

Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy Canadian foodservice findings
for the week of Dec. 18, 2023

Image Source: Shutterstock



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Just how big are Canada's largest chains?

The five largest chains—Tim Hortons, McDonald's, Starbucks, A&W and Subway—together comprise nearly 50% of all cumulative sales within the Top 200 Canadian chains, according to Technomic's *Top 200 Canadian Chain Restaurant Report*.

These five chains represent over \$19 billion in sales, while the remaining 195 chains account for an aggregate of just over \$20 billion.

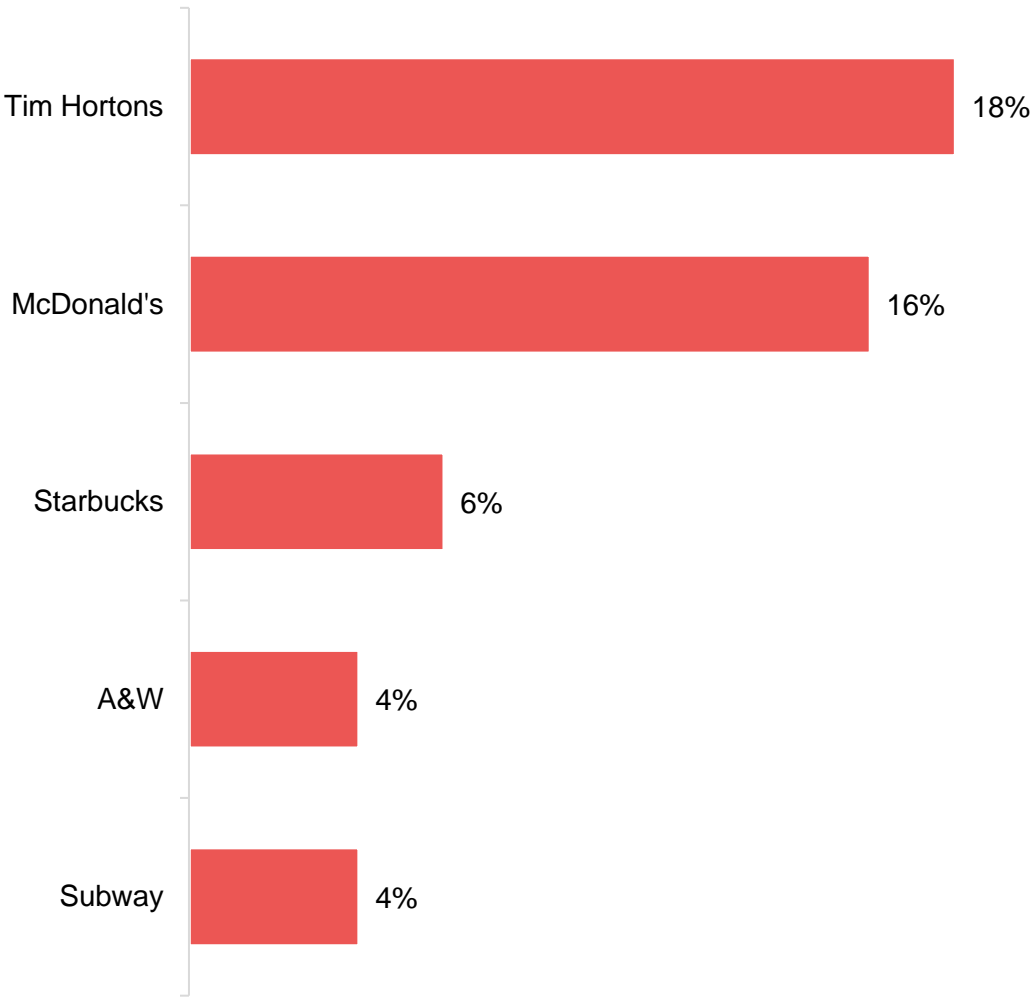
Tim Hortons alone makes up nearly 20% of the total sales in the Top 200, growing to over \$7 billion in annual sales last year. The brand looks to hold onto the top spot with sales increasing 8.5% year-to-date in 2023.

McDonald's, Canada's second largest chain, did over \$6 billion in sales last year, accounting for 16% of total sales in the Top 200.

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

Source: Technomic Ignite Company

TOP CHAIN SALES SHARE
SHARE OF TOTAL TOP 200 CANADIAN CHAIN SALES



IGNITE MENU

Top chains' fastest-growing ingredients

Supply chain struggles, economic factors and changing consumer preferences are impacting the fastest-growing ingredients at the Top 200 Canadian chain restaurants.

