

Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy Canadian foodservice findings for the week of Feb. 23, 2026



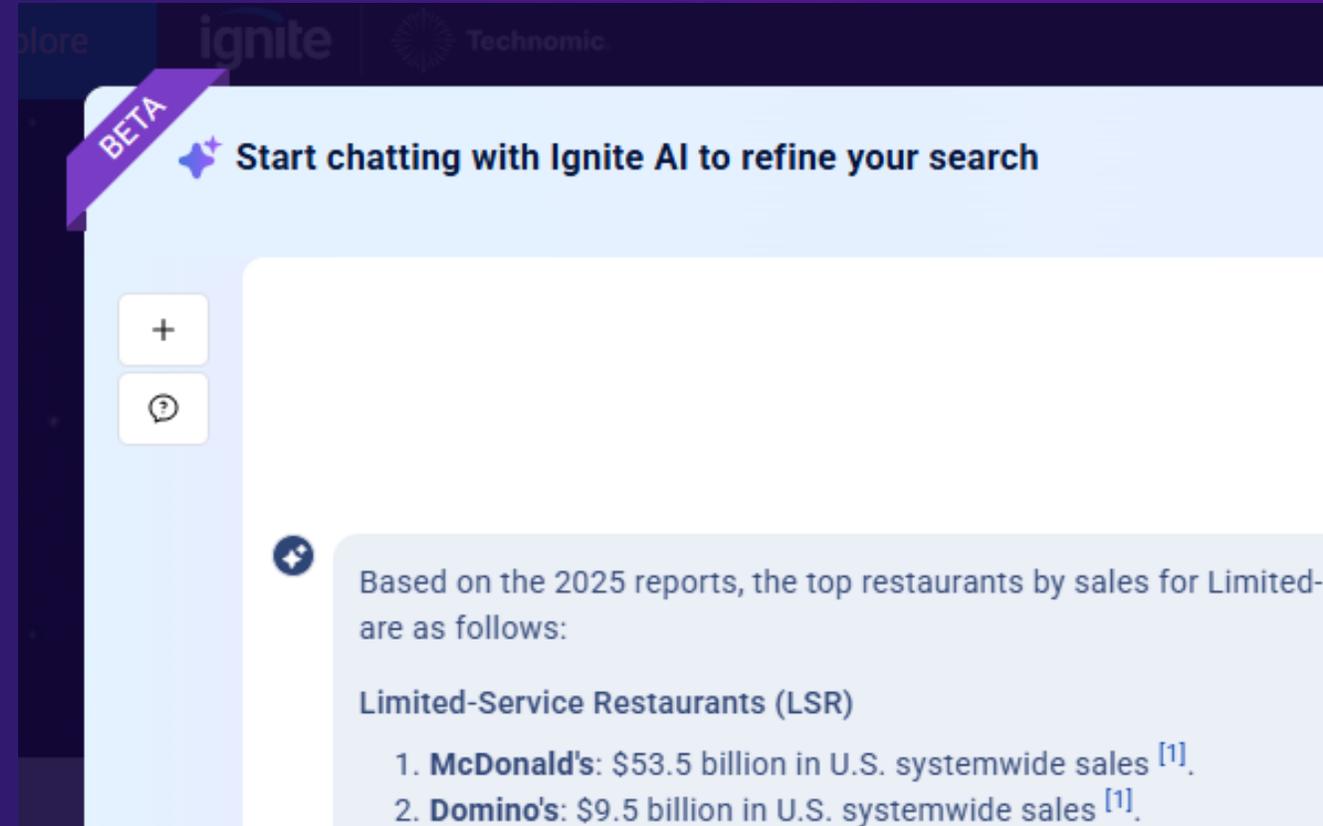
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Ignite AI is live!

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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 contains a message from Ignite AI, which reads: "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]."

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BETA

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

Limited-Service Restaurants (LSR)

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

Tim Hortons returns to growth in Canada

Tim Hortons achieved net location growth in Canada for the first time since 2021, closing 2025 with 3,903 stores, a 0.4% increase from the previous year.

In the U.S., the brand experienced its strongest year for new store openings in a decade, reflecting its growing presence in the market.

