Industry Insights

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

Image Source: Shutterstock
Support global initiatives with country-level foodservice insights

Understand evolving consumer behaviors, menu trends, industry news and operator data across 26 countries.

Explore country-level intel

ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA, BRAZIL, CANADA, CHILE, CHINA, COLOMBIA, FRANCE, GERMANY, INDIA, INDONESIA, JAPAN, MALAYSIA, MEXICO, PHILIPPINES, RUSSIA, SAUDI ARABIA, SINGAPORE, SOUTH AFRICA, SOUTH KOREA, SPAIN, THAILAND, UAE, U.K., U.S.
The total domestic footprint of the top 1,500 chain restaurants is forecasted to surpass 254,000 total locations to close out 2023, marking the third consecutive year of expansion.

On a percentage basis, the count of chain restaurants is projected to rise by 1.5% in 2023, essentially mirroring the annual increase observed in 2022.

Extensive new openings from chains like Starbucks, Jersey Mike’s Subs and Crumbl have helped lift the overall count of chain restaurant locations well above comparable pre-pandemic levels in 2019.

Explore Technomic’s recently released *Chain Restaurant Performance Outlook* report for deeper sales and location forecasting insights across key segments and menu categories.

**Ignite Company clients: Click here for more**

Source: Technomic Ignite Company
Note: Forecasts are preliminary and subject to ongoing updates

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IGNITE MENU

What’s trending in top-rated Q4 LTOs

As we close out the year, let’s check out the items that consumers are most excited about from the fourth quarter.

**Apples in Abundance**
Dishes featuring apples dominated the top-rated LTOs by purchase intent. Some 64% of consumers said they were likely to purchase the Handmade Apple Fritters at Krispy Kreme, as well as the Apple Crumb Pie at Ninety Nine Restaurant & Pub. Other highly rated items included the Upside Down Apple Pie at Morton’s The Steakhouse (59%) and Apple Dumplings at Handel’s Homemade Ice Cream (54%).

**Craveable Shellfish**
Dishes featuring crab, shrimp and lobster featured prominently on the top-rated list for craveability. Nearly three in four consumers (73%) found the Ultimate Surf and Turf with steak, shrimp and seafood stuffing at Ninety Nine Restaurant & Pub craveable. Other highly rated items included the Crab Cake Benedict at Mimi’s Bistro & Bakery (71%), the Chilled Shellfish Tower at Fleming’s Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar (71%), and the King Classic Steampot with king crab and shrimp at Joe’s Crab Shack (68%).

**Unique Egg Dishes**
Many egg dishes were deemed highly unique in Q4 2023. The Truffled Eggs With Smoked Salmon from Mimi’s Bistro & Bakery rose to the top of the list, which 82% of potential purchasers considered unique. Four egg dishes from Silver Diner also appeared on this list, including the Whipped Goat Cheese Ricotta Egg White Omelette (79%) and the Burrata Shakshuka (78%).

Source: Technomic Ignite Menu
Image Source: Shutterstock

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The increase in Americans returning to the office may be a key factor driving increased dine-in occasions. Consumers also report that on-premise occasions are better-suited for flavor trial than off-premise orders. More than half of overall consumers (51%) are likely or extremely likely to try new flavors when dining in, making the likelihood of flavor trial highest for dine-in occasions compared to all other order formats (e.g., takeout, delivery, etc.). Likelihood of new flavor trial for all order formats—especially dine-in occasions—is largely driven by millennials.

Post-pandemic work-from-home and hybrid work policies have disrupted dine-in occasions over the past few years, but the growing number of consumers returning to on-site work locations has created a prime opportunity for dine-in flavor trial of new or unique flavors.

Source: Technomic Ignite Consumer featuring the Technomic 2023 Flavor Consumer Trend Report
Base: 1,500 consumers who order food from restaurants
Q: How likely or unlikely are you to try a new or unique flavor when you’re ordering for...?
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.

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Since 1966, we have produced in-depth research focused on the foodservice industry.

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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