



2025 DINER TRENDS REPORT



INTRODUCTION



Faced with inflation and a tough economic climate, **are Canadian diners truly feeling the pressure to cut back on dining out and ordering takeout and delivery?**

To answer this question and better understand emerging diner trends among Canadian consumers, we surveyed 1,000 Canadians across the country.

In 2024, Canadian diners were more cautious than their U.S. counterparts. In Canada, dining and takeout frequency plateaued, whereas in America, daily frequency increased. While our survey results show

that overall, Canadians are willing to spend money on restaurants, there are some Canadians who are reluctant to do so due to inflation.

It's more critical now than ever for restaurants to offer top-notch experiences, deals, and convenient solutions to mitigate these new challenges and prove to diners that there is still value in dining out and ordering in.



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Summary of Key Findings

30%

of diners are getting takeout or delivery once a week or more often

Off-premise dining frequency is only slightly influenced by rising prices and inflation ■ Canadian diners may continue to be cautious about how much they are spending in the future.

42%

of diners are part of a restaurant loyalty program

Loyalty programs are becoming increasingly popular among diners ■ As diners seek more value, loyalty programs play a critical role in helping them do so.

25%

of 18 - 34 year old diners typically dine out alone (up from 18% who said the same in 2023)

Solo dining is on the rise among younger diners ■ Younger diners aren't afraid to dine out alone and do so more often than their older counterparts.

58%

of diners say that menu prices/value for money are their top deciding factor when choosing a restaurant

Menu prices/value for money is more important to diners than food quality ■ As diners feel the impact of inflation, menu prices hold a lot of weight for everyone except boomers.

52%

of diners are comfortable with technology in restaurants

Diners are on the fence about tech in restaurants ■ Technology in restaurants generates mixed reviews from diners, as younger generations are more comfortable than boomers.





Dining Frequency

With restaurant dining, takeout, and delivery frequency plateauing and daily dining down by 50%, Canadian consumers are becoming more cautious about their spending habits.



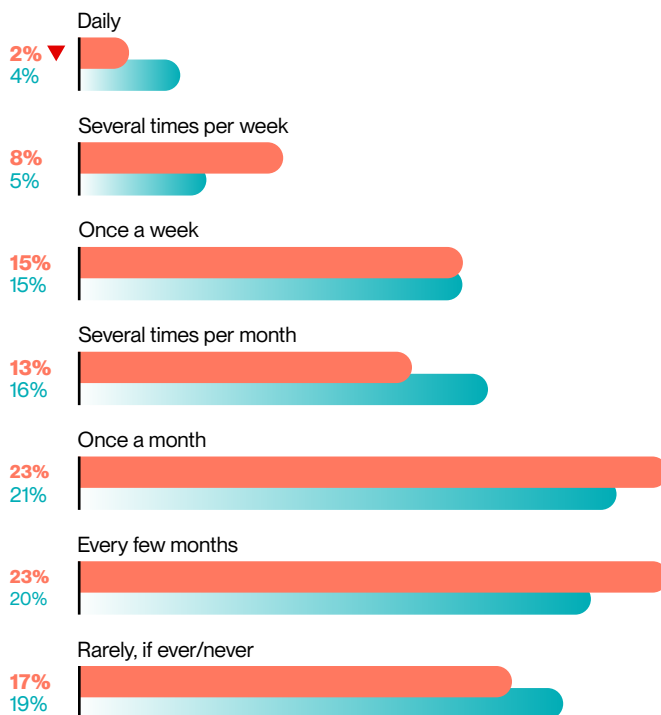
Overall Dining Frequency Has Stabilized While Daily Dining Drops Dramatically

In 2024, dining frequency stabilized compared to the previous year's decrease from the year prior. On average, 24% of Canadians dine out once a week or more often, indicating just a 1% drop from 2023. While a decrease from 2023, 32% of 18 - 34 year old diners say they dine out once a week or more frequently, which is more often than the average diner. In other words, younger diners present a lucrative opportunity for operators to drive sales.

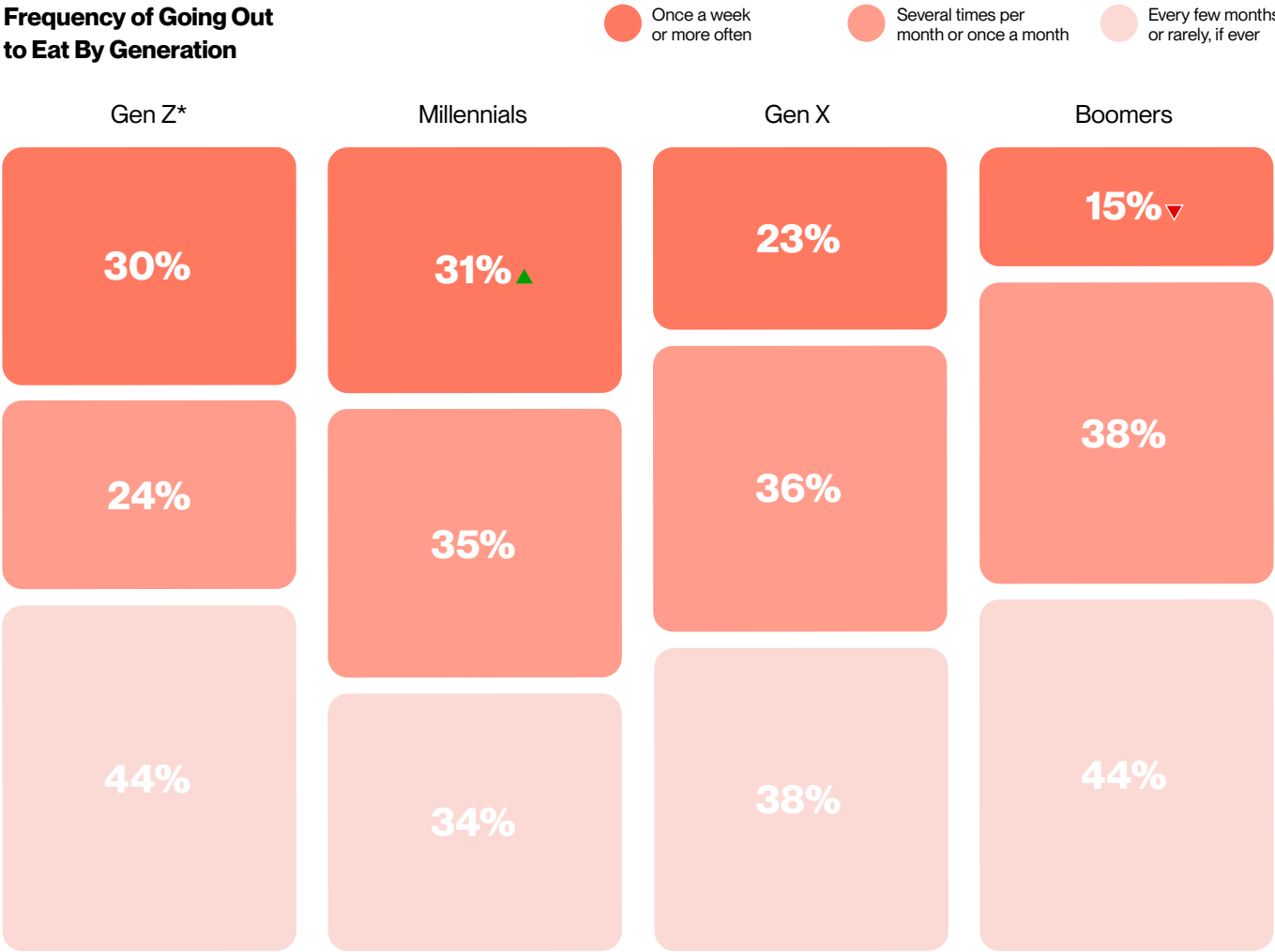
When it comes to daily dining, frequency has unfortunately decreased by 50% since the previous year, signaling that Canadian diners may be more cautious about how frequently they dine out. With 55% of diners citing high prices as the reason they're going out to restaurants less often than they were last year, it's no surprise that daily dining has plummeted.