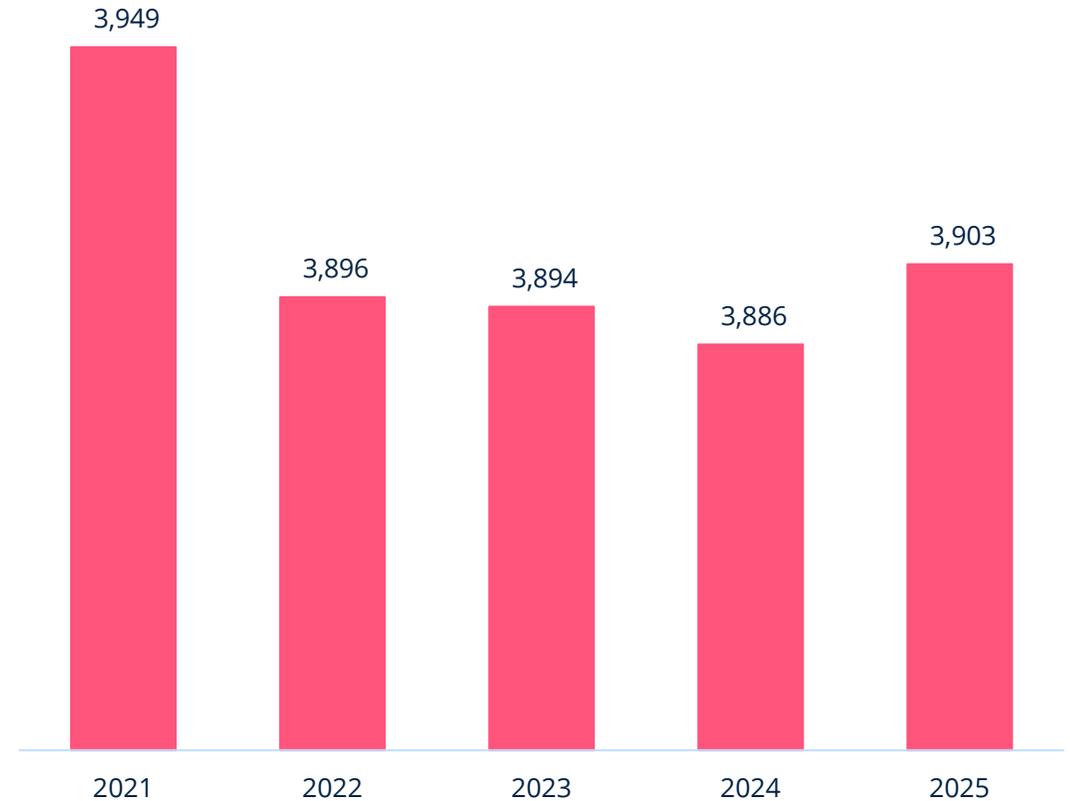
Globally, Tim Hortons continued its expansion, reaching a total of 6,232 locations worldwide, a 3% increase compared to the prior year.

Outside of Canada, the brand's largest markets include China with 896 stores, the U.S. with 683 stores, Mexico with 187 stores and Saudi Arabia with 184 stores.

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Source: Restaurant Brands International investor relations

TIM HORTONS CANADA SYSTEM RESTAURANT COUNT



Ignite Menu

Emerging menu trends to watch

Technomic's recent *Canadian Emerging Eats* report highlights trends from independent restaurant menus in Canada. Here are two menu trends to watch from the most recent installment.

Eccentric Emulsions

Operators are accentuating menu items with unconventional emulsions or quirky preparations of ingredients in emulsion form. These interesting mixtures offer sensory intrigue and textural enhancements.

On the Menu

Vegan Napoleon—black bean cakes, Winkler corn tostadas, pickled rutabaga, layers of **carrot emulsion** and savoury rhubarb port sauce (Fusion Grill in Winnipeg, Manitoba)

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

Source: Technomic Ignite Menu
Image Source: Shutterstock

Crispy New Potatoes—**pumpkin seed emulsion**, crispy Thai sausage, creme fraiche and charred scallion (Lulu Bar in Calgary, Alberta)

Chicken Skin

Operators are repurposing the skin of a chicken as an independent element on a dish to utilize the whole bird, add texture and minimize waste. Chicken skin appears as a crunchy garnish or chip variation on these contemporary creations.

