

Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy Canadian foodservice findings for the week of June 22, 2026



Image Source: Shutterstock

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Ignite Company

Ontario leads Canada's pizza market

Ontario leads Canada with more than 2,100 pizza chain locations. Six major pizza brands operate more than 100 locations each in Ontario, with Pizza Pizza, Domino's and Pizza Hut at the forefront.

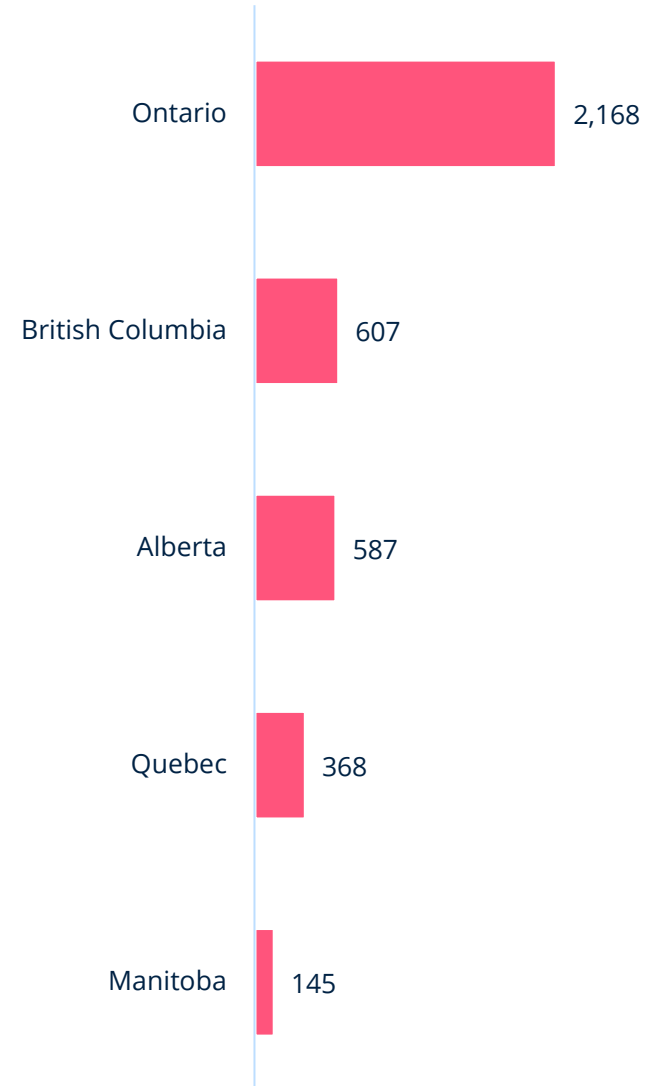
Across Canada, pizza chains represent 14% of the country's 30,940 total chain locations. Ontario demonstrates the strongest pizza concentration, with these chains making up 16% of all restaurant locations in the province. Quebec sits at the opposite end of the spectrum, where pizza chains account for just 8% of total stores.

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

Source: Technomic Ignite Company

Note: Totals capture all pizza chains among the top 250 chain restaurants

PIZZA CHAIN LOCATIONS BY PROVINCE
TOTAL LOCATIONS BY PROVINCE AS OF 2025 YEAR-END



Ignite Menu

Fastest-growing sauces in appetizers

Spicy and globally inspired sauces (often in tandem) are transforming appetizer menus as operators respond to consumer preferences for adventurous options. Operators are pairing these sauces with familiar items, especially handhelds, creating an accessible entry point for flavour exploration.

Nashville hot sauce and hot honey have emerged as menu staples, complementing wings, mozzarella sticks and fries, while also elevating plant-based cauliflower bites.

Chipotle sauce brings smoky Mexican tastes to classic appetizers, such as wings, mozzarella sticks, nachos and calamari. For a creative twist, operators are incorporating chipotle sauce into Caesar salad, adding an unexpected

kick that transforms a familiar dish.

Thai sauce is another increasingly popular choice for chicken wings and bites, but forward-thinking operators are expanding its applications. Some are pairing this Asian-inspired sauce with Mexican empanadas or spring rolls and shrimp satay.

Chile oil is particularly making waves across seafood (e.g., ahi tuna and oysters) and vegetable appetizers (e.g., broccoli and eggplant). Beyond adding flavour, chile oil offers functional benefits. When consumed in small amounts, it is known to boost metabolism and reduce inflammation, making it an appealing addition for health-conscious diners seeking both taste and wellness.

