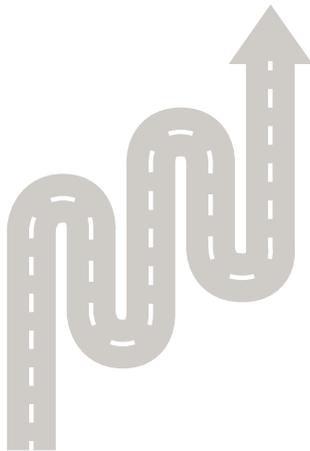


# What to Expect in Canada in 2021

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As we head into 2021, the world of foodservice remains in unprecedented territory as we collectively deal with the immediate and long-lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. While many unknowns linger as the world anxiously awaits an end to the virus, we do know that those who demonstrate the most versatility in response to industry, consumer and cultural shifts are best set to succeed in the coming year. Read ahead for Technomic's expert predictions to better equip yourself for what's to come and how to prepare for a post-pandemic world.



**1**  
**The Road to Recovery Steadies**

Foodservice will experience the start of a financial recovery in 2021, but sales results across segments will be a mixed bag. Limited-service restaurants will turn in a solid performance, as this sector is expected to return to 2019 revenue levels by the end of next year. On the other hand, full-service restaurants will rebound more slowly, as

the segment continues to be challenged by unit closures and consumers' cautious return to dine-in occasions. Investment in off-premise initiatives will be central to sparking a financial comeback across segments. Though we anticipate moderate growth in 2021, overall industry sales will still be below 2019 levels.

**2**  
**Taking a Stronger Stand**

Although social and environmental progress paused when the pandemic hit, the degree to which these calls to action have become louder and more urgent means we'll see operators double down on efforts over the coming year. Operators will take a firmer stance on climate change by menuing more plant-based substitutes, marketing carbon footprint levels of items and restaurants, and supporting

suppliers who implement environmentally friendly practices. To tackle social inequalities, we'll see an uptick in donations to fight food insecurity and support minority organizations; more diverse hiring and promotion practices; and the expansion of inclusive tipping to ensure fair pay of employees.

**3**  
**Sustainable Off-Premise Strategies**

While the extent to which consumers will return to dining rooms remains unknown, operators across segments are moving forward with investing in off-premise for their long-term growth strategies. For full-service operators, evolving to an off-premise-focused business model will provide a better chance to survive the pandemic and potentially even thrive. Look for smaller dining rooms that accommodate more walk-



Zucchini noodles with bacon, eggs and Parmesan cheese

4

### The Many Facets of Comfort

As food continues to provide solace, operators will find more ways to serve up comfort fare. In conjunction with new craveable classics, we'll see a surge of quirky dishes that cheer the heart, including the revival

of ordering windows, multiple drive-thru lanes, designated curbside pickup spots, and in-store pickup and grab-and-go stations that minimize time at the restaurant and contact with others. To help make the off-premise experience seamless, expect further development of mobile ordering, geofencing and other technologies; more delivery services brought in-house to better control costs and quality; and further adoption of ghost kitchen models that efficiently fulfill the influx of delivery and takeout orders.

of wacky mashups (think sushi casseroles) or simple vintage recipes (think peanut butter bread). Stressful times will also open the door for controversial ingredients, such as MSG and fats, to sneak onto menus. But, health won't take a backseat entirely. In addition to more anxiety-alleviating items, such as lesser-known leafy greens, citrus and mushrooms, expect operators to disguise better-for-you meals as indulgent, including alternative noodles and fries or vegan desserts and cocktails.



5

### Homegrown Solutions

As travel limitations persist both within Canada and at its borders, traditional restaurants and noncommercial venues will reimagine new ways to generate revenue by drawing local visitors and endorsing "our home and native land." As a nod to the local tourism campaigns mounted by cities and provinces this year, operators will similarly ramp up promotions of authentic hyperlocality in marketing materials, such as by celebrating local farms and businesses by sourcing products from them. Further, new grassroots movements around supporting local independents and small regional chains will spread.



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We provide insights into consumer, industry and menu trends in the U.S., Canada and 23 countries around the world. Our team of experts helps leaders in the industry make complex business decisions, set strategy and stay ahead of the curve.