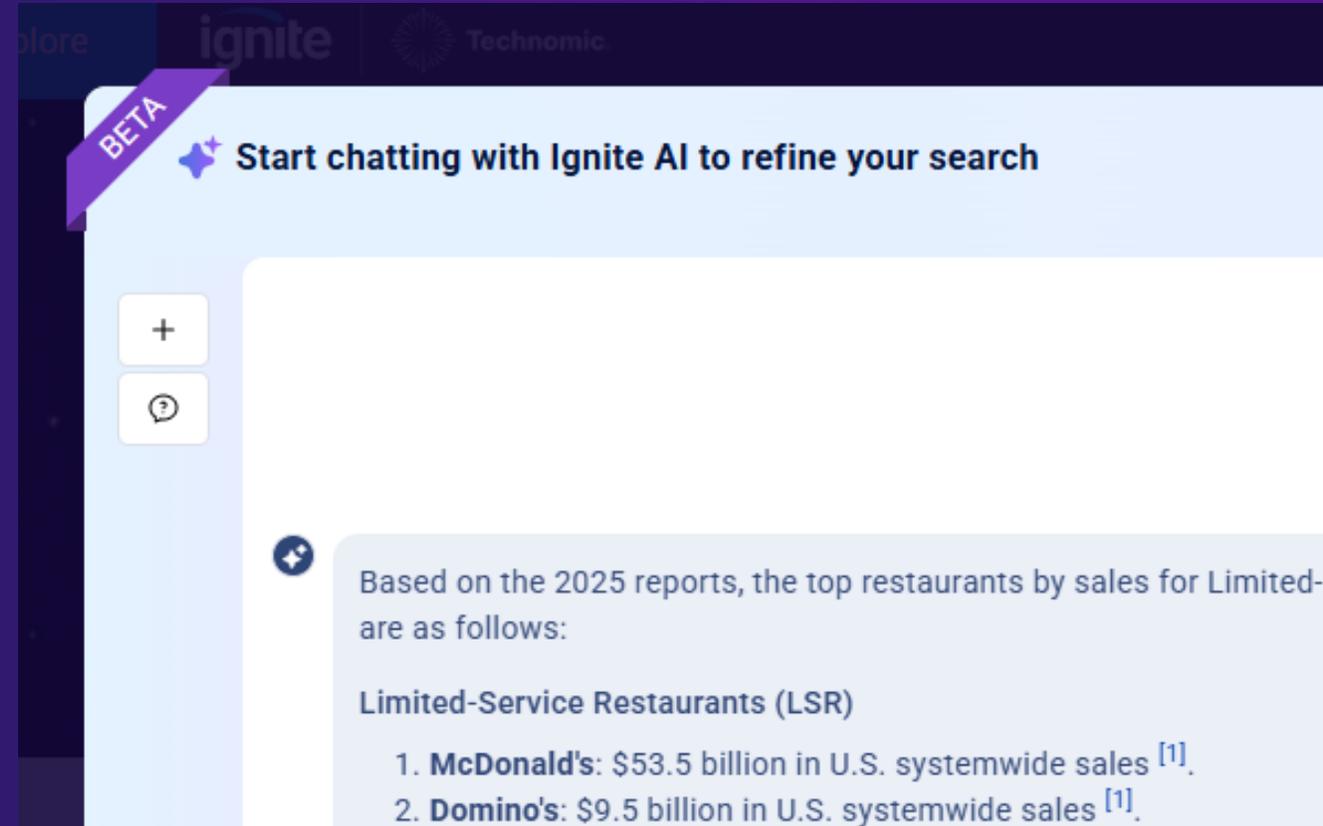
Image Source: Shutterstock

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Ignite AI is live!

Ask questions, **get instant answers** with detailed sourcing directly from Ignite.

Try it now!



The screenshot shows the Ignite AI chat interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the word "ignite" and the Technomic logo. A purple banner with the word "BETA" is visible. Below the banner, a message says "Start chatting with Ignite AI to refine your search". On the left side, there are two buttons: a plus sign and a speech bubble icon. The main chat area shows a response from Ignite AI, which includes a list of Limited-Service Restaurants (LSR) based on 2025 reports. The response is as follows:

Based on the 2025 reports, the top restaurants by sales for Limited-Service Restaurants (LSR) are as follows:

- 1. **McDonald's**: \$53.5 billion in U.S. systemwide sales ^[1].
- 2. **Domino's**: \$9.5 billion in U.S. systemwide sales ^[1].

Ignite Company

Foodservice industry added 20,000+ jobs in 2025

The Canadian foodservice sector showed notable growth in 2025, adding more than 20,000 jobs—an increase of more than 2% compared to the previous year.

