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# Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy Canadian foodservice findings for the week of July 18, 2022

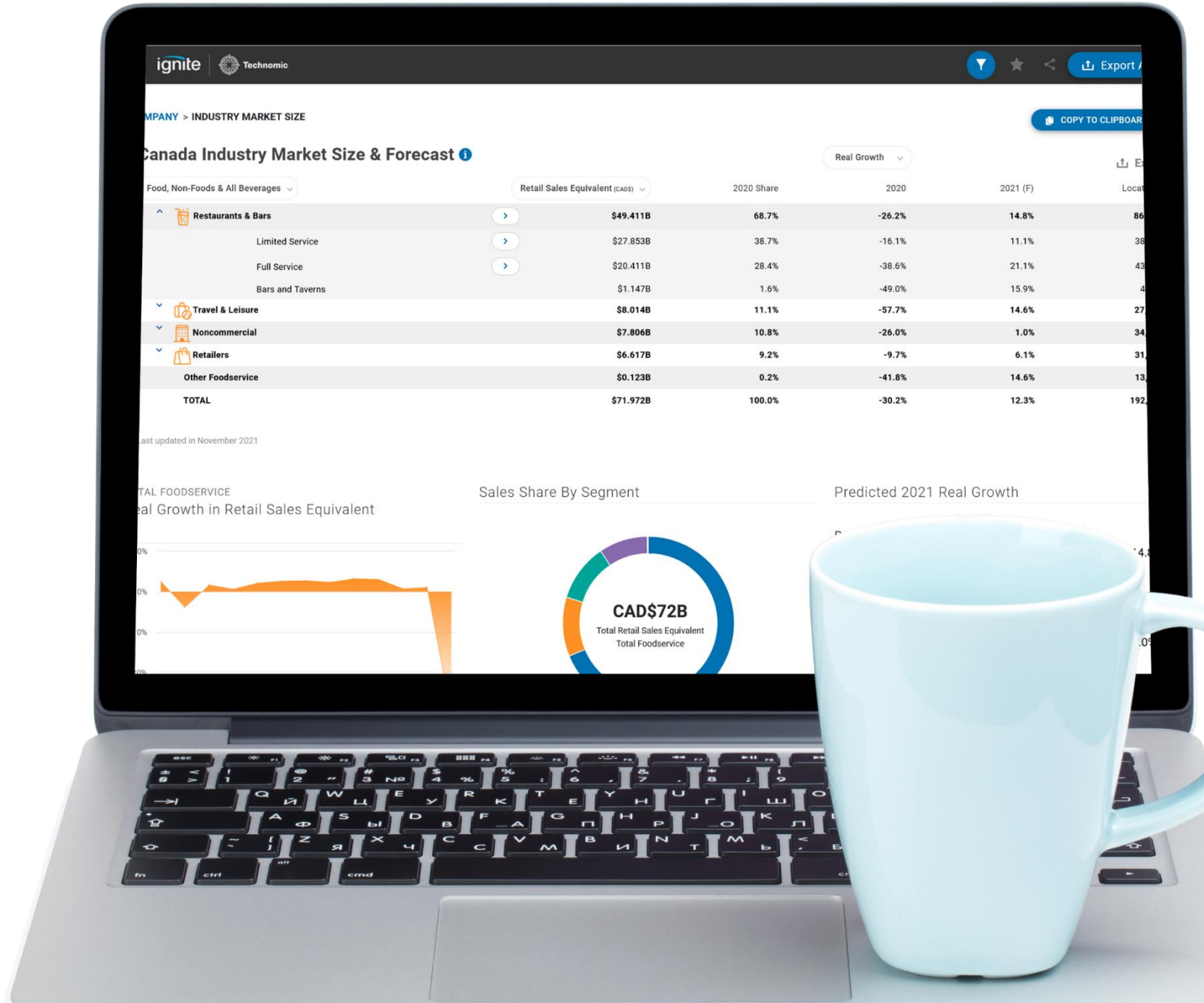


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# Wingstop Plans Major Canadian Expansion

Wingstop has officially entered Canada. The wing chain's newly opened Toronto location marks its first foray into Canada as the company looks to build 100 locations in the country through a development agreement with JPK Capital.