- 31%** of **Millennials** dine out once a week or more often
- 15%** of **Boomers** dine out once a week or more often
- 41%** of **Toronto** diners dine out once a week or more often

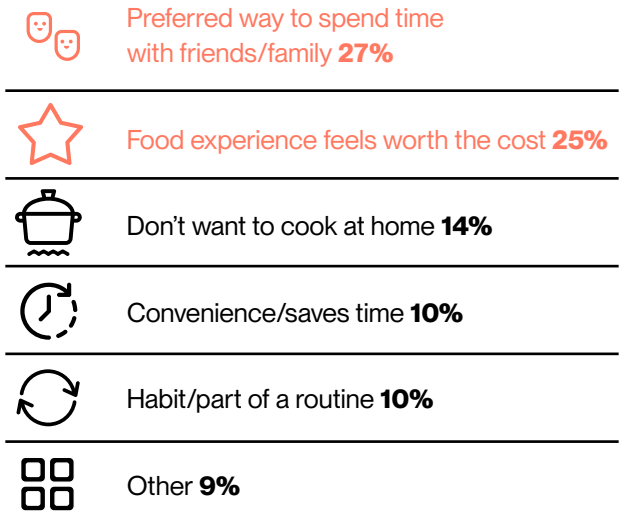
Frequency of Going Out to Eat YoY 2023 2024



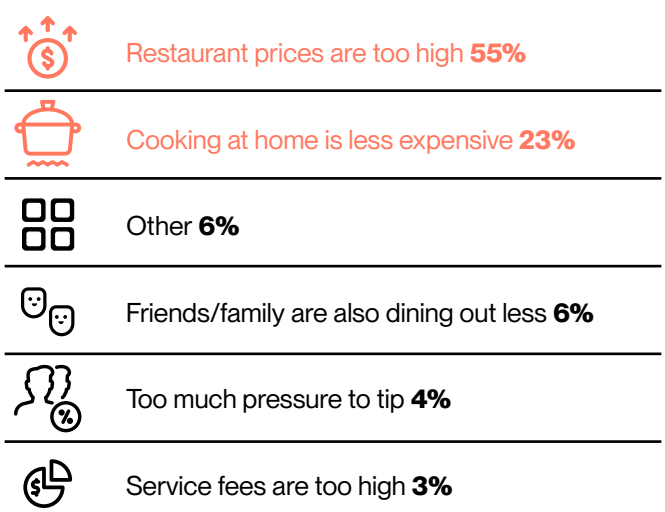
Frequency of Going Out to Eat By Generation



Reasons Consumers are Going Out to Eat More Than Last Year



Reasons Consumers are Going Out to Eat Less Than Last Year



* Caution: small base.

Takeout and Delivery Outpace Dine-Out Frequency Due to Convenience

Much like dining out, the rate at which Canadians are ordering takeout and delivery has stabilized. However, one difference is that takeout and delivery are outpacing dine-out frequency, with 30% of diners ordering takeout at least once a week or more often.

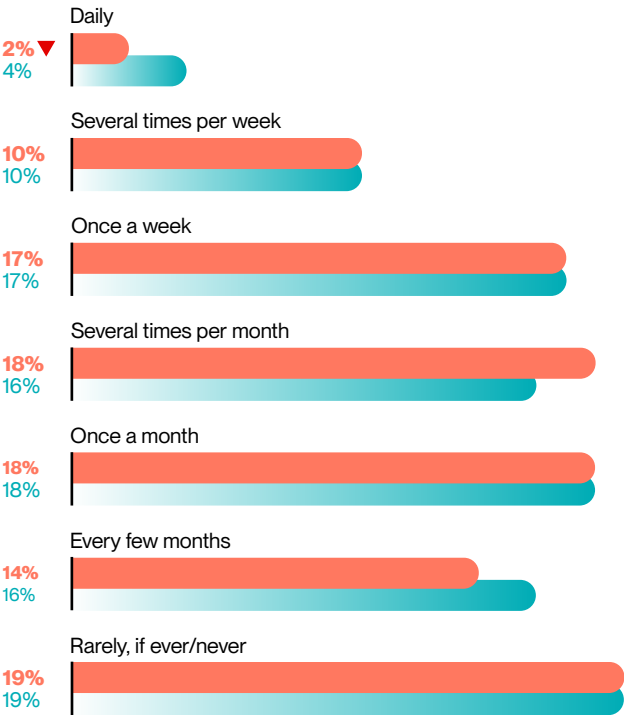
So why are Canadians ordering takeout and delivery more than they are dining out? When asked, the top reasons diners gave were convenience and that they preferred to enjoy a meal at home. Both of these trends are here to stay, even post-pandemic. In fact, convenience/saving time is the top reason diners gave for ordering takeout more than in 2023.

There is a generational divide among Canadians when it comes

to prioritizing takeout and delivery. While Boomers' off-premise ordering habits have slowed down, Gen Z and Millennials are picking up the slack and leading takeout and delivery frequency across the country. A whopping 39% of them say they order in at least once a week, compared to just 11% of Boomers. These findings make sense, since Gen Z has grown up with technology and services that meet their needs on demand.



