

# Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy foodservice findings  
for the week of Nov. 13, 2023

Image Source: Shutterstock



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# Chick-fil-A and Popeyes hit 3,000 store milestone

After years of persistent development, Chick-fil-A and Popeyes both recently crossed a major development milestone, as the two chicken chains reached 3,000 total domestic locations.

Despite their similar store footprints, Chick-fil-A ranked third in Technomic's 2023 Top 500 Chain Restaurant Report, while Popeyes finished in the 16<sup>th</sup> spot. The report, which ranks chains by U.S. systemwide sales, highlights how Chick-fil-A's per-store

sales significantly outpace its competitors in the limited-service segment.

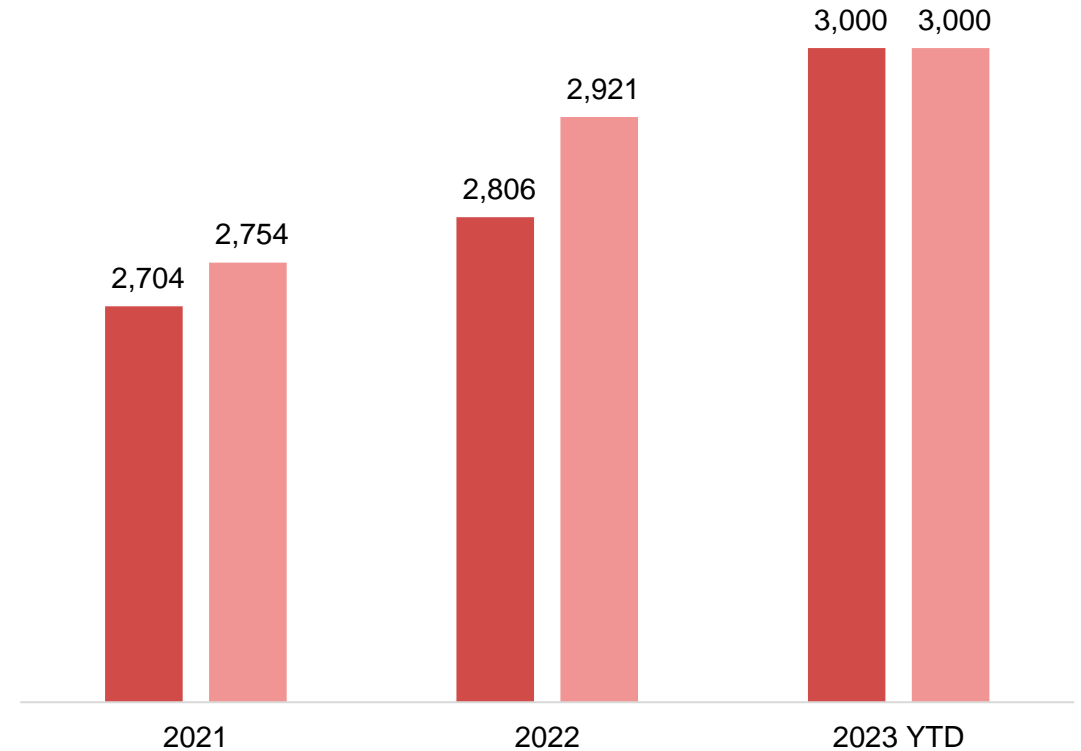
Including the recent openings from Chick-fil-A and Popeyes, there are now 18 total chains with at least 3,000 stores in the U.S. KFC, with nearly 4,000 U.S. locations, remains the largest chicken chain by store count.

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

Source: Technomic Ignite Company

TOTAL DOMESTIC LOCATIONS

■ Chick-fil-A ■ Popeyes



## IGNITE MENU

# Q3 2023 menu highlights

With the launch of Technomic's new Ignite Menu data for the third quarter of 2023, here are some key takeaways.

Overall, menu item counts are on the rise (+4.3%), with all mealparts showing increasing counts. Also on the rise are menu prices, though with less of an uptick, at 1.1% average price growth in the last year.

Nonalcohol beverages saw the greatest item count growth in the last year, up 7.0%. Within this category, several cold coffee drinks have increased year over year, including iced espresso (+30.4%), iced Americanos (+17.5%) and iced lattes (+14.6%). Additionally, several global beverages are on the rise, such

as iced chai (+12.1%), horchata (+8.1%) and Jamaica (+7.0%).

