

# Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy foodservice findings  
for the week of April 22, 2024

Image Source: Shutterstock



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**JUST RELEASED!**

# **Inform your strategy with the Technomic Top 500 Chain Restaurant Report**

Gain access to performance, rankings and forecasts for the restaurant industry's leading 500 chains to develop strategies, identify growth opportunities and monitor performance.

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Chain  
Restaurant  
Report  
**2024**

# MENU

DIRECTIONS

June 17-19, 2024

Loews Atlanta  
Atlanta, GA

The event for all segments of noncommercial foodservice to cultivate meaningful relationships while gathering industry data and insights. Explore the latest menu trends, operational hacks and budget-saving strategies.

To learn more, visit  
[MenuDirections.com](https://MenuDirections.com)

200+ Attendees



20+ Speakers



40% College & University

35% Healthcare

15% K-12

6% Contract Headquarters/  
Business & Industry



Ignite Company

# Top 500 location expansion highest since 2016

The domestic footprint of the Top 500 chains increased by 1.8% in 2023 to a total of more than 233,000 restaurants, attaining the highest rate of new location growth observed since 2016.

The total count of Top 500 chain locations expanded by over 4,100 net new locations during the year, paced by the robust development of players including Starbucks, Jersey Mike's Subs, Crumbl, Chipotle Mexican Grill and Dunkin'.

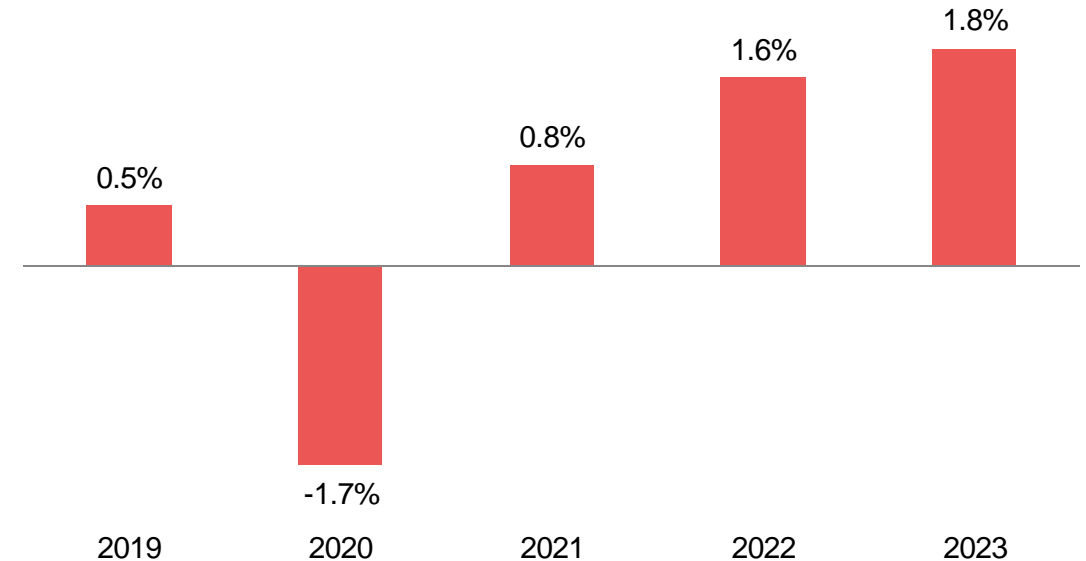
But this growth wasn't limited to the industry's largest players, as more than half of Top 500 chains expanded by at least one new location in 2023.

Unmatched insights and analysis of the industry's largest chain players can be accessed in Technomic's recently released *2024 Top 500 Chain Restaurant Report*.

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

Note: U.S. location counts reflect year-end 2023  
Source: Technomic Ignite Company

**TOP 500 CHAIN RESTAURANTS**  
ANNUAL CHANGE: TOTAL U.S. LOCATIONS



## Ignite Menu

# LTO trends to watch

Technomic's recently published *LTO Seasonal Review* highlights several notable trends among limited-time offers this winter:

### Crab Dip:

- Creamy dip typically made with crabmeat and cream cheese
- Often features multiple cheeses
- Indulgent appetizer option

### Dessert-Inspired French Toast:

- French toast inspired by desserts such as tiramisu, apple pie and bread pudding
- Extra indulgence by combining two sweet items
- Example of a mealpart and daypart mashup

### Cake Batter Flavor:

- Flavor reminiscent of cake batter with a buttery, vanilla taste

- Featured in cookies, doughnuts and ice creams
- Often featured with sprinkles, making for a nostalgic and colorful dessert

### Cream Cheese Drinks:

- Beverages featuring cream cheese icing or flavoring
- Seen in coffees or lemonades
- Adds a unique creamy element to drinks

### Smoked Cocktails:

- Cocktails featuring smoked elements
- Appearing in Old Fashioneds and Manhattans
- Example of utilizing a new preparation style to add creativity to menu items

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



Silver Diner's Apple Pie Stuffed French Toast  
Image Source: [Silver Diner Facebook](#)

## Ignite Consumer

# What LSRs can do to protect the value equation

Roughly two-thirds of LSR consumers have noticed menu price inflation, prompting shifts in their restaurant dining habits. This trend is expected to impact overall LSR ordering behaviors due to consumer price fatigue.