Frequency of Ordering Takeout/Delivery YoY
2023 2024



“With my work schedule, it just makes more sense to grab something on the way home.”

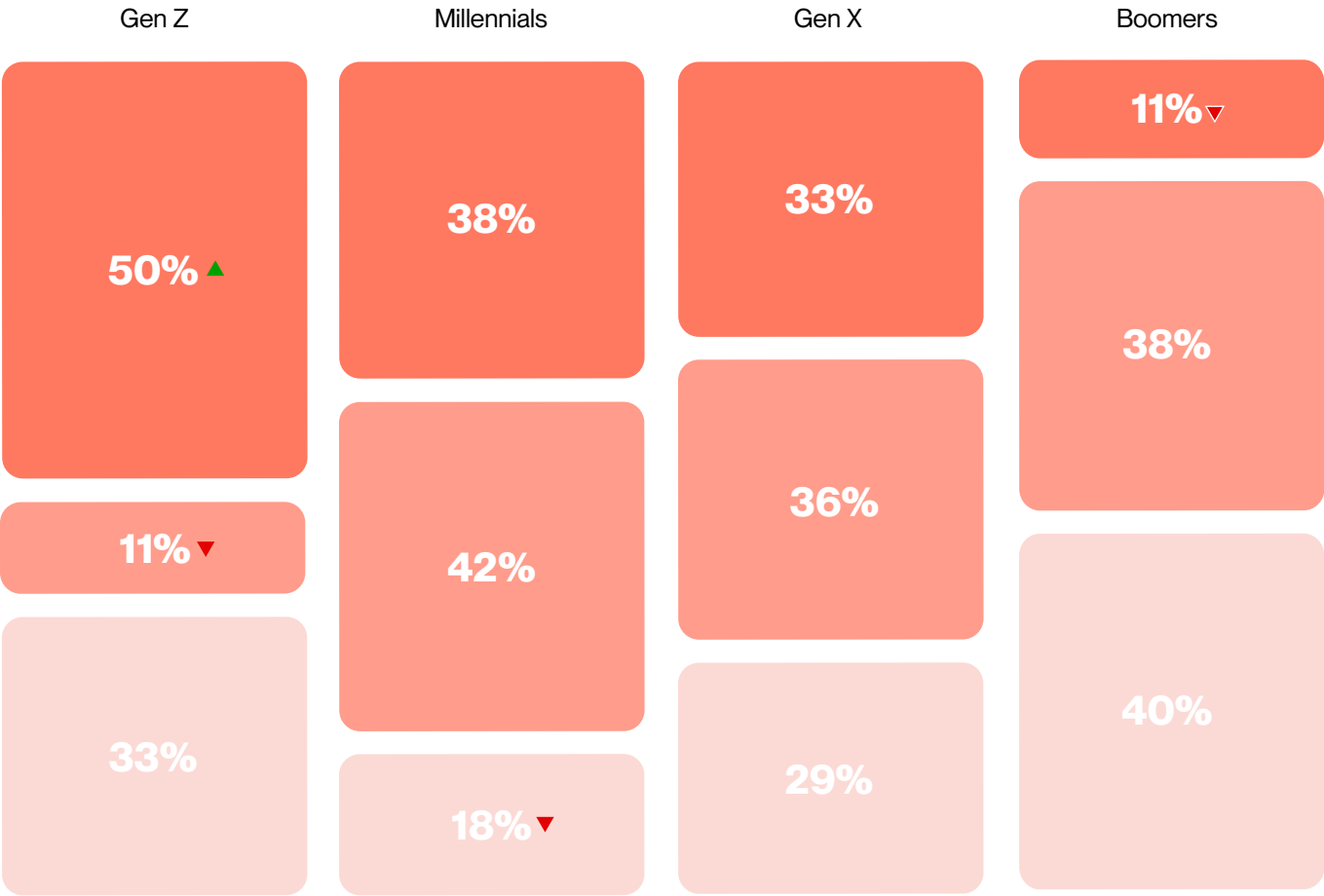
(Male, 26, Toronto, ON)

5%

of Millennials are getting take-out or delivery daily

Frequency of Ordering Takeout/
Delivery by Generation

Once a week or more often Several times per month or once a month Every few months or rarely, if ever



Reasons for Ordering Takeout/
Delivery More Than Last Year

- Convenience/saves time 43%
- Don't want to cook at home 14%
- The food experience feels worth the cost 14%
- Habit/part of a routine 10%
- Preferred way to spend time with friends/family 8%
- Influenced by social media to try more places more often 7%

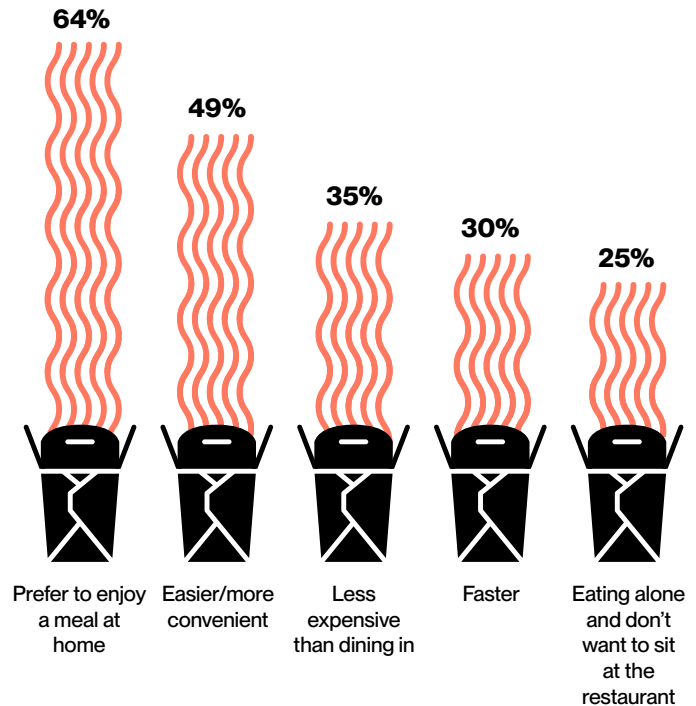
Reasons for Ordering Takeout/Delivery
Out Less Than Last Year

- Restaurant prices are too high 38%
- Cooking at home is less expensive 33%
- Delivery fees are too high 11%
- Quality of the experience has diminished 8%
- Other 6%
- Too much pressure to tip 3%

“There’s more deals on takeout. And if you’re ordering from the website itself, they don’t charge you any kind of fees. It’s just the upfront price you pay plus taxes. But if you’re ordering through Uber Eats or Skip, then they charge you a service fee, taxes and other kinds of tips. I think ordering takeout from the restaurant itself is much cheaper than ordering from Uber Eats.”