Other global ingredients and flavors are also continuing to grow on menus. Indian coconut chutney (+33.8%), Philippine ube (+33.3%), Mexican birria (+30.6%) and Central American mamey (+21.4%) have all shown growth on menus over the past year.

Conventional and plant-based seafood dominated the list of fastest-growing proteins, taking eight of the top 10 spots. Plant-based shellfish (+68.8%) occupied the top spot, followed by stone crab (+41.2%), sturgeon (+32.6%) and amberjack (+21.1%).

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

Source: Technomic Ignite Menu  
Image Source: Shutterstock

## ITEM COUNT GROWTH OVER THE LAST YEAR (Q3 2022-Q3 2023)

Add-On **+5.9%**  
Adult Beverage **+5.1%**  
Entree **+4.4%**  
Appetizer **+4.2%**  
Dessert **+3.6%**  
Kids Menu **+2.8%**  
Side **+1.5%**

**Overall +4.3%**



# Changes in weekend occasions likely driven by value

Historically, conventional wisdom has been that consumers seek value from restaurants. In one form or another, value is always at the forefront of conversations regarding consumer decisions and behaviors. Yet, amid stubborn historical inflation, consumers have proven quite resilient. A determined diner will always find a way to enjoy foodservice, and Technomic predicts the approach to stretching one’s foodservice dollar will differ from prior economically challenging periods.

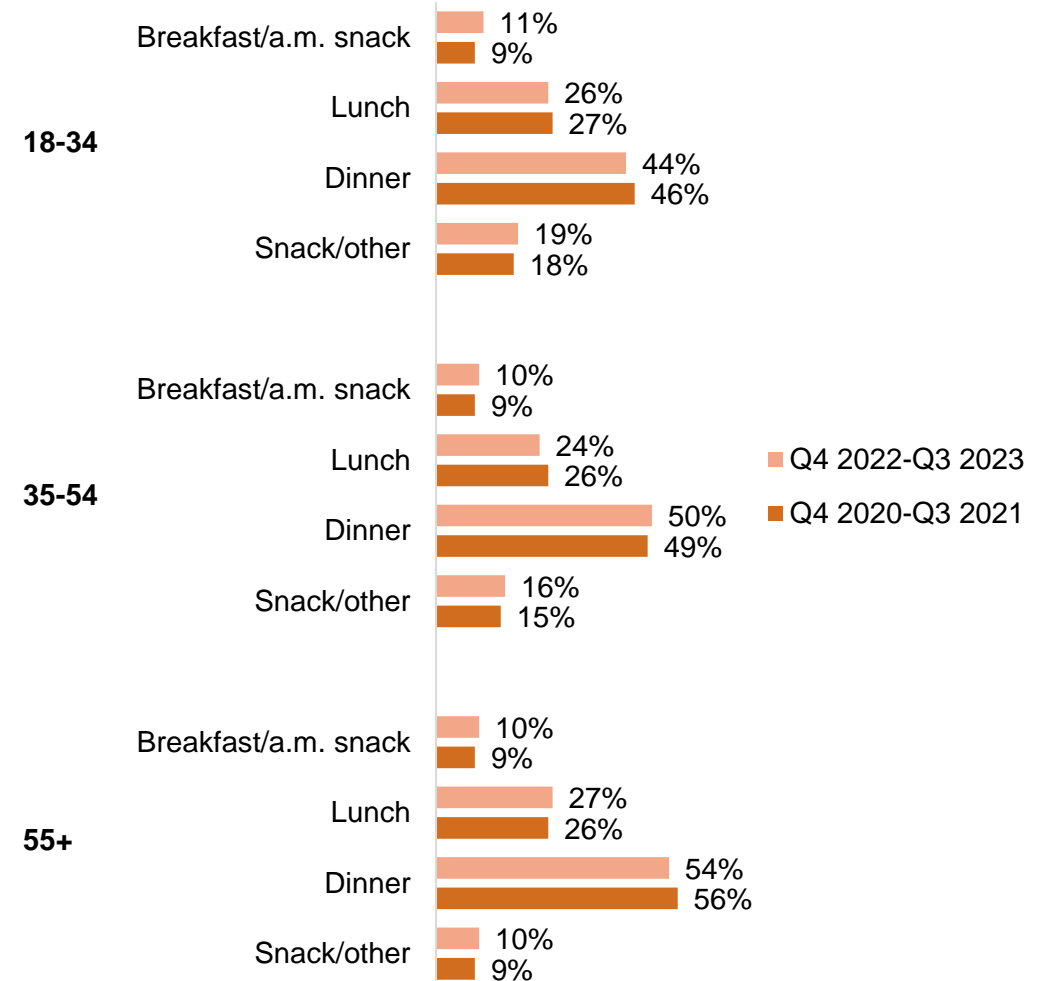
The chart on the right shows—by age group—how consumers have moved away from either lunch or dinner occasions in favor of both breakfast and off-peak dayparts.