To maintain the value proposition at limited-service restaurants, it will be important for operators to lean into the deals and specials sought by

consumers. If prices continue to increase, however, operators should anticipate consumers ordering fewer add-ons and drinks. This may be an opportunity for operators to streamline menus by removing less-popular add-ons, sides and desserts, and instead focus on appealing main items or exciting drinks and add-ons that are primary visit drivers.

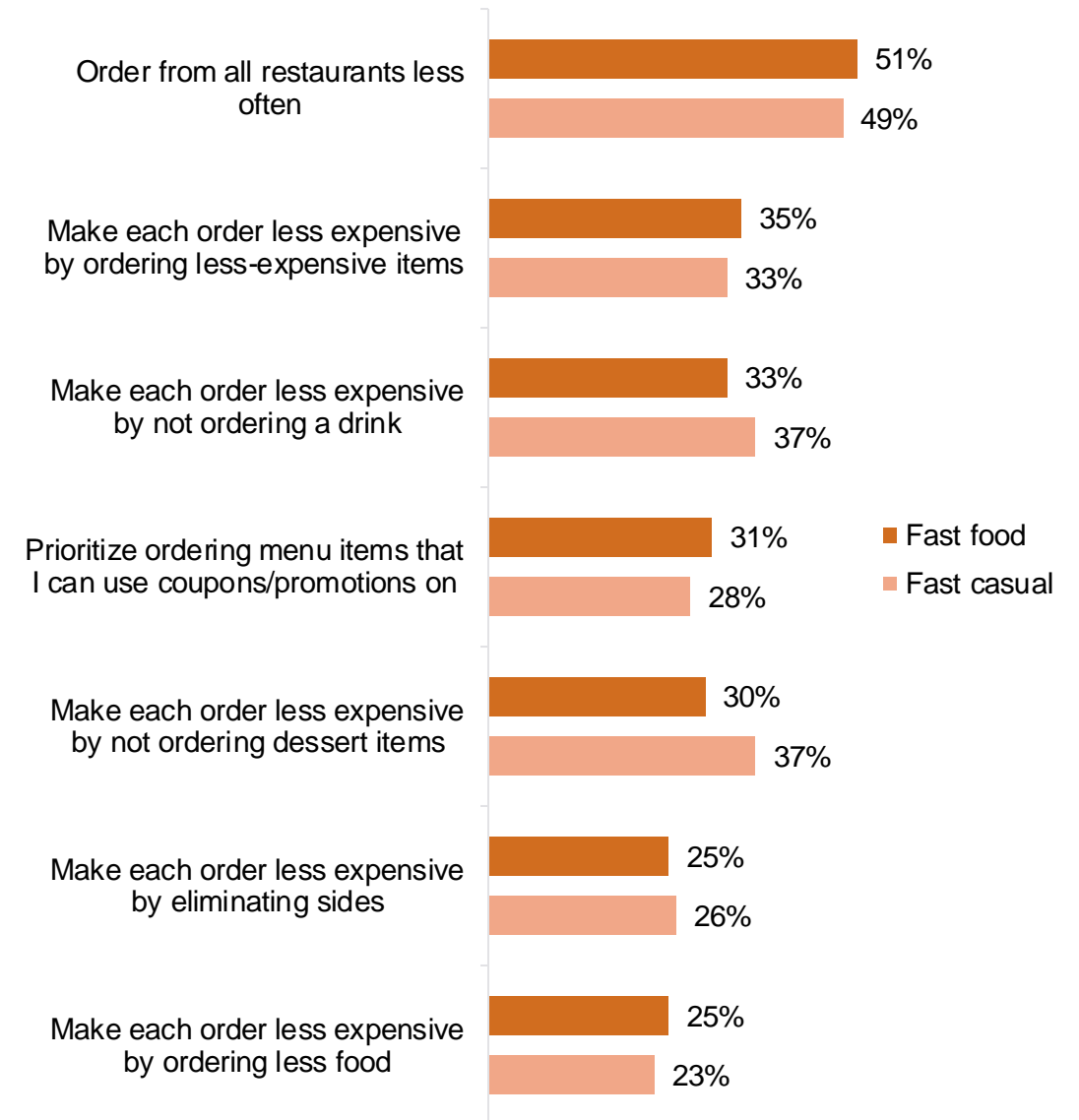
[Ignite Consumer clients: Click here for more](#)

Base: 750 (fast-food) and 751 (fast-casual) consumers who order from limited-service restaurants at least once a month

Q: If menu prices continue to rise at [fast-food/fast-casual] restaurants, which of the following would you be likely to do? Select all that apply.