(Male, 26, Toronto, ON)

Top Reasons Diners Choose Takeout/Delivery Over Dining Out

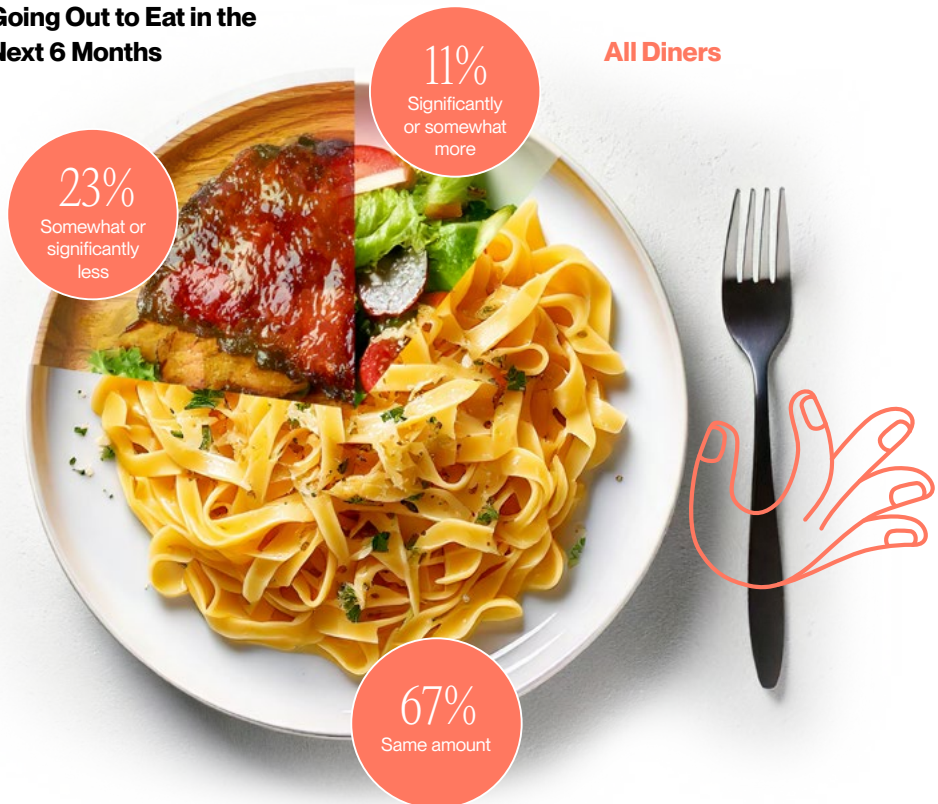


Younger Generations: The Driving Force Behind Dine-in and Takeout

Canadians are keeping a closer eye on their budgets, whether they're dining out or ordering in. When asked how much more often they expect to be going out to a restaurant or ordering takeout and delivery, most diners (67%) say they plan to go out at the same rate, and 66% say the same about takeout and delivery.

The upside for restaurant operators is that despite the majority of diners sticking to their usual routines, younger generations, like Gen Z and Millennials, are getting out more. 15% of Gen Z and Millennials expect to be going out to a restaurant *significantly* or *somewhat* more in the next six months than the average Canadian diner. In addition, 20% of Millennials expect to get takeout or delivery *significantly* or *somewhat* more, which is higher than the average Canadian diner.

Expected Frequency of Going Out to Eat in the Next 6 Months



20%

of Millennials expect to order takeout/delivery significantly or somewhat more in the next 6 months

Expected Frequency of Ordering Takeout/Delivery in the Next 6 Months





Our Takeaways

To keep consumers dining out and ordering in, restaurants need to show diners they're still worth the money. Small changes can make a big impact on keeping customers engaged and coming back for more.

- ✓ Introduce budget-friendly menu options or happy hour deals to cater to those cutting back their spending.
- ✓ Promote online ordering directly from your restaurant to cater to those who want to avoid high delivery fees.
- ✓ Optimize the dine-in experience to encourage customers to continue dining out with friends and family despite tough economic times.



Spending Habits

Dining-out checks are getting bigger, while takeout and delivery spending are holding steady, but tips are staying the same. Even as costs rise, customers' tipping habits haven't changed much.



Canadians Aren't Dining Out More – But They Are Spending More

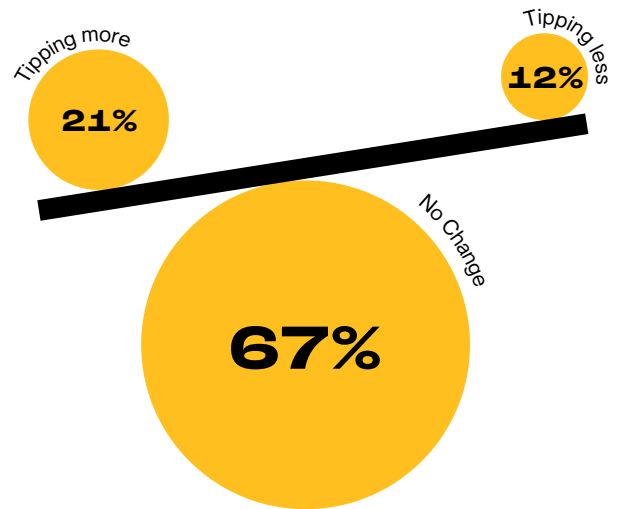
Despite overall dining frequency plateauing, Canadian diners are spending more per check on average, whether they are dining in or ordering takeout or delivery. The average meal out costs Canadians \$63, which is a \$7 increase from the year prior. Gen Xs are the biggest spenders when it comes to dining out, reportedly spending \$68.

The majority (67%) of Canadian diners appear to be tipping the same amount as the year prior, despite average check totals growing. Canadians are tipping 15% on average, with Boomers tipping the most generously at 16%.