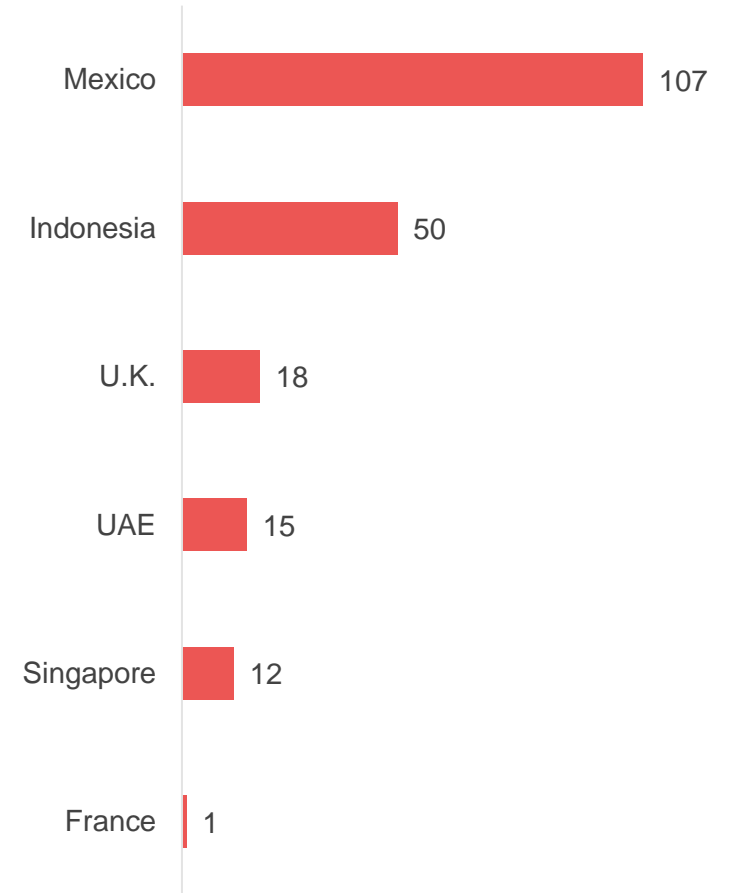
Wingstop finished 2021 with more than 1,700 total global locations across seven countries. The wing player's global store footprint jumped by over 12% on an annual basis, driven by 193 net new openings.

Over half of Wingstop's approximately 200 international locations are in

Mexico. The chain has a sizeable footprint in Indonesia as well.

Many of Wingstop's international markets feature sauce flavours exclusive to each country. A new flavour, Honey Garlic, will be made exclusively for Canadian locations.

WINGSTOP INTERNATIONAL LOCATIONS  
2021 YEAR-END COUNTS BY COUNTRY



# Dishes on the Rise at Full Serves

Overall menu item counts are up 1.7% at full-service restaurants in the last year, showing an uptick from the 8% decline during the previous year (Q1 2020-Q1 2021). Dishes showing growth at these operations include global entrees, interesting protein options, value offers and customizable dishes.

Mexican taquito entrees take the first-place spot on the fastest-growing dish list. Taquitos are easily adaptable to different types of fillings, making them a good option no matter which meats or veggies may be available to operators.

Vietnamese pho entrees are also rising. A soup dish containing noodles and meat, pho entrees also reflect the larger global comfort food trend.

Also appearing on the list of fastest-growing dishes is Arctic char, a cold-water fish similar to salmon. Like salmon, Arctic char is rich in omega-3, making it a healthy functional food.

Value offers remain important to consumers, especially considering current inflation rates. As a result, bowl value meals are on the rise on full-service menus, combining these trendy meals with a wallet-friendly offer.

Another important trend is customization. Since parents like a sense of choice with their children's meals, it's no surprise that choice of sides are increasingly appearing on full-service kids menus.

