

# Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy Canadian foodservice findings for the week of March 10, 2025

Image Source: Shutterstock



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# Answer your most pressing questions on consumer visit behaviour

Explore demographics, preferences and behaviours to understand who is visiting chain brands, why they're going and how brands are performing with Ignite Consumer

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**Technomic**<sup>®</sup>



**BY DAYPART**

**Where should I go for lunch?**

**BY SEGMENT**

**I need something fast!**

**BY OCCASION TYPE**

**Where's date night?**

**BY NEED STATE**

**I'm craving chocolate cake!**

Ignite Company

# Effective promotions buoy Boston Pizza in 2024

Same-store restaurant sales grew just under 1% for Boston Pizza in 2024, boosted by more than 3% growth in the fourth quarter.

Despite shuttering five stores during 2024, Boston Pizza achieved \$931.7 million in franchise sales for the year, a slight uptick from \$925.7 million the year prior. Same-store restaurant sales growth (largely due to menu price increases) was the primary driver of this increase in Q4.

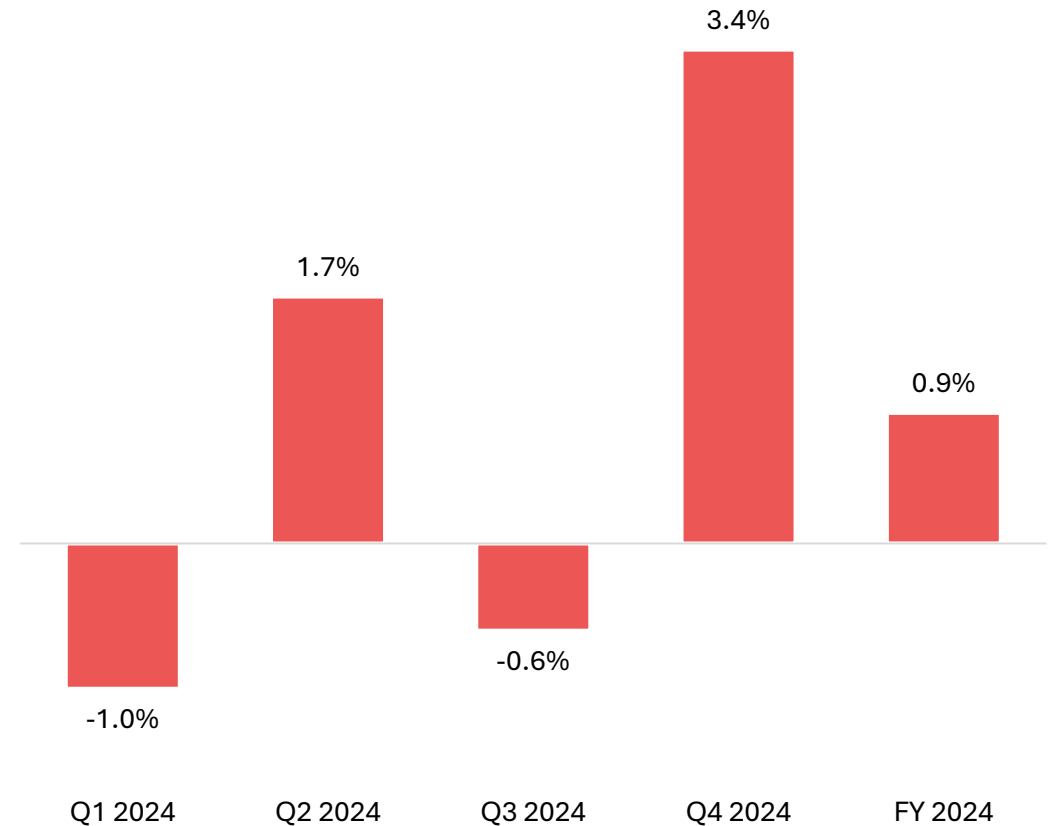
Though the brand ended the year

positively, earlier quarters provided some challenges. The president of Boston Pizza International noted that effective promotions, such as the \$15 lunch menu and Hockey Night in Canada, aided the brand in overcoming industrywide challenges in the earlier parts of the year.

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

Source: Technomic Ignite Company

**BOSTON PIZZA**  
YEAR-OVER-YEAR SAME-STORE RESTAURANT SALES



## Ignite Menu

# Fastest-growing flavours at emerging chains

Canadian emerging chains are highlighting a variety of fun flavours. Coconut takes the lead, mainly as a syrup or topping option. It continues to appear in Asian-inspired dishes, including coconut curry tofu or soup, as well as Asian wrap and salad options.

Blueberry-strawberry flavours are on the rise, mostly menued in smoothies and yogurt. Operators are also using this flavour combination in salads or as a topping on popular breakfast items, including French toast and pancakes.