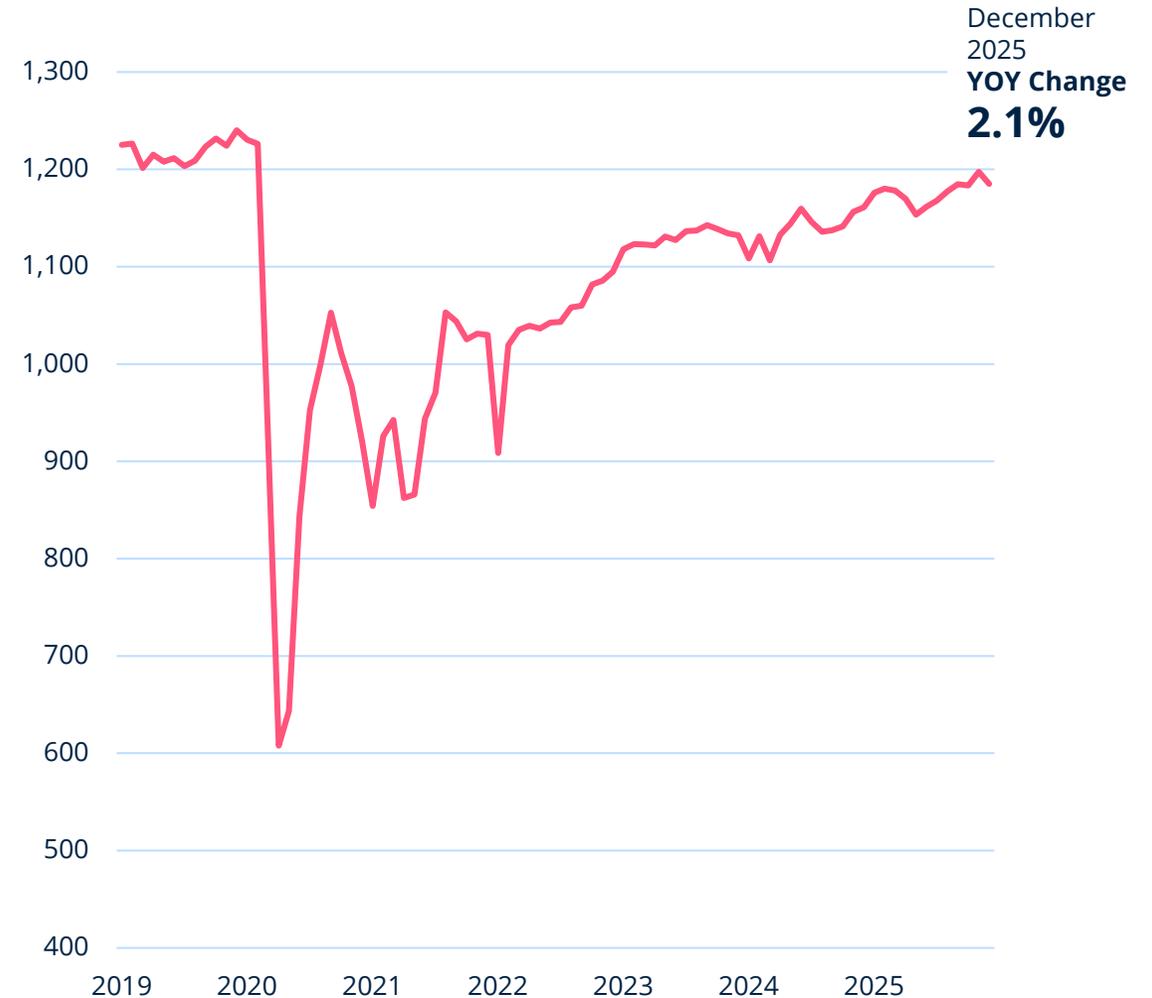
Historically, foodservice employment in Canada reached its peak in 2018, with nearly 1.3 million jobs. However, the sector has experienced several setbacks since then, most notably in 2020, when foodservice industry employment levels were halved due to the widespread impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more key indicators shaping the Canadian foodservice industry, check out Technomic's *Foodservice Industry Economic Indicators*, available on Ignite.

[Ignite Company clients: Click here for more](#)

Category: Accommodation and Food Services
Source: Statistics Canada

CANADIAN FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT
TOTAL INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES



Ignite Menu

Industry challenges slow menu growth

Menu size is growing year over year but continues to moderate, with average item counts showing an increase of 1.3%. This is on trend with the past few quarters, with size increasing 1.9% year over year in Q3 2025, 2.7% in Q2 and 7.8% in Q1 2025. This slope continues its disinflation due to increased challenges, including labor shortages and operational costs.

Add-ons moved back into the lead for mealpart growth (+6.4%), led by a 33.3% increase in both fruit add-ons and combo meal add-ons. Looking further into that increase in fruit add-ons, the fastest-growing options are cherry (+33.3%), mango (+16.4%) and coconut (+10.0%). Drink add-ons (+30.4%) also lead as a low-cost way for consumers to customize a meal.