On the Menu

Chicken Skin Chips—with jalapeno cream cheese dip (JinBar in Calgary, Alberta)

Deviled Egg—with **crisp chicken skin**, togarashi and tobiko (Hop Scotch Dinner Club in Halifax, Nova Scotia)



Ignite Consumer

Understanding the quick service drive-thru occasion

The drive-thru has become a defining feature of the quick-service restaurant (QSR) experience, transforming from a mere convenience into an essential component of modern dining. It goes beyond speed and efficiency, catering to the varied preferences of today's consumers—whether they're seeking a quick snack, indulging a craving or enjoying a routine meal.

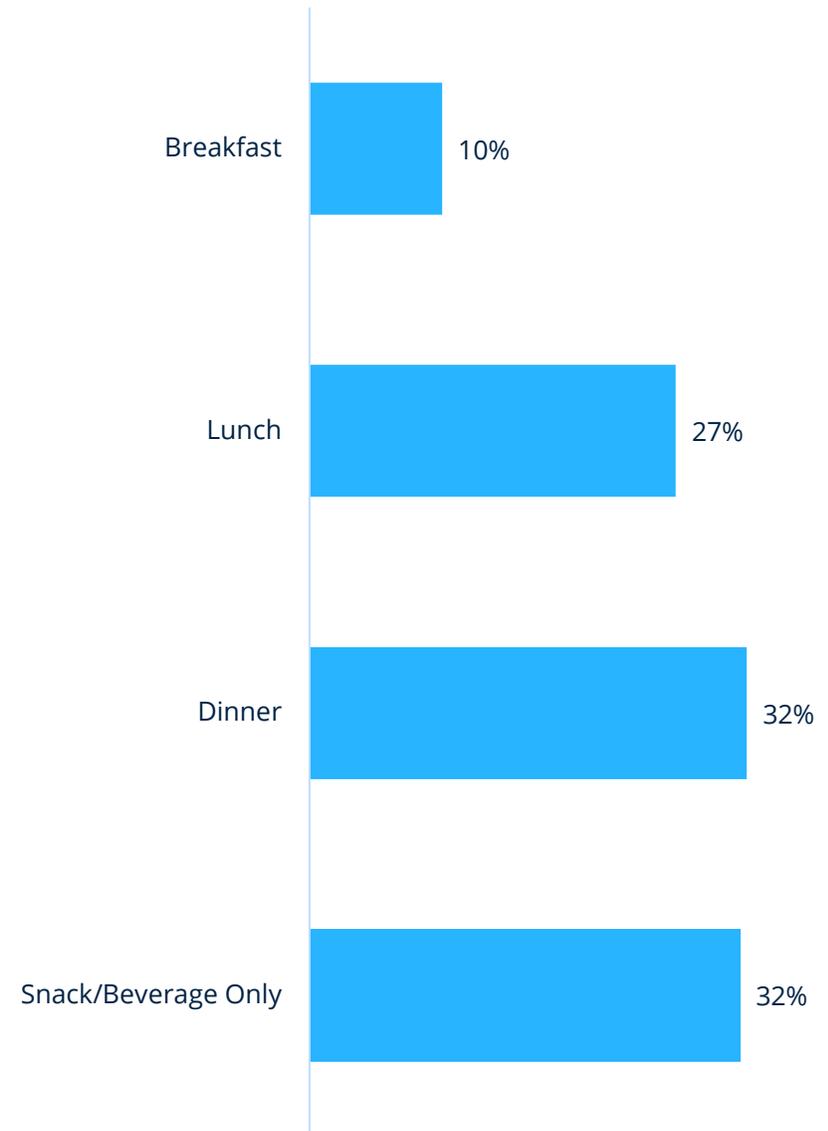
Insights from Ignite Consumer reveal two key trends that hold significant implications for both operators and suppliers. Nearly **32% of drive-thru occasions are snack or beverage-only**, highlighting the demand for quick, indulgent options.

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

Additionally, **49% of drive-thru orders are consumed in the car**, emphasizing the need for portable menu items and smart packaging solutions. These findings underscore the importance of offering comfort-driven, crave-worthy products that align with the on-the-go lifestyle of QSR customers.

QSR DRIVE-THRU DAYPART



Fastest-growing global beverage chains

Technomic's recently released *Global Beverage Menu Category Report* is a deep dive into coffee, tea and other beverages around the world. Below are a few highlights on growing beverage chains:

Coffee and tea specialists are among the fastest-growing chains of any cuisine category worldwide, outpacing burger and pizza operators.

