

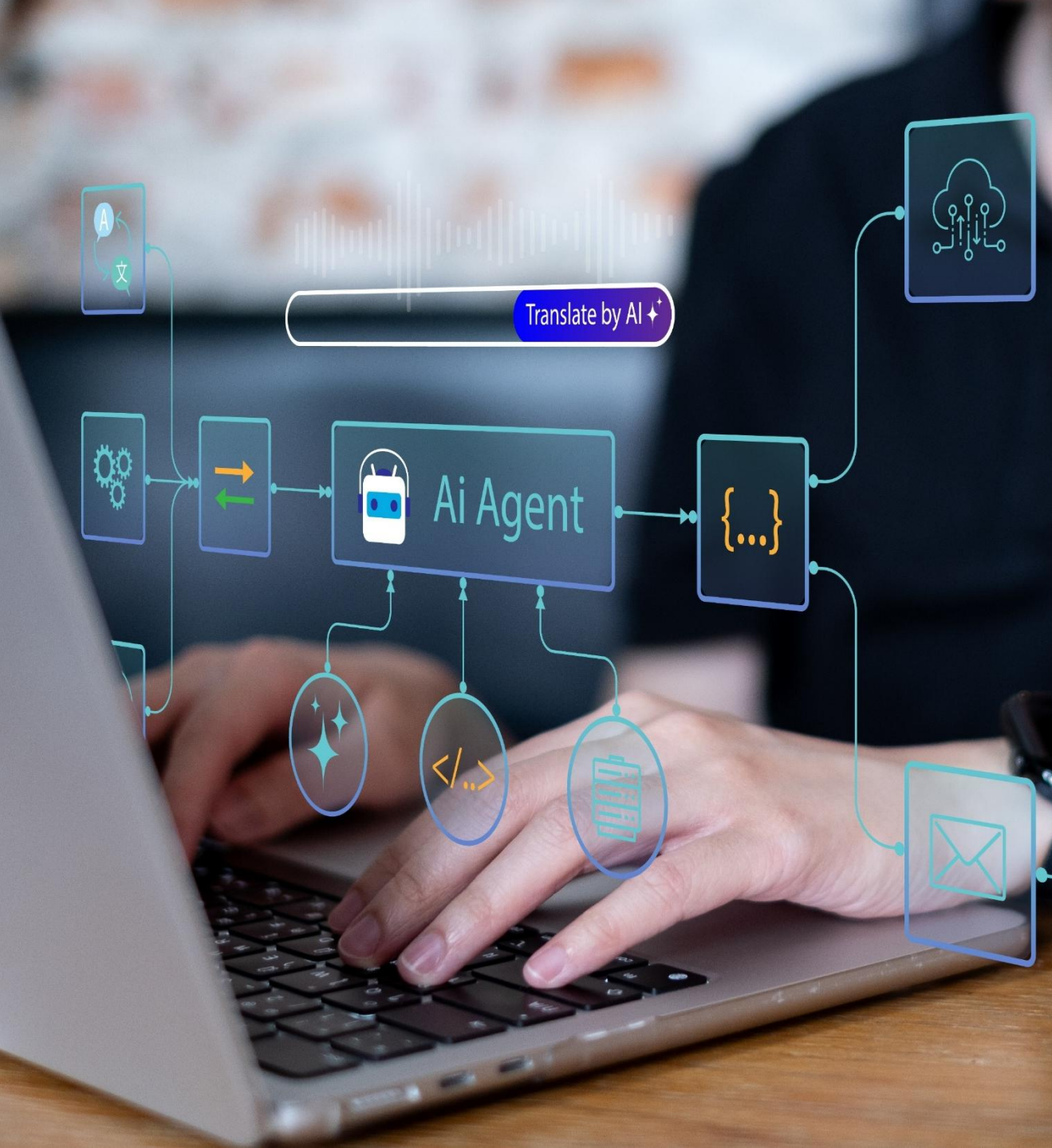
Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy Canadian foodservice findings for the week of Aug. 24, 2026



Image Source: Shutterstock

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What if you could ask your data anything?

Which chains are growing fastest?

What menu trends are gaining momentum?

Where are my best opportunities for growth?