Chicken thighs top the list of fastest-growing ingredients. This cut of chicken is often cheaper than others and supply chain constraints during COVID-19 led chicken thighs to rise in popularity, as it was a more readily available option than chicken wings. Post-pandemic, the protein continues to grow, often appearing on chicken sandwiches and as is in meal deals.

Leeks are increasing on menus, lending a mildly sweet flavour to all manner of

dishes, including pastas and soups.

Central and South American guava is showing growth on menus, particularly in nonalcohol beverages, such as smoothies, and adult beverages, including margaritas. The fruit's functional benefits make it appealing for consumers looking for physical and mental health boosters. Watermelon is also on the rise on Top 200 menus in both nonalcohol and adult beverages. The fruit is upgrading lemonades, energy drinks and cocktails.

Finally, havarti is increasingly appearing at Top 200 chains. The mild, creamy cheese is often showing up on burgers and sandwiches.

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

Source: Technomic Ignite Menu, Q3 2022-Q3 2023

Image Source: Shutterstock

FASTEST-GROWING INGREDIENTS AT TOP 200 CHAINS Q3 2022-Q3 2023

Leeks **+73%**

Watermelon **+60%**

Guava **+60%**

Havarti Cheese **+60%**

**Chicken
Thighs
+83%**



‘Offers a good value through technology’ as a restaurant driver

Decreased restaurant foot traffic continues to be a struggle for many operators as consumers cope with inflation and increased menu prices. As such, operators have placed greater attention on their value offerings.

Value, however, extends beyond price and can be attained through a variety of channels. For example, one attribute that Technomic’s Ignite Consumer platform measures is whether operators “offer a good value through use of technology.”

Technomic found that 53% of consumers would say that this attribute is important or very important when

selecting a restaurant for an occasion. Restaurant guests who tend to prioritize this attribute are millennials (60%) and Gen Zers (55%).

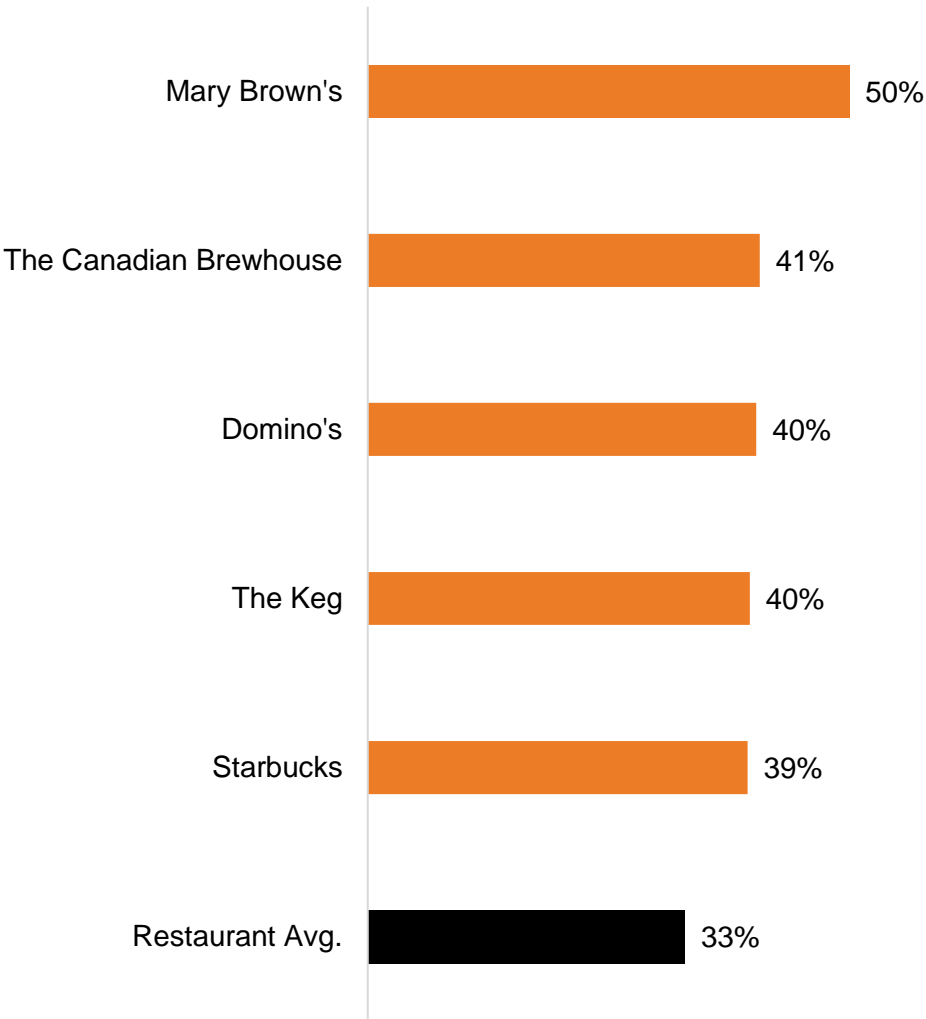
The chart to the right represents the top-performing chains for “offers a good value through use of technology” as rated by recent guests. The top chain, Mary Brown’s, is currently promoting its 12 Days of Giveaways promotion exclusively to app members, showcasing one way by which technology (i.e., the app) can offer value to guests. Other ways might be simpler, such as the ability to pay with a digital wallet or place an order online.