\$63 average spend on dining out
(+\$7 from 2023)

15% is the average tip when
dining out

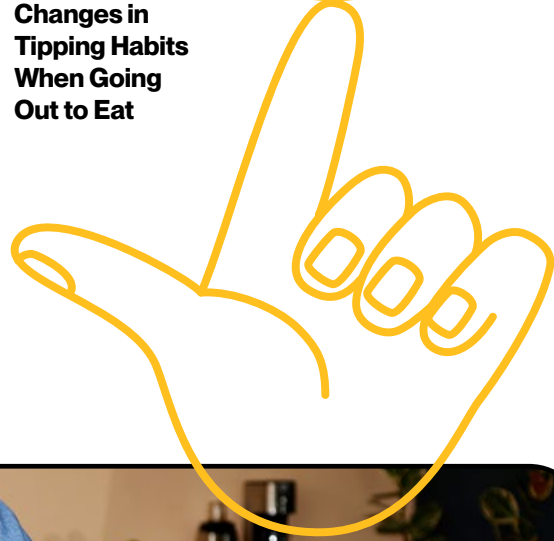




“If you look at the final bill and you’re already paying a fee, a service fee through the business, then you might not be able to tip the server because you’re already paying in on top of your bill.”

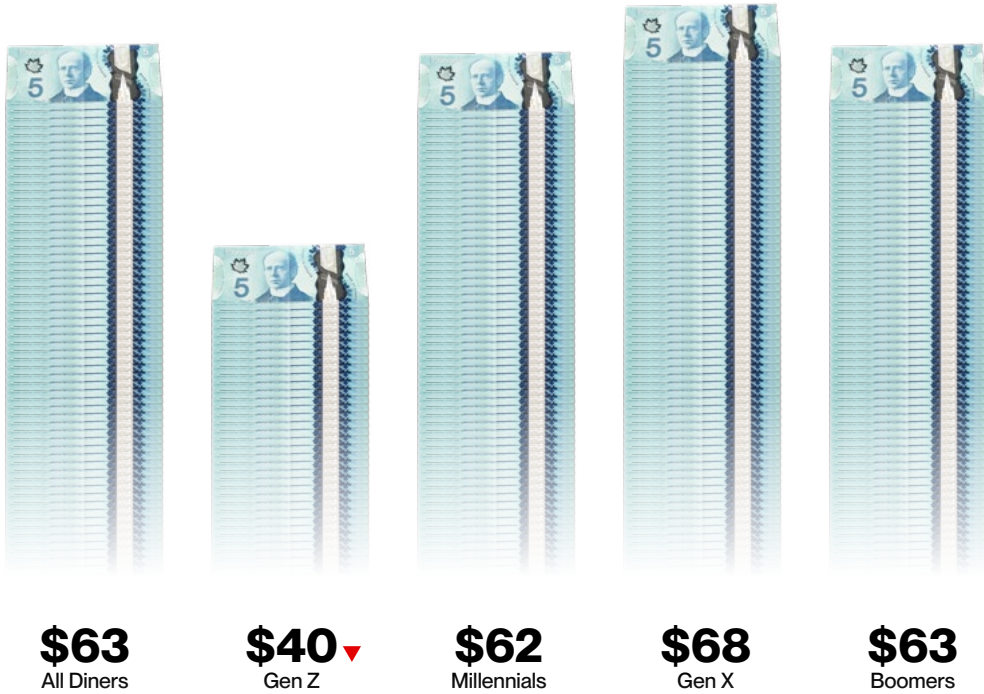
(Male, 26, Toronto, ON)

**Changes in
Tipping Habits
When Going
Out to Eat**

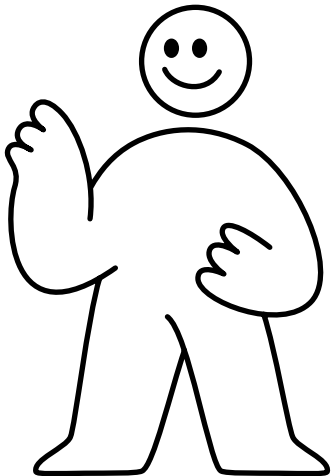




Average Spend When Going Out to Eat by Generation



Average Tip When Going Out to Eat by Generation



\$38 average spend on takeout and delivery (-\$1 from 2023)

12% is the average tip for getting takeout or delivery

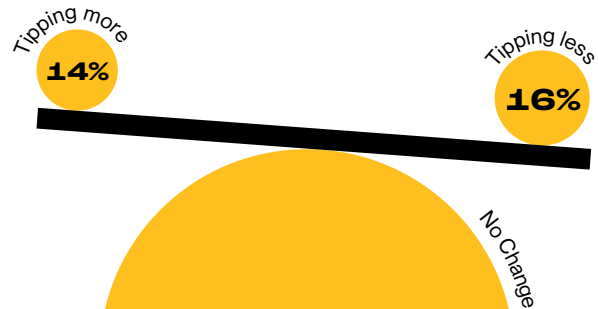


Takeout and Delivery Habits Hold Steady – And So Do Tips

While dining out is costing Canadians more than ever before, it's a different story for takeout and delivery.

The average spend for ordering takeout or delivery is \$38, which is down by \$1 from the year before. Gen X appears to be the biggest spenders across every generation, followed closely by Millennials who reportedly spend \$40 on average.

As for tipping on takeout and delivery, most Canadians aren't changing their tipping habits. 70% say they're sticking to the same amounts, which is even more than tipping for dining in. On average, diners tip around 12%, but Gen Z diners seemingly demonstrate that they may be more generous than their elder counterparts. Meanwhile, Gen X falls below the curve at just 11%. It turns out, the biggest tippers might not be who you'd expect!



Changes in Tipping Habits When Getting Takeout or Delivery



Average Spend When
Ordering Takeout or
Delivery by Generation



Average Tip When Ordering
Takeout or Delivery by Generation



“I feel like, especially with Uber Eats and stuff like that, I have to pay close attention to the amount of tips that they take out or the delivery costs itself. **It's gone up quite a bit, so now I'm kind of pulling away, from delivery and just kind of utilizing the restaurants that are a little bit closer to me.**”

Female, 50, Edmonton, AB



Our Takeaways



Canadians are spending more than ever before to dine out without forking over more money for takeout and delivery. Keep these findings in mind to keep customers coming back for more, even as prices rise.

✓ Transparency is key, especially when it comes to service fees. These extra charges can heavily impact the amount consumers choose to tip.

✓ If leveraging tipping prompts, keep suggested tip sizes between 10 - 24%.