Speaking of drinks, nonalcohol beverages increased 3.9% year over year, jumping up from a 3.7% year-over-year uptick in Q3 2025. The fastest-growing ingredients were basil seeds (+492.3%), red beans (+463.6%) and grass jelly (+392.9%), and the fastest-growing healthy claims were nonfat (+61.1%), no-sugar (+27.3%) and decaf (+23.2%).

Not only are nonalcohol beverages booming but hot, cold and frozen beverages all saw pricing upticks, up 5.0%, 3.4% and 2.0% average price growth, respectively. Capitalizing on the consumer desire for beverages will also help raise the price of the cheque.

[Ignite Menu clients: Click here for more](#)

Source: Technomic Ignite Menu, Q4 2024-Q4 2025
Image Source: Shutterstock

ITEM COUNT CHANGE % IN THE LAST YEAR Q4 2024-Q4 2025

+6.4%
ADD-ON

-1.3%
APPETIZER

+6.1%
KIDS MENU

OVERALL
+1.3%

+3.9%
NONALCOHOL BEVERAGE

+3.1%
SIDE

+2.3%
DESSERT

+0.9%
ADULT BEVERAGE

+0.2%
ENTREE



Ignite Consumer

Growing importance of music selection in restaurant choices

Music has become a key ingredient in creating the perfect restaurant vibe, with its importance to diners growing by 6 percentage points overall between 2019 and 2025. What was once a minor detail now plays a bigger role in where consumers chose to go. Today's diners expect more than just good food—they want an atmosphere that feels right, and music plays a central role in setting the tone. The right playlist can transform a space, creating a vibe that's welcoming, memorable and aligned with the overall dining experience.

This shift reflects a broader trend: restaurants are now destinations for experiences, not just meals. Music helps shape the mood, influences how

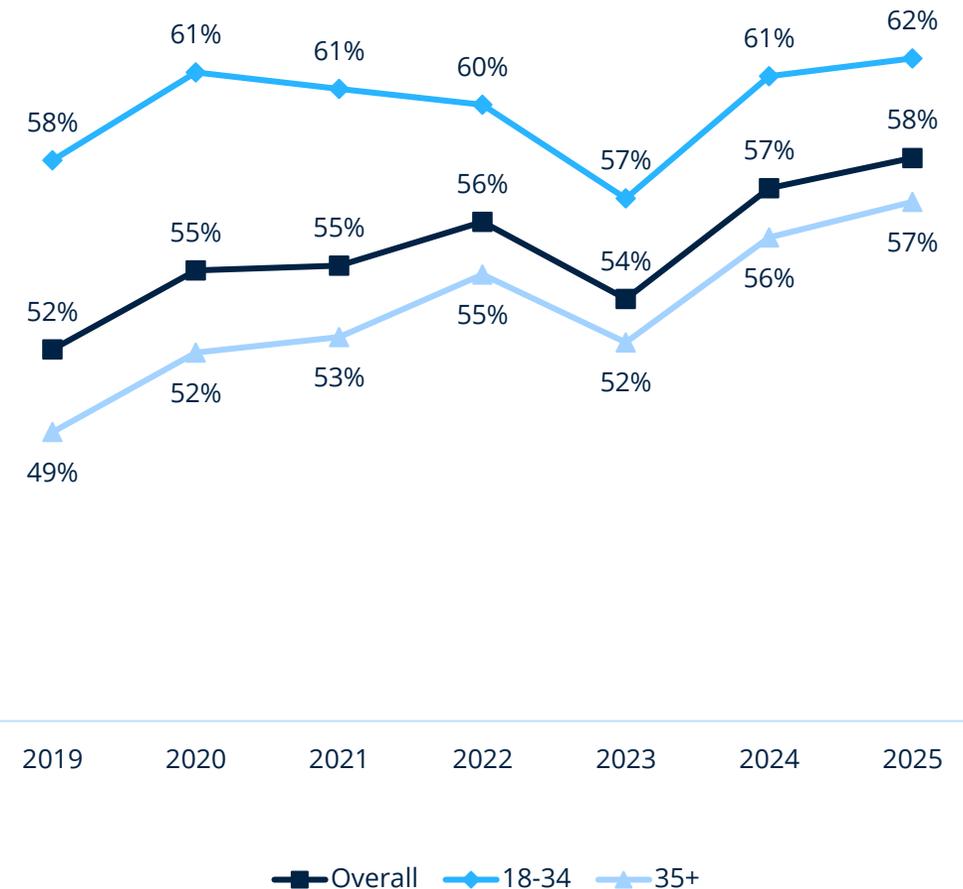
long customers stay and even impacts how much they spend. For operators, this is both a challenge and an opportunity. Music can't be an afterthought anymore—it's a competitive edge. Curating playlists that match your brand and enhance the vibe is essential.