FASTEST-GROWING SAUCES IN APPETIZERS (Q1 2025-Q1 2026)

NASHVILLE HOT
+40%

CHILE OIL
+17%

HOT HONEY
+12%

CHIPOTLE SAUCE
+18%

THAI SAUCE
+14%



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

Source: Technomic Ignite Menu, Q1 2025-Q1 2026
Image Source: Shutterstock

Canadian consumers reshape how they interact with QSRs

Technomic’s Ignite AI helped us quickly identify four key shifts in the way consumers behave at quick-service restaurant chains, including:

- **Ordering channel:** Digital ordering overtakes the drive-thru
- **Party composition:** Solo dining is rising sharply
- **Daypart:** Dinner is becoming the dominant QSR daypart
- **Primary need state:** Healthy is strengthening as a visit driver

The table to the right dives deeper into the first trend and shows how the surge in app- and web-based ordering appears to be directly cannibalizing the traditional drive-thru channel. Online

carryout has grown from 7.3% to 12.1%, representing a gain of 4.8 percentage points and the steepest growth trajectory of any ordering channel. Drive-thru, contrastingly, lost nearly 4 percentage points of share over this period.

In terms of overall satisfaction, guests placing their order online for carryout are likely to rate their visit more favorably than those who placed their order at the drive-thru (46.4% excellent rating vs. 43.7%, respectively).

The shift suggests that digital infrastructure, including app-based ordering, loyalty integration and in-store pickup optimization, is no longer differentiating but expected.

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

Base: 3,500 Canadian consumers ages 18+ per quarter
Source: Technomic Ignite AI and Technomic Ignite Consumer

QUICK-SERVICE CHAIN RESTAURANT OCCASIONS % OF RECENT GUESTS WHO ORDERED

Ordering Channel	Q1 2024	Q1 2025	Q1 2026	2-year change
Inside the restaurant (with an employee)	55.7%	51.3%	55.5%	-0.2
Drive-thru	17.1%	15.7%	13.3%	-3.8
Online for carryout (digital)	7.3%	8.4%	12.1%	+4.8
Online for delivery (digital)	7.5%	9.1%	8.9%	+1.4
Inside the restaurant (kiosk/tablet)	5.4%	6.6%	6.7%	+1.3
Phone order (carryout)	3.7%	5.3%	1.5%	-2.2
Phone order (digital)	2.6%	3.0%	1.2%	-1.4
Other	0.7%	0.6%	0.8%	+0.1

Global Foodservice Navigator Program

Find global menu trends with Ignite

Technomic's Global Foodservice Navigator's menu data is live on Ignite! This tool allows users to explore trends in seasonality, dish type, flavours and more.

For users interested in how seasonality affects menu development, Ignite's global menu data tracks how many items chains have released each month. This data allows users to explore how brands respond to major events, introduce holiday-themed items or roll out seasonal menus.

Ignite's global menu data also includes breakdowns by dish type, including how quickly dishes, such as iced coffee, fried chicken or loaded fries, have grown in global markets. In countries

where menu development is highly active, knowing which dishes are resonating with consumers is critical. This tool provides users with the timely updates they need to adapt to developing trends.

Key flavours and ingredients—and how they've grown—are also available for each market. This feature is ideal for users interested in adapting signature menu items to developing trends.

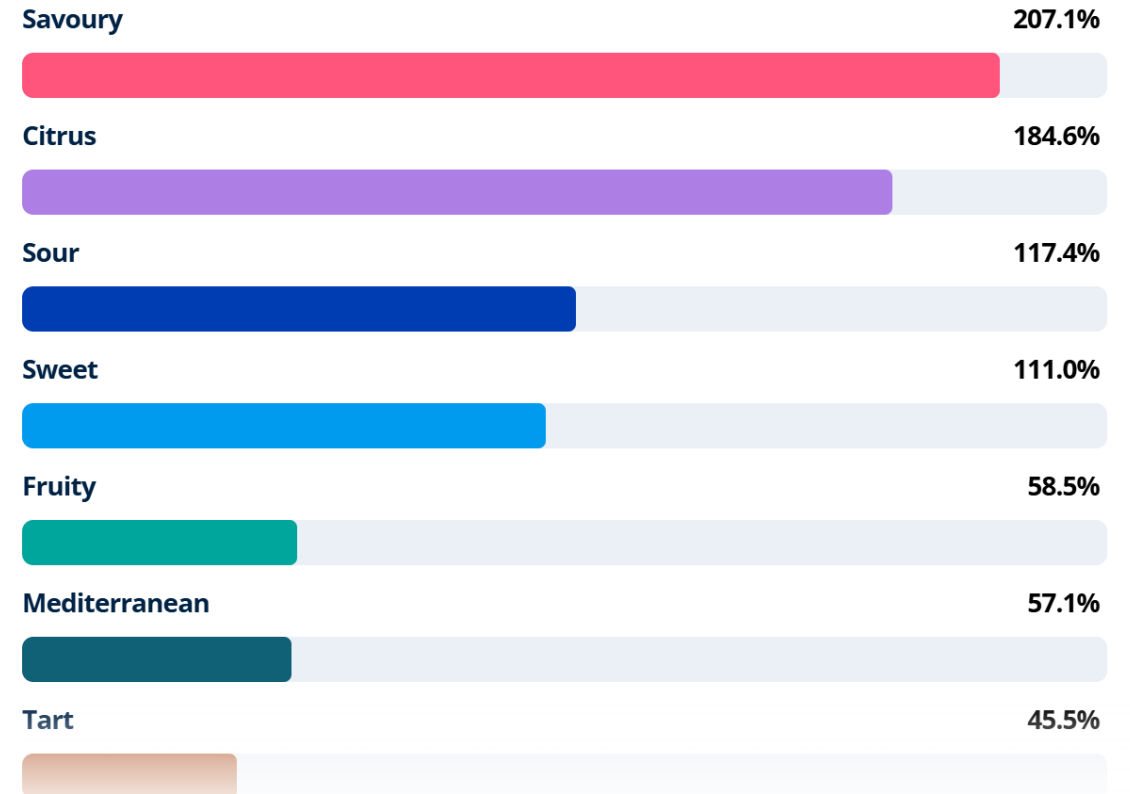
Ignite's market dynamics data helps to contextualize each of these data points. Users can explore this tool to see where foodservice is growing the fastest and which types of restaurants are driving this development.