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

Base: 400 recent guests per brand
Source: Technomic Ignite Consumer, Q4 2022-Q3 2023

WHICH CHAINS WIN AT PROVIDING VALUE THROUGH TECH?*

% STRONGLY AGREE



How global consumers place orders

Twice a year, Technomic asks consumers in 25 countries around the world how they prefer to order meals from foodservice operators. Below are a few highlights:

Globally speaking, the standout shift is a move away from more interpersonal ways of placing orders, like phone calls and ordering at restaurant counters, in favor of digital ways, though the extent to which this shift has taken place

varies notably by digital format. Ordering by computer, for example, has declined over the past four years more than even counterside ordering, and ordering with in-store kiosks, on mobile devices' browsers and by text message have each seen only very slight growth.

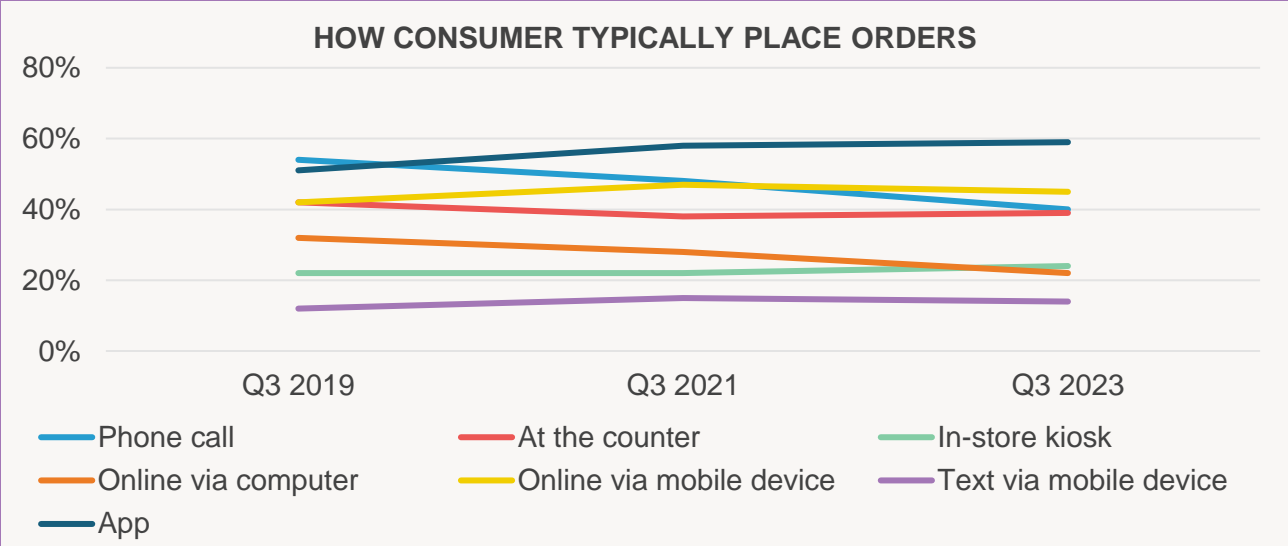
The shift toward app-based ordering has been more pronounced in Asia, Europe and Latin America, where it

rose by 9% in each region but has been relatively slow in North America and the Middle East.

This difference, of course, also varies within regions, with the Philippines (a 23% increase in app usage) and Argentina (15%) far outpacing China (6%) and Mexico (2%). Other highlights include Indonesia and Singapore notably each seeing slight declines over the last four years, while Saudi Arabia

and the high-usage Brazil market have effectively seen no changes during the same period.

Get more data-driven insights into consumer trends around the world with Technomic's [Global Navigator Program](#).



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Base: 8,700-8,719 global consumers; varies by order type
Q: When you order a meal for takeout or delivery, how do you typically place your order? Select all that apply.
Note: Q3 2019 data does not include Thailand
Source: Technomic Global Foodservice Navigator Program

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