Ignite AI Edge delivers instant answers, powered by Technomic's industry-leading intelligence and advanced AI.

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Chain restaurant sales forecasted to eclipse \$50M in 2026

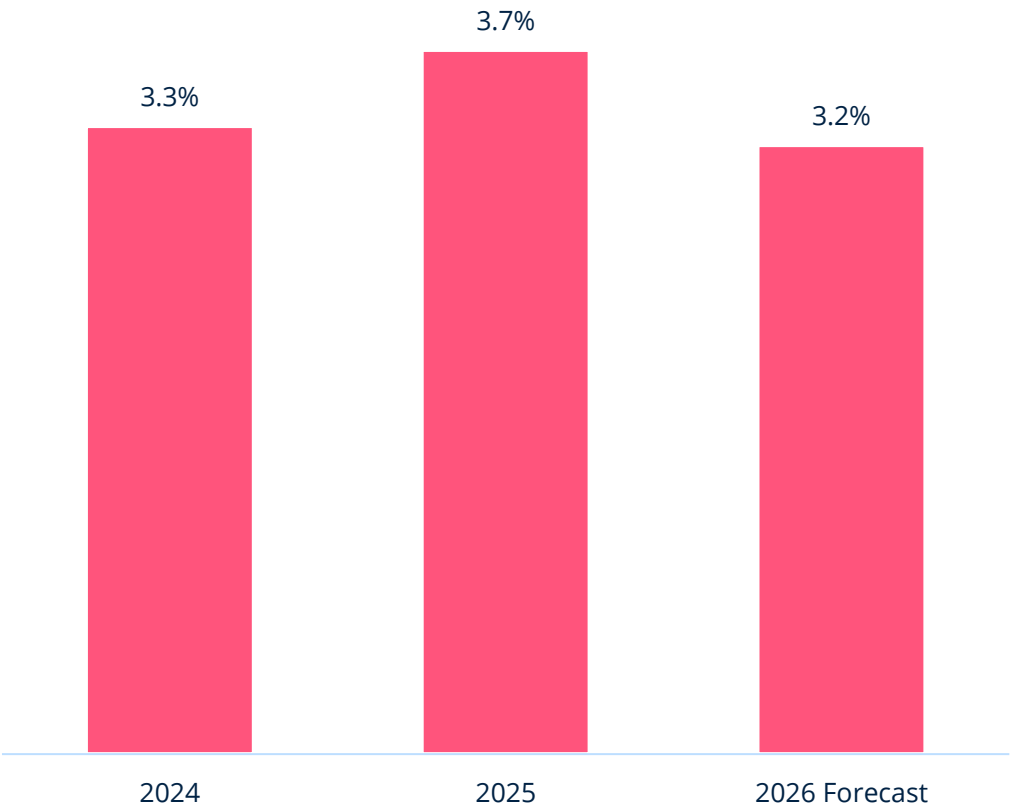
Technomic's top 250 chain restaurants in Canada are projected to generate \$50.4 billion in cumulative sales volume for 2026, representing a 3.2% year-over-year increase. While growth remains positive, the pace has moderated slightly from the 3.7% expansion recorded in 2025.

The outlook is driven by continued location expansion from sandwich chains, including Firehouse Subs, Jimmy John's and Jersey Mike's. Canadian chicken brand Poulet Rouge also ranks among the fastest-growing chains in the market.

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

Source: Technomic Ignite Company

TOP 250 CANADIAN CHAIN RESTAURANTS
ANNUAL SALES CHANGE



Notable flavour and ingredient trends on the rise

Looking at the list of fastest-growing flavours and ingredients on Canadian menus over the past year illuminates some noteworthy trends.

FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANTS

Elevated Comfort Revival

- Stuffing (+46.7%)
- White Bread (39.1%)
- Lemon Pepper Sauce (+38.5%)

Tiny But Might Superfoods

- Baby Kale (+90.9%)
- Chia Seeds (+39.1%)
- Macadamia (+38.5%)

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

Source: Technomic Ignite Menu, Q2 2025-Q2 2026
Image Source: Shutterstock

LIMITED-SERVICE RESTAURANTS

Tropical Exotica

- Dragon Fruit (+51.7%)
- Fruit Punch (+29.2%)
- Caribbean (+27.5%)

Smoke, Spice & Everything Bold

- Harissa (35.3%)
- Spicy Barbecue Sauce (+29.4%)
- Paprika (+22.2%)



Popular limited-service chains among Gen Zers

Data from Ignite Consumer highlights key characteristics shared by the top-performing chains among Gen Z diners.