Source: Technomic Ignite Consumer featuring the 2024 Future of Limited-Service Restaurants Consumer Trend Report

### LIKELY BEHAVIOR IF PRICES CONTINUE TO INCREASE\*



## Global Foodservice Navigator

# Morning coffees around the world

Technomic recently asked consumers in 25 markets around the world about how, and how often, they take their morning cup of coffee. Below are a few fascinating highlights.

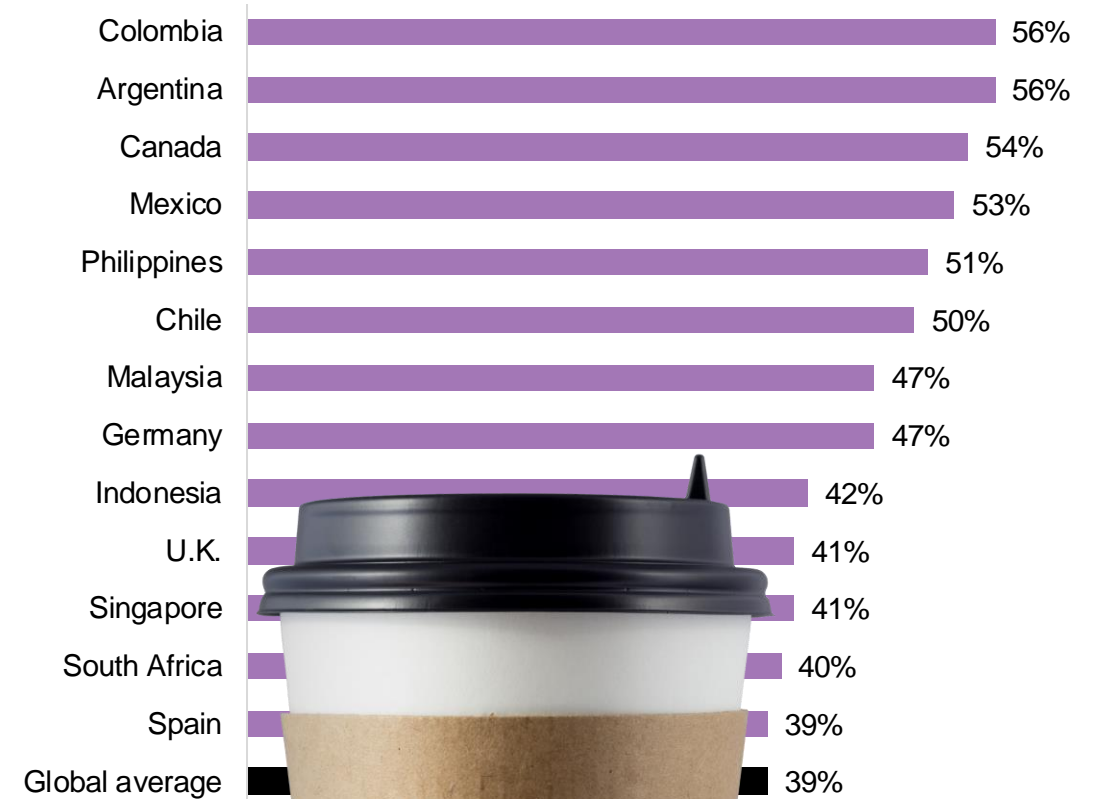
Half of global consumers report visiting cafes for their morning meal, making them by far the most frequently patronized category in this daypart. Latin America (64%) and Europe (63%) consumers notably overindexed in this regard, and those in Asia (42%) and North America (40%) also showed strong enthusiasm for these operators.

Ordered by a respective 39% and 35% of consumers who order breakfast away

from home, hot coffees and hot specialty coffees are the two most popular morning options globally. Consumers in Latin America, Europe and Asia all showed strong enthusiasm for both, while North America consumers clearly preferred regular coffees over specialty ones (43% compared to 20%, respectively).

By contrast, global consumers did not draw such a distinction among iced regular and specialty coffees (18% each). Latin America and Asia consumers slightly overindexed for interest in these morning drinks, while those in North America only slightly underindexed.

### % CONSUMERS WHO ORDER HOT NON-SPECIALTY COFFEE FOR BREAKFAST AT LEAST OCCASIONALLY



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

Source: Technomic Global Foodservice Navigator Program  
Image Source: Shutterstock

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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.

### Have questions?

Reach out to us today.

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