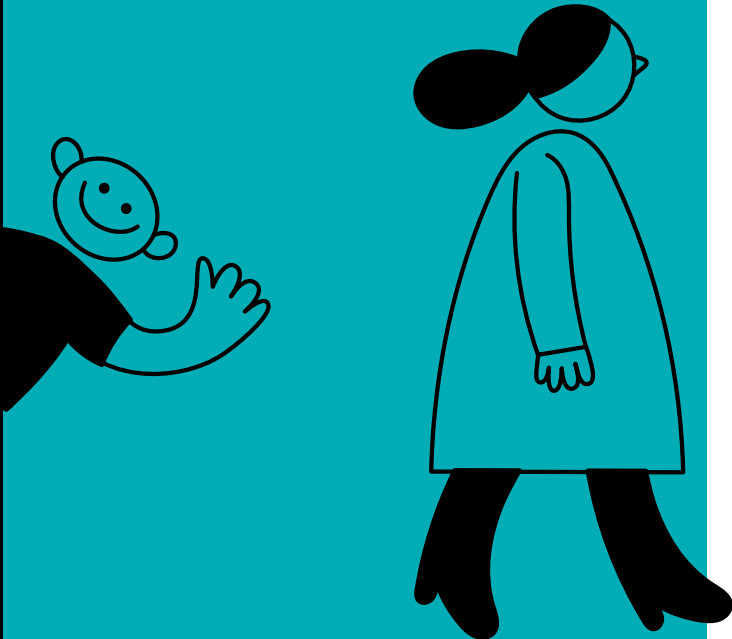
✓ Offer customers deals and ease tipping pressure, since feeling forced to tip is the top reason for tipping less. Doing so will keep customers from opting for quicker, more casual dining options.

3



Behaviour & Preferences








With tighter budgets and convenience taking priority, more diners are opting for fast food, pick-up, and solo meals.



Uptick in Preference for Fast Food

Canadians are finding ways to save money, including changing the types of restaurants they visit. While almost a third of Canadian diners continue to seek out family style restaurants, there's been an uptick in those who prefer fast food style restaurants. In 2024, 25% say they choose fast food most often when dining out, which is up from 17% in 2023. Meanwhile, fast casual restaurants are seeing a drop in popularity, with only 12% of diners visiting them most often, which is down from 20% the year prior.

Even though 88% of diners say quick service restaurants (QSRs) are getting pricier, they are still choosing QSRs over full service restaurants to keep costs down. This is especially true for Millennials, 29% of whom opt for fast food restaurants most often, compared to just 18% of Boomers who said the same. Meanwhile, Boomers lean towards family style restaurants, as dining out is their preferred way to spend time with family and friends. These findings reveal that while convenience is king, quality time still takes priority for some diners.

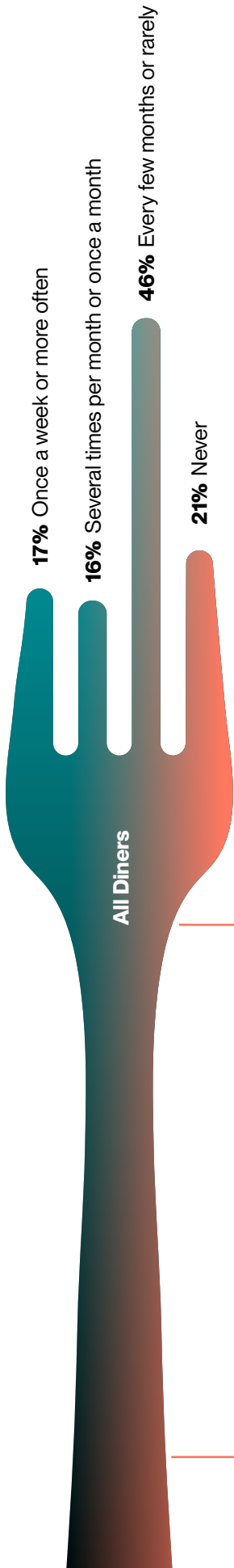
Type of Restaurant Consumers Seek Out Most Often YoY		2024	2023
	Fast food	25% ▲	17%
	Fast casual	12% ▼	20%
	Brasserie/bistro/cafe	7%	7%
	Bar/grill	13%	15%
	Fine dining	10%	8%
	Family style	31%	31%
	Other	2%	2%

Solo Dining Slowly on the Rise, Especially Among Younger Diners

Spending time with family and friends remains the top reason diners are dining out more than last year. While nearly half of Canadians primarily dine out with their spouse or significant other (49%) or families (48%), more and more are dining solo. In 2024, 17% of Canadians say they typically dine out alone, which is up from 14% in 2023. With older diners favouring family style restaurants in efforts to spend more quality time with family, it's no surprise that solo dining appears to be more popular among the younger generations.

In fact, 25% of 18 - 34 year old diners say they typically go out to a restaurant solo, compared to 18% who said the same the year prior. It's clear that members of the younger generations aren't afraid to eat alone. Our survey revealed that 32% of them dine out at least once a week – more than the average Canadian. They're redefining what it means to dine-out – no company required.

Young diners aren't the only ones eating alone. Canadians with children under the age of 18, as well as those with household incomes over \$200,000, are also embracing solo dining, likely as a way to have down time and take a break from their busy lives. No matter the reason, the growing trend of solo dining presents a unique opportunity for restaurants.



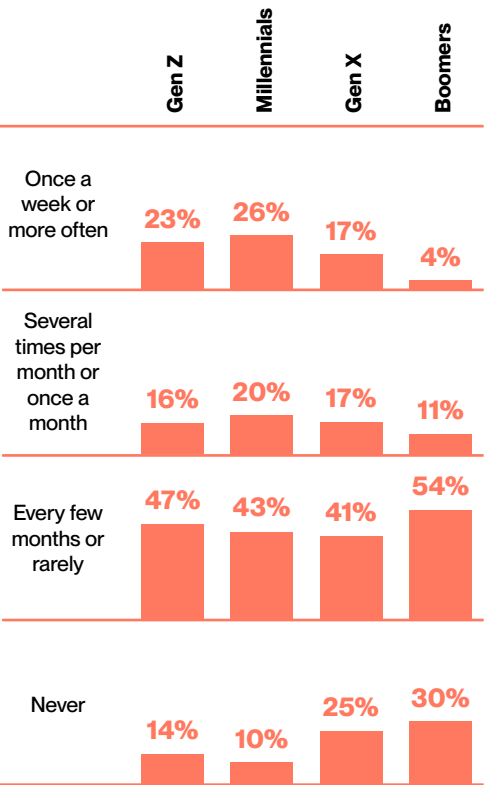
17%▲

of diners said they typically go out to a restaurant alone (up from 14% in 2023)

25%▲

of 18 - 34 year old diners typically dine out alone (up from 18% in 2023)

How Often Diners Are Dining Alone by Generation



Planning Ahead Is Becoming More Popular Among Canadian Diners

Almost half of Canadians surveyed think reservations are valuable, likely because they're becoming increasingly selective when dining out. About half (49%) of diners always, most of the time, or occasionally make a reservation, versus 41% who said the same last year.