Specialty and global-flavour concepts stand out as particularly popular. Chains such as Osmow's, Opa of Greece, Nando's and Quesada Burritos & Tacos attract a significantly higher percentage of Gen Z core guests—those who visit or order at least once a month. These brands offer bold and diverse cuisines, including Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and Mexican flavours, which strongly resonate with younger consumers seeking unique dining experiences.

Health-focused concepts like Booster Juice and Osmow's also enjoy strong

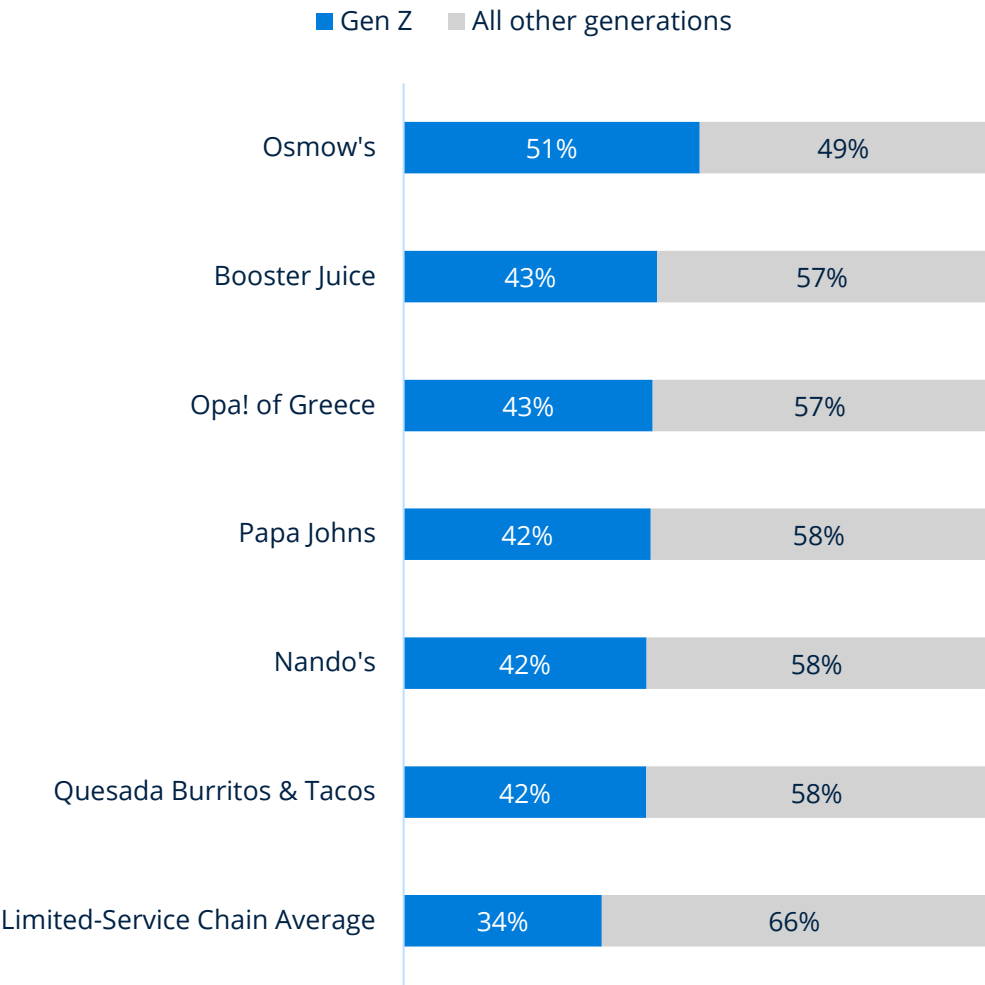
Gen Z loyalty. These chains cater to health-conscious diners by emphasizing fresh, nutritious and customizable menu options, aligning with Gen Z's preference for wellness-oriented choices.

