



# DINING OUT

## OPPORTUNITIES IN THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE SPACE

### 2022 TREND REPORT BITE

#### TRANSLATING TO THE GROCERY AISLE

The last few years have been a whirlwind for restaurants, from the initial devastation of the pandemic to the scramble to pivot to take-out and ghost kitchens, to the cautious return of in-person dining and rising inflation rates. Now, more than two years after Covid-19 first hit, diners are trying to find a new equilibrium that balances safety with a desire for normalcy and even indulgence as well as prices that fit within tighter budgets. Food and beverage developers can take inspiration from the dining space to play into a more affordable away from home experience that consumers are searching for. Read on to learn about where dining stands today, and how retailers can apply dining trends and flavor inspirations to grocery stores and beyond.



#### 80% OF CONSUMERS

*say that they are eating out less often due to inflation.*

#### 29% OF CONSUMERS

*were motivated to eat their last meal away from home because they had a specific craving.*

Source: Restaurant Business , Datassential

# Who's Dining Out?

Though rising inflation is impacting consumers' decisions to dine out, we're taking a look at those who have most recently been enjoying the dining space.

## PARENTS

More than two years into the pandemic, parents are tired of cooking at home with children, so it makes sense that millennials and Gen X are the generations most likely to have had their last meal at a restaurant with kids. Mintel reports that, eager for a break from the kitchen, millennials plan to spend more money on dining out in 2022 and are interested in restaurants that offer comfort foods.

## GEN Z

Gen Z is disproportionately impacted by the volatile economy, leaving them with less discretionary money. However, they're still interested in dining out and are more likely to say their last meal was eaten with friends, so low-cost and fast-casual options are particularly appealing.

## CHANGE-SEEKERS

Many consumers are turning to restaurants for excitement after two years of lockdown: Datassential reports that 53% of millennials last tried a brand-new food item at a restaurant, while Mintel found that more than 40% of consumers want to increase their on-premise dining, largely driven by desire for changed experiences.



## PRODUCTS OF NOTE



**BEECHER'S HANDMADE CHEESE "WORLD'S BEST" MAC & CHEESE** has full-of-flavor penne folded with the award-winning Flagship cheese. The manufacturer claims to donate to the Beecher's Foundation, which inspires kids to make healthy food choices for life.

**36%** of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



**BETTER CHEW ORIGINAL FRIED CHICKEN PLANT-BASED CHICKEN SUBSTITUTE** is a vegan product with homestyle seasoning said to be a kids' favorite, and cooks in minutes. The manufacturer claims to continuously create food solutions that are affordable and accessible to all.

**44%** of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.

# Give the People What They Want

## PLENTY OF OPTIONS

- Millennial diners are nearly equal in their desire for healthy options and comfort foods
- 62% of boomers like trying new foods when they're part of familiar menu items
- More than 25% of diners are looking for a unique experience they can't replicate at home

## CONSISTENCY

- Nearly half of Gen X and older consumers are loyal toward casual dining restaurants that serve familiar favorites consistently
- Gen Z consumers skew toward chicken fast food restaurant loyalty while millennials are loyal to burger and coffee-/tea-focused restaurants

## GREAT TASTE

The percentage of diners who will only try a new food if they think it will taste good increases with age: 49% of Gen Z; 53% of millennials; 62% of Gen Z; 69% of boomers.

## ADVENTUROUS FLAVORS

Diners are open to adventurous flavors such as tajin, harissa, ube, yuzu and more. Developers can cater to global inspired flavors like these in their product innovations.



## PRODUCTS OF NOTE



**MEMBER'S MARK NASHVILLE STYLE HOT CHICKEN FLAVORED CRINKLE CUT KETTLE POTATO CHIPS** feature a medium heat and a sweet taste with spice and pepper flavors.

47% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



**TRADER JOE'S COLD BREW COFFEE AND BOBA COCONUT NON-DAIRY FROZEN DESSERT** with Tapioca Pearls is suitable for vegans. It contains boba, which is a tapioca pearl commonly found in Taiwanese bubble tea.

34% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.

# Dining at Home

What are some of the lessons that retail brands can learn from the current restaurant dining trends?

## DEMOGRAPHIC INSIGHTS

Boomers are just as likely to try new things at restaurants as grocery stores and 62% like trying new flavors in familiar menu items.

- » Target this demographic by offering prepared favorites with a twist.

## FOCUS ON THE EXPERIENCE

Dining out is largely driven by desire for a changed experience and as a way to socialize with family and/or friends.

- » Catering-style or family-style options in grocery stores allow consumers to recreate the social aspect of dining out with less cooking stress.

## INDULGENCES AT HOME

Nearly 1/4 of consumers are in a tight financial situation and have little disposable income.

- » Offer affordable indulgences that mimic the restaurant experience at a lower price point.

## CONVENIENT & AFFORDABLE

Consumers with tight financial situations are most likely to be frequent fast food customers.

- » Emphasize the low prices on convenient packaged meals or ingredients for adults and children.



## PRODUCTS OF NOTE



**LA BREA BAKERY TAKE & BAKE FRENCH BAGUETTE**, from Nancy Silverton's iconic La Brea Bakery, has a perfect crispy crust and a rich taste with every bite, and bakes in eight to 10 minutes.

**43%** of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



**WHATABURGER HONEY BUTTER SAUCE** is the same recipe you'll find at the popular burger chain on their famous honey butter chicken biscuit. Several of Whataburger's other sauces, including their Spicy Jalapeño Ranch and Spicy Ketchup, are also available in retail locations.

# THE TAKEAWAYS

Dining out made a slow and steady comeback after the turmoil of the last few years. Diners are still eager to see friends and family as well as break up the monotony of post-lockdown life. Though consumers are still enjoying dining out, with the current rise in inflation, many are keeping a watchful eye on their spending habits, making dining out less of a priority.

In the current state of dining, there are several lessons that retailers can learn from restaurants' experiences: make gathering with loved ones simple by offering family-style ready-made dishes; make it easy to try new things with fresh ingredients in favorite dishes; keep in mind consumers' search for affordability, and as always make it taste amazing.



## SOURCES

- Mintel
- Mintel GNPD
- Datassential
- GrubHub
- Restaurant Business

## YOU DESERVE MORE. LET'S GET STARTED.

What does true partnership look like? You deserve a flavor partner ready to turn these trends into the tangible.

Let McCormick FONA's market insight and research experts get to work for you. Translate these trends into bold new ideas for your brand. Increase market share and get to your "what's next." Our technical flavor and product development experts are also at your service to help meet the labeling and flavor profile needs for your products to capitalize on this consumer trend.

From concept to manufacturing, we're here for you — every step of the way. Contact our sales service department at [630.578.8600](tel:630.578.8600) to request a flavor sample or chat us up at [www.fona.com/contact-fona/](http://www.fona.com/contact-fona/)



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