## FASTEST-GROWING DISHES AT FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANTS

Bowl Value Meals **+300%**

Arctic Char **+200%**

Pho Entree **+160%**

Kids Choice of Side **+140%**

**TAQUITO  
ENTREE  
+350%**



# Importance of Social Responsibility to Restaurant Guests

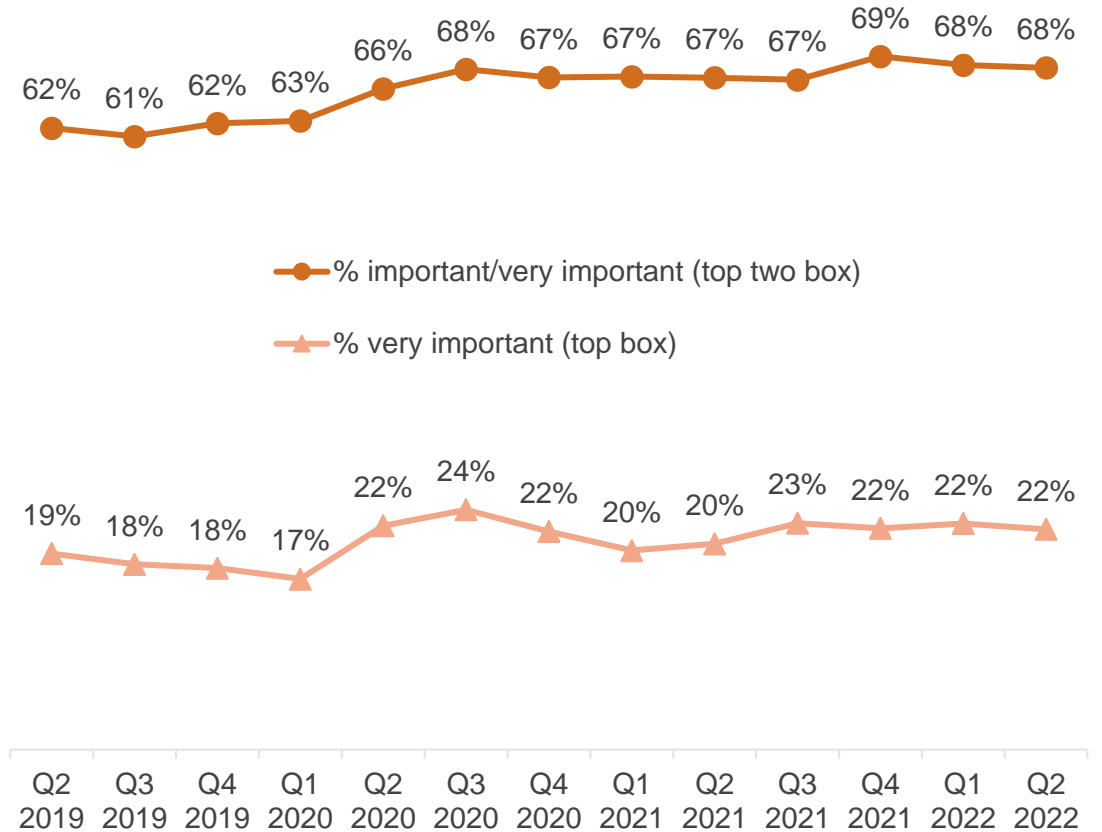
Last month, the Canadian government published final regulations to prohibit single-use plastics. A ban like this seems to be aligned with what consumers say they want from restaurants yet creates unique challenges for restaurant operators who still might be struggling or rebuilding following the pandemic.

Just how important is social responsibility to consumers? Data from Ignite Consumer shows that 68% of Canadians say that whether a restaurant “is socially responsible” is important or very important to them when choosing a restaurant for an occasion. The importance of this

attribute has been on the rise for the past few years and surely has been accelerated since the pandemic.

Nevertheless, it is still very much a secondary or even tertiary restaurant driver, with less than a quarter of consumers saying it is “very important” in the decision-making process.

IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY WHEN SELECTING A FULL-SERVICE OR LIMITED-SERVICE RESTAURANT



Base: 1,800 consumers ages 18+ per quarter  
Source: Technomic Ignite Consumer



# Where Spicy Foods Bring the Most Heat

The spicy food trend remains strong in the restaurant industry as consumers continue to seek out heat-inducing flavors and ingredients and operators are obliging with a myriad of new products to meet that demand.

But consumer definitions of what makes something spicy and their willingness to try it varies considerably when looking across different global markets.

Here's a breakdown of where diners most enjoy spiciness when dining out, per a recent global survey of consumers across 25 countries.

Mexico is the undisputed global leader when it comes to consumers' affinity for

heat—some 63% of restaurant-goers saying they prefer something spicy or very spicy.

Conversely, diners in Japan show the least enthusiasm for spice, with 83% saying they like foods that are not spicy at all and only 1% with a preference for very spicy.

Globally, 55% of consumers want at least some heat, with 25% at somewhat spicy, 24% at spicy and 6% at very spicy.

Offerings that temper spicy flavors with sweet accents have been on trend at restaurants globally for some time, and for good reason. About a third of

consumers globally (31%) enjoy the sweet heat flavor combination. The combo—commonly expressed in ingredients such as hot honey—is most enjoyed in Indonesia (61%), the Philippines (58%) and Malaysia (44%), making Southeast Asia a prime opportunity for pairings such as habanero with honey and chipotle with gula melaka.

Learn more about consumers' flavor and flavor combination preferences, as well as recent LTOs featuring spicy ingredients across 25 global markets with [Technomic's Global Navigator program](#).



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