So why do Canadians make reservations? Most diners want to guarantee a table is available (61%), especially for special occasions (60%). Despite their growing appetite for solo dining, Gen Zs place a higher emphasis on the importance of making a reservation for large group outings.

When it comes to how Canadians make reservations, the majority (76%) prefer to call in (up from 69%

in 2023), regardless of the reason for making a reservation. This desire to dial suggests diners still value the human connection and prefer connecting directly with a staff member, likely to address questions and concerns. When it does come time to use a third-party reservation site, OpenTable is the most widely used reservation platform in Canada, with the vast majority of diners choosing it over other options.

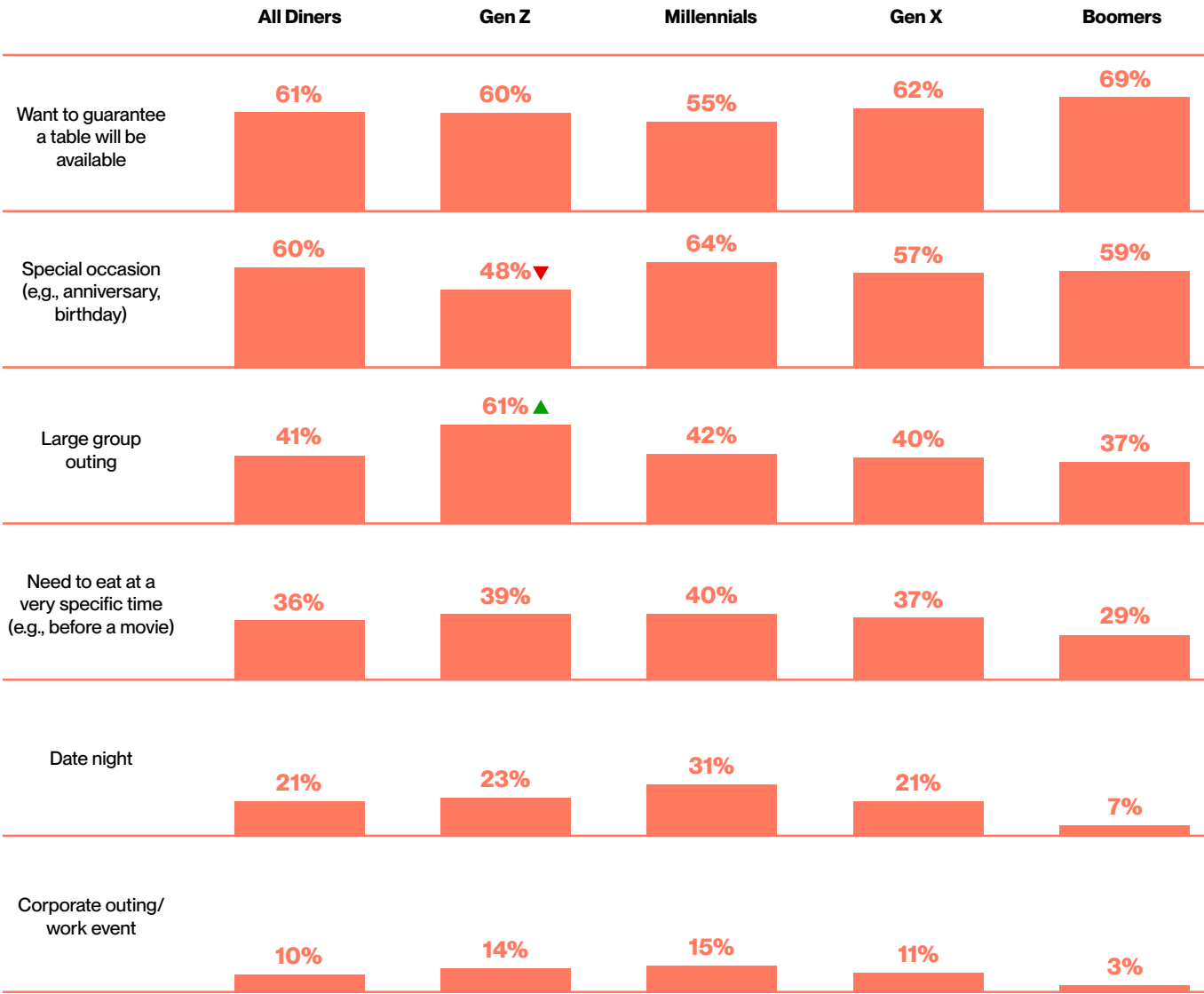


How Often Diners Make Reservations	All Diners	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers
Always/most of the time	13%	9%	12%	13%	15%
Occasionally	36%	15% ▼	42%	32%	37%
Rarely	36%	48% ▲	32%	38%	35%
Never	15%	28%	14%	17%	13%






49%
of diners make a reservation
at least occasionally (up
from 41% in 2023)



Motivations to Make Reservations



Channels Used to Make a Reservation

	2024	2023
 Phone (call in)	76%▲	69%
 The restaurant's website	49%▲	35%
 Third-party reservation site (e.g., OpenTable, Resy)	24%	23%
 Walk-in	13%▼	18%
 Google	10%	8%

Top 3 Reservation Apps Used

 **OpenTable™**

90%

 **yelp**

10%

 **eat**

7%



Canadian Diners Continue to Cut Out the Third-Party

Even with lots of delivery options at their disposal, 52% of Canadians prefer picking up their takeout orders. Similarly, Americans also pick up their takeout orders, but they prefer to do so via the drive-thru.