China-based Luckin Coffee accounts for a significant portion of growth among all coffee operators.

Its growth has noticeably outpaced that of global competitor chains like Starbucks, Dunkin' or Tim Hortons, as well as that of major local chains like Thailand's Cafe Amazon.

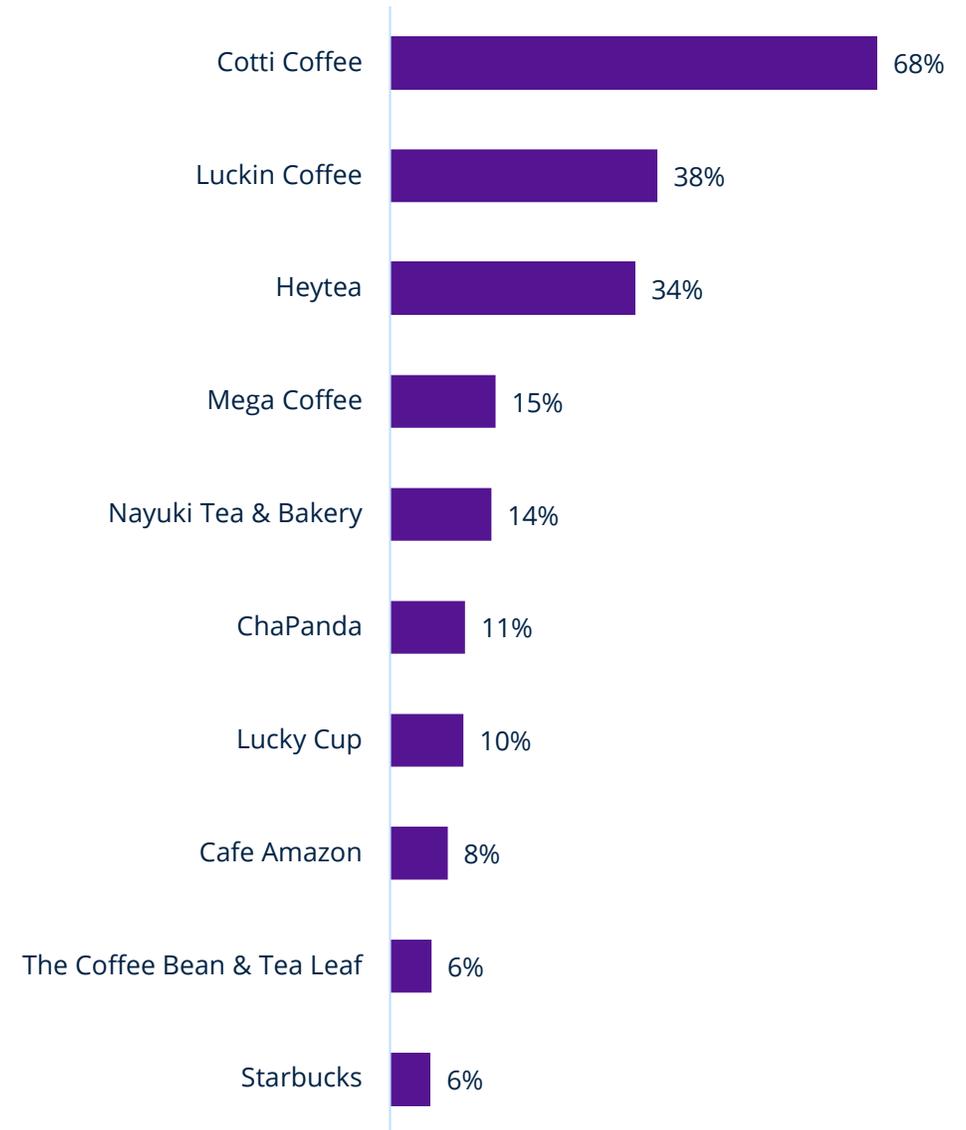
China-based tea cafe chains are similarly driving the vast majority of unit growth in this category.

Eight of the world's 10 largest tea cafe chains are headquartered in this market, with U.K.-based Gong Cha and Malaysia-based Tealive the only exceptions.

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

Source: Technomic Global Foodservice Navigator Program 2025 Global Beverage Menu Category Report

GLOBAL BEVERAGE CHAINS BY % UNIT GROWTH



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Global Foodservice Navigator

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

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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?

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