

THE FOODSERVICE CONSUMER – CANADA – 2024

Following the pandemic, foodservice is now challenged to navigate an uncertain economy with streamlined operations and menu variety to meet evolving demands.



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Reports



The Foodservice Consumer – Canada – 2024

This report looks at the following areas:

- An overview of the types of locations consumers dine at/from, how they use foodservice and at which dayparts
- What encourages and discourages consumers from using foodservice
- Areas of interest when it comes to menu and restaurant concepts
- Attitudes toward using tech at foodservice
- The perceived impact of social media influencers
- Perceptions related to value at foodservice



Following the pandemic, foodservice is now challenged to navigate an uncertain economy with streamlined operations and menu variety to meet evolving demands.

Overview

Canadians have rekindled their interest in dining out after a few tough years of lockdowns and economic uncertainties. Still, competition has been reignited and is further complicated by shifts in societal dynamics that affect consumer preferences like workplace changes and evolving demographics, which affect consumer preferences related to value, usage patterns and demands for specific flavours and experiences.

In response, operators need to astutely allocate resources to meet consumer expectations around convenience, culinary innovation and value amidst ongoing economic uncertainties.

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Report Content

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- What you need to know
- Consumer trend #1: dinner may be prime time for foodservice, but other dayparts bolster usage
- Consumer trend #2: social media's influence on menu innovation requires perspective
- Consumer trend #3: rumours of on-premises' demise have been greatly exaggerated
- Market predictions
- Opportunities

CONSUMER INSIGHTS

Consumer fast facts

Types of restaurants dined at or ordered from

- Fast food leads, but consumers still value experience
 - Graph 1: types of restaurants dined at or ordered from in the past three months, 2024
- Even with higher prices, foodservice is better positioned versus 2022
 - Graph 2: types of restaurants dined at or ordered from in the past three months, 2022 vs 2024
- Millennials' preference for fast casual points to demand for elevated convenience
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- Younger generations' preference for online ordering highlights the need for investment in this space

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 - Graph 23: easier ordering options to motivate dining out frequency, by age of children in household, 2024
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 - Graph 28: price/expense deters ordering, by financial situation, 2024
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- Mocktails address younger generations' growing preference for non-alcoholic beverages
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- ...and with parents of children and teens
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 - Graph 34: interest in menu concepts, men vs women, 2024
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Interest in restaurant concepts

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- Kiosks win more on speed than experience

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- Graph 39: attitudes towards kiosks at foodservice, 2024
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 - Graph 47: attitudes towards international cuisines and social media trends at foodservice, 2024
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 - Graph 48: attitudes towards international cuisines and social media trends at foodservice (any agree), by generation, 2024
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 - Graph 49: attitudes towards international cuisines and social media trends at foodservice (any agree), new Canadians vs overall, 2024
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 - Graph 50: "I'd like to see restaurants incorporate more of the trends I see from social media influencers" (any agree), visit select social media websites weekly, 2024
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- Promote takeout as solutions for dinners that are yet to be decided
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- Give parents of young children a helping hand with nightly takeout suggestions
 - Graph 53: "ordering takeout delivery on an app is a good option when I can't decide what to make for dinner" (any agree), by age of children in household, 2024
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 - Graph 54: "ordering takeout delivery on an app is a good option when I can't decide what to make for dinner" (any agree), by location, 2024

Attitudes toward foodservice and value

- Most believe value for money at foodservice has dropped
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- Gen Zs are least likely to observe shifts in perceived value
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- Value-related concerns are less dramatic in Quebec
 - Graph 57: attitudes towards value at foodservice (any agree), Quebec vs overall, 2024

COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES

Marketing and advertising

- Use menu hacks to introduce international dishes
- Will climate change's increasing impact erode seasonality's importance?
- Is dynamic pricing a 'third rail' for foodservice?

Opportunities

- Foodservice is not immune from AI's growing impact
- The case for AI robots in restaurants
- The case against AI robots in restaurants
- Are consumers concerned about privacy when it comes to AI at foodservice?
- McDonald's becomes WcDonald's, launches anime-inspired manga campaign
- Will Gen Alpha's rise impact the importance of restaurant spaces?
- Smaller footprints for smaller overhead in a more digitized world
- Are ghost kitchens dead and buried?

THE MARKET

Market context

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- Canadians look to cut back on eating out for their financial well-being
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Disclaimer

This is marketing intelligence published by Mintel. The consumer research exclusively commissioned by Mintel was conducted by Kantar Profiles ([See Research Methodology for more information](#)).

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Published by Mintel Group Ltd

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