Irish flavours are increasing in multiple mealparts. Corned beef is used in sandwiches and breakfast platters,

Baileys is popping up in desserts, such as cheesecake, and Irish cream syrup is showing up in coffee drinks.

Latin American flavours are also experiencing growth. Dulce de leche, a caramelized milk confection similar to caramel, is seen in coffees and desserts. Habanero, achiote, chimichurri and elote are showing up in seafood dishes, tacos, seasoning blends and sauces and dips.

Lastly, Moroccan flavours are popping up in sandwiches and wraps, often paired with chicken and vegetables. Couscous dishes are also popular, as well as Moroccan mint in beverages.



**FASTEST-GROWING FLAVOURS AT EMERGING CHAINS**  
Q4 2023-Q4 2024

**Coconut**

+17.3%

**Blueberry-strawberry**

+16.0%

**Irish**

+15.6%

**Latin American**

+14.7%

**Moroccan**

+13.6%

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

Source: Technomic Ignite Menu, Q4 2023-Q4 2024  
Image Source: Shutterstock

## Ignite Consumer

# Mary Brown's serves chicken like no other

According to recent Mary Brown's guests, 68.2% called out the chain's chicken as its most unique item that cannot be ordered anywhere else.

Here's what some recent guests had to say when asked about unique items served at Mary Brown's.

*"Fried chicken with a special blend of spices. Better than KFC."*

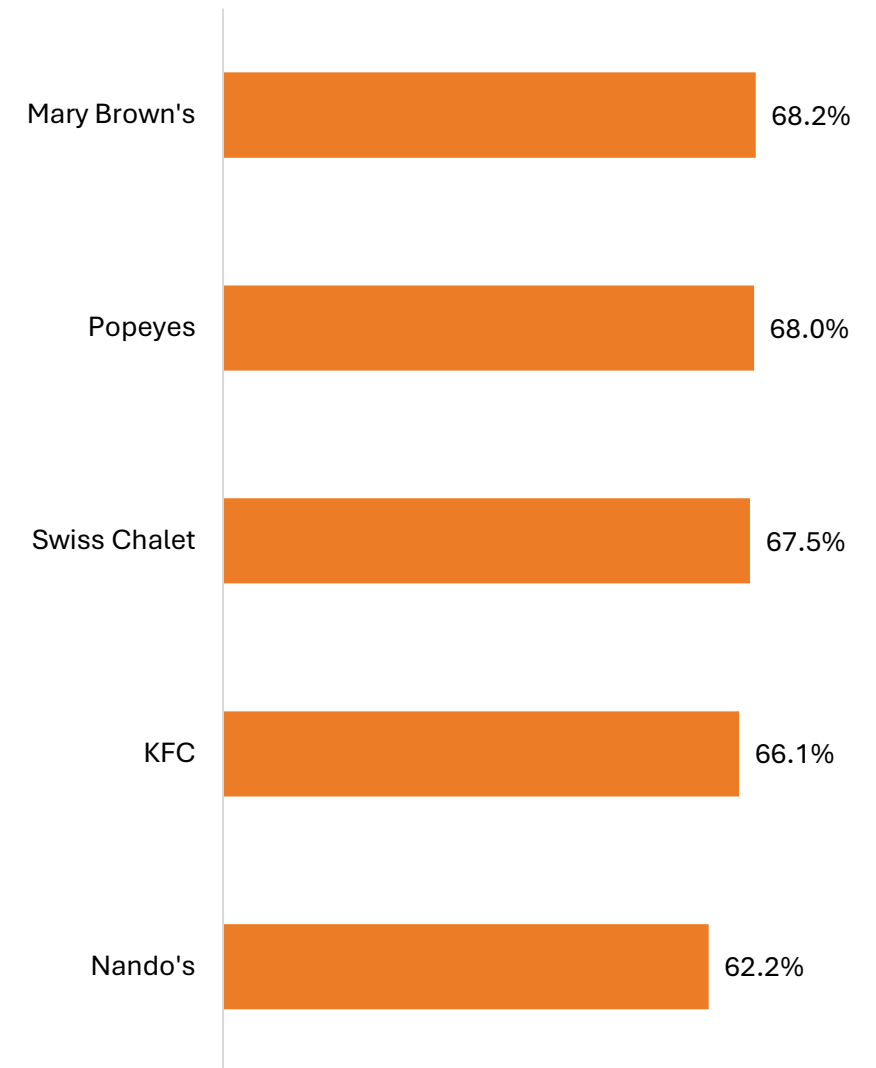
*"I know you can get chicken sandwiches at other places, but the Big Mary combo is unique and the best-tasting chicken sandwich I've ever had and is the main reason I choose (Mary Brown's)."*

Consumers overall echo this sentiment, with 21% saying that "serves unique items I can't get elsewhere" is very important when deciding on a restaurant for an occasion. In fact, this decision driver has increased in importance, up from 17% in 2019.