Customization emerges as another key driver of Gen Z engagement. Chains such as Quesada Burritos & Tacos, Papa Johns and Osmow's allow guests to personalize their meals, whether through build-your-own burritos, tailored pizza toppings or customizable wraps and bowls. This ability to tailor meals reflects Gen Z's desire for individuality and control, making these chains particularly appealing to this demographic.

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

Base: 23,235 respondents ages 18+; Varies by brand
Source: Technomic Ignite Consumer, Q3 2025-Q2 2026
*Note: Core guests are defined as guests who identify visiting/ordering from the chain once a month or more

LIMITED-SERVICE CHAINS WITH THE HEAVIEST GEN Z PATRONAGE
% OF CORE GUESTS*



Where are coffee specialists growing?

Asia-born chains are dominating expansion, both within their home markets and abroad. Below are a few recent highlights:

Blue Tokai plans to reach 800 units in India by 2030. The [homegrown coffee QSR](#) ended 2025 with about 240 locations.

Ediya Coffee expanded into Canada. The [South Korea-based coffee QSR](#) currently has about 4,200 locations in its home market and a handful of countries abroad.

Lucky Coffee operator Mixue Group plans to open 2,000 units of the brand in China in 2026. The [multibrand operator](#) had more than 10,000 locations of the coffee QSR at the end of 2025.

Mammoth Coffee reached 1,000 locations in South Korea. The [South Korea-based coffee QSR with a focus on value pricing](#) got its start in 2012.

Nowwa Coffee expanded into Malaysia. The [China-based coffee QSR with a focus on health](#) has grown to more than 10,000 locations since its 2019 founding.

The Venti is set to enter the Philippines. The South Korea-based coffee QSR with a focus on value is partnering with [franchisee JJR Brothers](#) on the market entry.

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

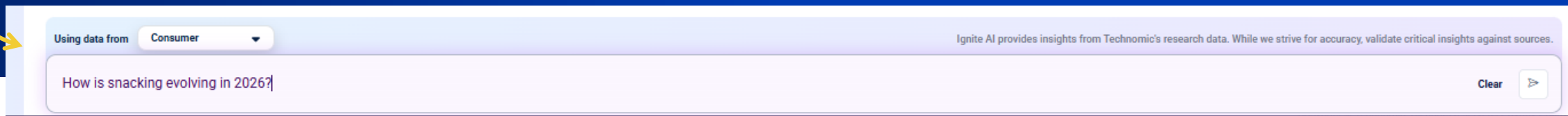
Image Source: [Galleria Supermarket Toronto Instagram](#)

✦ TASTE OF KOREA ✦



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.



Using data from **Consumer** Ignite AI provides insights from Technomic's research data. While we strive for accuracy, validate critical insights against sources.

How is snacking evolving in 2026?

Clear

Canadian snacking behavior shows a clear directional shift: morning snacking is the fastest-growing occasion, late-night snacking is seasonally volatile, and afternoon snacking remains dominant but is gradually ceding share. Gen Z is the engine driving snack-occasion growth, and limited-service coffee and beverage brands continue to own the category.

Morning snacking is the priority growth opportunity. The volume increase, the routine-driven purchase behavior, as well as the clear commute and in-car consumption profile, all point to a daypart that rewards brand habituation

and convenience-first formats. Limited-service operators—particularly coffee cafes—are well-positioned but face growing competition from home preparation. Menu items that are affordable, portable and repeatable are the right fit for this occasion.

Brands that want to grow their snack occasion share need to align with Gen Z values: speed, digital ordering, flavour exploration and social context for late-night and afternoon occasions. Late-night snacking is seasonal, social and higher in spend.

HOW AND WHERE SNACKS ARE CONSUMED

Eating Location	Morning Snack	Afternoon Snack	Late-Night Snack
Inside the unit	32.1%	38.0%	31.1%
At home	17.6%	22.3%	40.1%
In car (driving)	22.6%	18.1%	12.1%
In car (parked)	18.2%	13.8%	11.3%
At work	7.2%	3.7%	3.6%
At school	0.6%	0.8%	0.9%
In car (parked)	18.2%	13.8%	11.3%

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

Source: Technomic Ignite AI

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