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

Source: Technomic Ignite Global Menu Trends

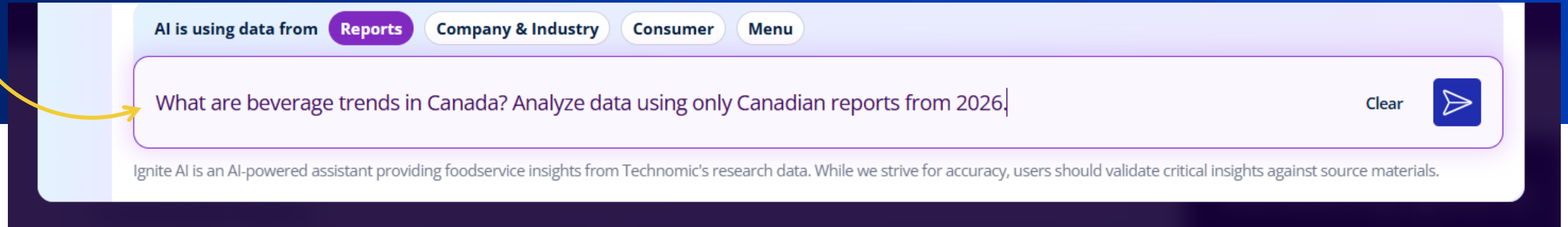
Fastest Growing LTO Flavors in China ⓘ

Year Over Year Percentage Change



Ignite AI Prompt of the Week

In each Industry Insights, we ask Ignite AI a top-of-mind industry question and share the answer with you. Copy our prompt or write your own to answer your industry questions in our Ignite.



Key Takeaways

- 1. Alcohol-free beverages are the standout growth engine.** Among the Top 200 Canadian chains, overall adult beverage mentions fell 5% year over year, yet alcohol-free beverages grew 25%. Within that category, alcohol-free cocktails/mixed drinks are up 30% and alcohol-free beer rose 16%.
- 2. Specialty and innovative cocktails are gaining traction.** A second major trend is the continued rise of

specialty drinks and more distinctive cocktail development. Canadian menu data shows specialty drinks up 4%, while restaurant original cocktails increased 33%, signaling stronger experimentation from operators and mixologists. For suppliers, this points to a market where innovation and premiumization are becoming more important drivers of beverage performance.

- 3. Bold flavours are shaping beverage innovation.** Flavour is a major part of the Canadian beverage

story in 2026. The fastest-growing flavours highlighted are chile (+69%), espresso (+29%) and passion fruit (+21%). These results suggest beverage innovation is leaning into bold, adventurous and premium flavour cues.

- 4. Wine demand is becoming more selective.** Wine is not growing broadly, but certain varietals are outperforming. Canadian reports highlight that Chianti is up 35% and sauvignon blanc/fume blanc is up 18%. At the same time, the market is

showing weakness in other wine types, including red zinfandel (-57%) and cabernet sauvignon (-21%). This suggests Canadian wine demand is becoming more varietal-specific, with growth concentrated in a narrower set of winning styles rather than across the category as a whole.

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

Source: Technomic Ignite AI



Cultivate your Canadian menu strategy from ideation to launch

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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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