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

Base: Approx. 400 recent guests per brand  
Source: Technomic Ignite Consumer, Q1 2024-Q4 2024

## % OF RECENT GUESTS MENTIONING CHICKEN AS "UNIQUE ITEM I CAN'T GET ELSEWHERE"



# Mixue Ice Cream & Tea—largest chain in the world

McDonald’s has lost its claim to the highest number of locations worldwide to Mixue Ice Cream & Tea, which has more than 45,000 locations worldwide. The China-based bubble tea and ice cream operator recently launched its IPO on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, raising more than US\$400 million and seeing near-record oversubscription. What’s behind Mixue’s rapid growth?

Two factors stand out as notable. First, the chain’s strong emphasis on affordability and the logistical capabilities backing it up have played no small part in the rapid expansion since its 1997 founding. Drinks and ice cream

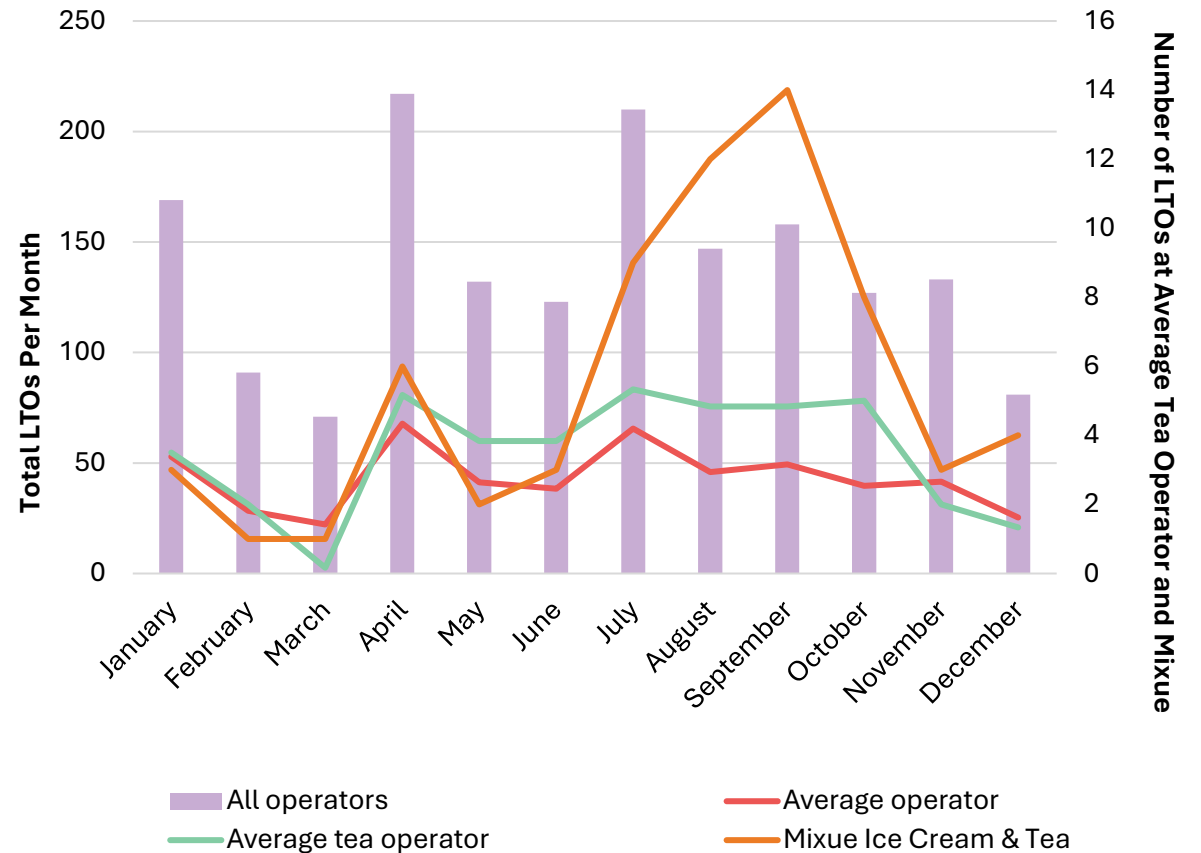
cones alike are typically priced in the single-digit yuan range.

Secondly, Mixue is well-known in its home market and abroad for its rapid menu development. In 2024, the chain introduced almost 70 new and LTO items in China—twice as much as Heytea alone and just over a quarter of all items released by tracked operators in the category. In contrast to other operators, Mixue consistently introduces items during particularly active spring and summer months, as well as the less-active winter season, with development typically outpacing that of its competitors.

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

Source: Technomic Global Foodservice Navigator Program

2024 MONTHLY MENU DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA



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