In 2024, a continuing breakfast boom will gather momentum. During the weekends, data suggests brunch will become the new dinner thanks to its equally appealing social aspects, large adult beverage selections and lower average checks.

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

Base: Approximately 50,000 recent chain restaurant guests ordering/visiting Friday-Sunday per year shown  
Source: Technomic Ignite Consumer

SHARE OF WEEKEND OCCASIONS BY AGE GROUP



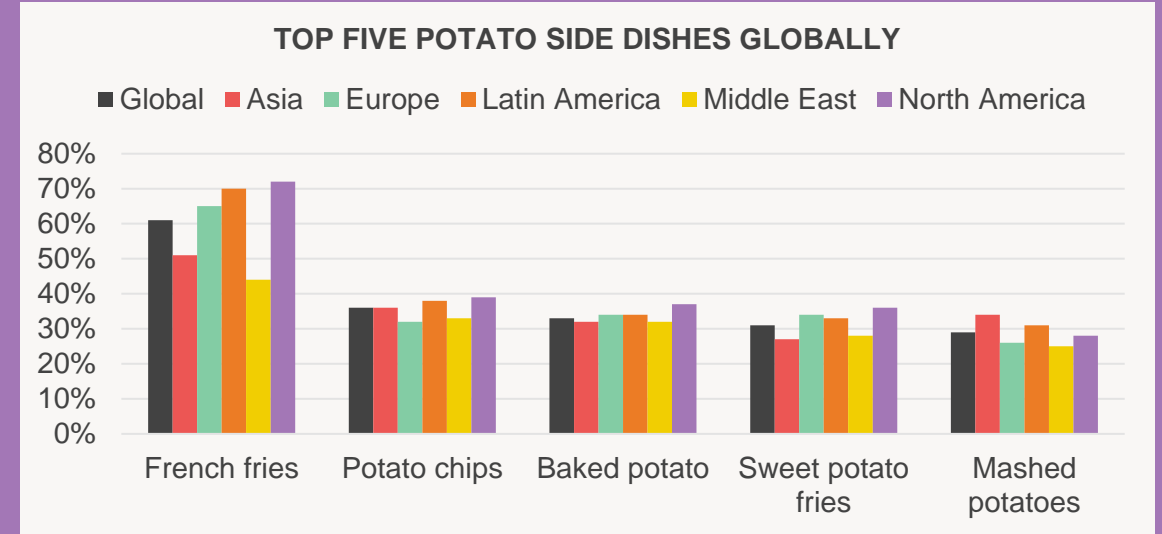
# Global potato side dish preferences

Technomic recently asked consumers in 25 countries around the world about the kinds of potato-based side dishes they prefer to order with burgers. Below are a few highlights:

Unsurprisingly, french fries are the undisputed champion in this category, with 61% of consumers globally ordering them and restaurant-goers in every region preferring them over all other potato-based sides.

Consumers in China (31%) and Saudi Arabia (39%) were distinct outliers and among the only markets where less than about half of consumers order french fries.

While the runners-up—potato chips (36%) and baked potatoes (33%)—saw little regional variation across consumer preference, others, like mashed potatoes (most popular in Asia and Latin America), hash browns (Latin



America and North America) and potato tots (North America) had more pronounced differences in ordering habits.

Although potato salad was the least popular option worldwide among potato sides, a healthy 25% of all consumers registered their interest in it as a side, with this number boosted by strong showings in North America, Japan, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Only Technomic tracks restaurant chain news and trends daily across 25 countries in a dozen languages to keep clients informed and ahead of their competition.

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

Base: 4768 global consumers  
 Q: If offered, which of the following side items would you consider ordering with burgers at a restaurant or other dining location? Select all that apply.  
 Source: Technomic Global Foodservice Navigator Program

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