In 2026, diners aren't just choosing food—they're choosing the atmosphere, and music is the key to delivering it.

Ignite Consumer clients: [Click here for more](#)

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

IMPORTANCE OF "MUSIC SELECTION IS APPROPRIATE" WHEN SELECTING A RESTAURANT FOR AN OCCASION
% IMPORTANT/VERY IMPORTANT



Global Foodservice Navigator Program

Where is fried chicken most popular?

Fried chicken is a key dish for global operators, with nearly half of all consumers worldwide ordering it at least occasionally. Here are a few insights into how frequently global consumers order fried chicken at foodservice:

About two-thirds of consumers in Malaysia order fried chicken when dining out at least once every 90 days—the highest of any surveyed market and well above the global average of 42%.

Just under half of all consumers in Asia and the Middle East order fried chicken. These figures are slightly higher percentage than those in Latin America

and considerably higher than seen in North America or, especially, Europe.

Southeast Asia features a disproportionately high percentage of consumers ordering fried chicken compared both to the rest of Asia and to the global average.

Get more data-driven insights into global preferences and trends with Technomic's Global Foodservice Navigator Program.

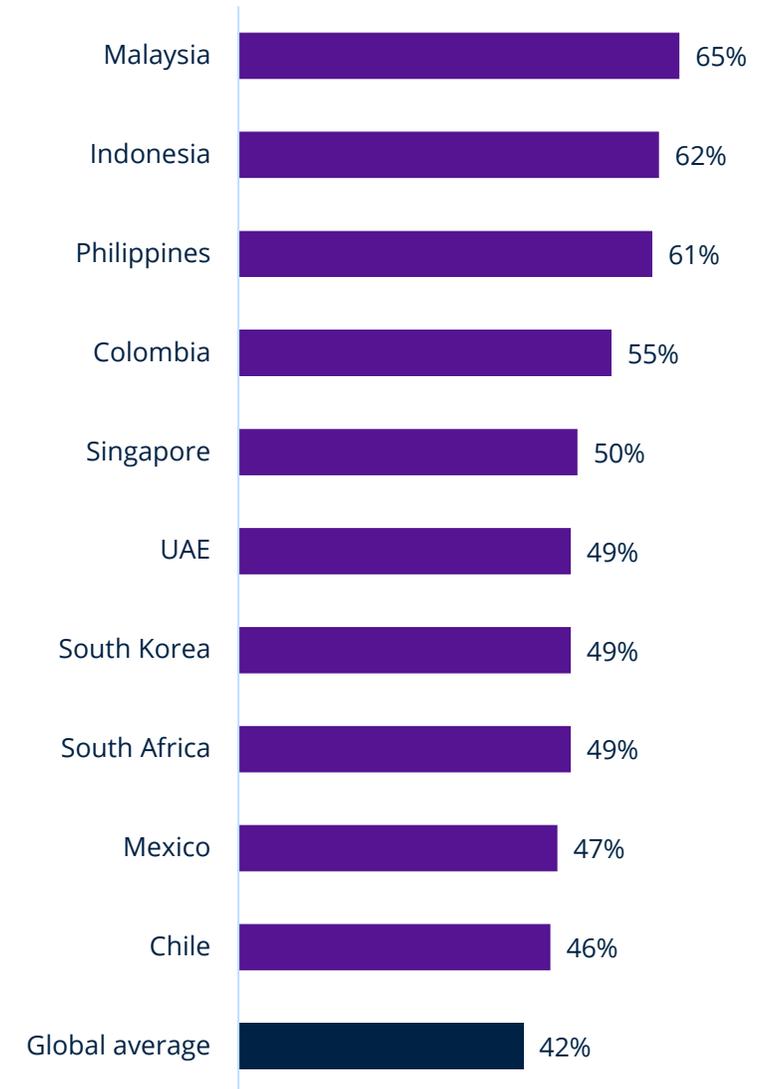
[Global Navigator clients: Click here for more](#)

Q: Which types of food do you order at restaurants or other dining establishments at least occasionally (once every 90 days)? Select all that apply.

Base: 8,602 global consumers

Source: Technomic Global Foodservice Navigator Program Q3 2025 consumer survey

% CONSUMERS ORDERING FRIED CHICKEN AT LEAST ONCE EVERY 90 DAYS



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Global Foodservice Navigator

Understand the global industry, from menu trends to consumers, in 25 markets.

[Explore>>](#)

Since 1966, we have produced in-depth research focused on the foodservice industry.

We provide insights into consumer, industry and menu trends in the U.S., Canada and 23 markets around the world.

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

Have questions?

Reach out to us today.

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