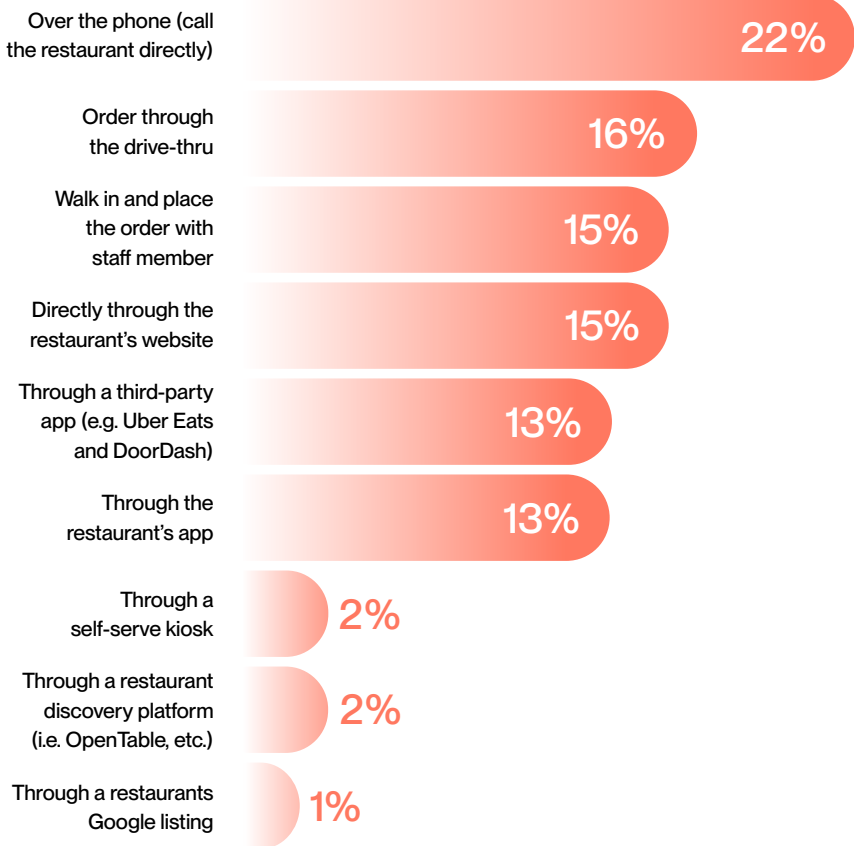
Although Canadians prefer to get their food to go via the drive-thru and by delivery more in 2024 than the year prior, 22% responded that they still usually place to-go orders over the phone, versus only 13% saying they usually use a third-party app. However, Gen Zs and Millennials are the exception to this trend, where 23% shared that they typically place an order to go through a third-party app. And when it comes to which third-party apps Canadians use, they rely on a mix of ordering apps with Uber Eats (64%), SkipTheDishes (52%), and DoorDash (45%), each claiming a generous slice of the food delivery and takeout market.

32%
of Millennials prefer to get their to-go orders delivered

39%
of Boomers prefer to place orders to-go over the phone



How Diners Usually Place a To-Go Order



Preferred Way to Getting Food To Go



The drive-thru
2024: 22% ▲
2023: 16%



Walk in and pick up
2024: 52% ▼
2023: 61%



Delivery
2024: 25% ▲
2023: 22%

Other
2024: 1%
2023: 1%



“I like to order and then just walk over and pick it up.
Or if I have somebody that’s coming close by, I’ll say, ‘Hey, can you just stop here and grab this for me’ and they’ll just bring it by.”

Female, 50, Edmonton, AB



Our Takeaways

Speed, convenience, and affordability are key to adapting to changing diner behaviour.

- ✔ Provide diners with the option to make a reservation over the phone and on your restaurant's website.
- ✔ Engage directly with diners instead of relying on third-party vendors for takeout orders, as Canadians want to save on delivery fees.
- ✔ Tap into the solo diner market by offering solo seating and a tailored menu.



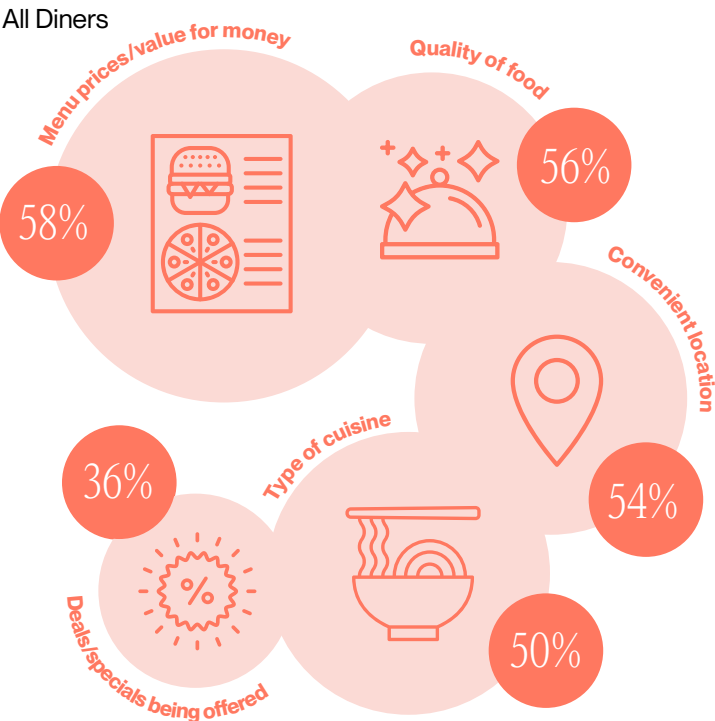
Offering value may be the secret to getting diners through your door in 2025.

Diners Are Hungry for Value

Amidst inflation, Canadians aren't shying away from good deals when choosing restaurants. 58% of diners shared menu prices/value for money are their top deciding factor. This strong emphasis on pricing for Canadian diners is reflected in the fact that 97% of diners always or occasionally consider menu prices and value for money when choosing where to eat.

While food quality is 62% of Boomers' top deciding factor for restaurants, the younger generations prioritize menu prices and value for money above all else. Interestingly, Gen Z is more likely to be influenced by curated lists, like "top 10 new restaurants" when picking a dining spot.

Top Factors Influencing Where Diners Choose to Eat



	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers
Menu prices/value for money	59%	59%	61%	53%
Quality of food	43%	56%	55%	62%
Convenient location	53%	50%	57%	56%
Type of cuisine	53%	44%	55%	53%
Deals/specials being offered	38%	40%	34%	31%

Diners Use Loyalty Programs to Stretch Their Dollars

With menu prices and value key to most Canadian diners' choices, it's natural for them to seek ways to stretch their dollars. It's no surprise that many Canadians are turning to restaurant loyalty programs to save money. In fact, 42% of diners surveyed are restaurant loyalty program members, which is up from 29% who said the same last year. Additionally, 92% of these loyalty program members belong to quick-service programs (up from 82% last year), mirroring the rise in fast food dining.

So why are Canadians joining restaurant loyalty programs? The ability to earn free items and to access discounts and coupons are top reasons. Regardless of their motivation for joining, 40% of loyalty program members engage with these programs weekly or more often.

As diners engage in loyalty programs more often to stretch their dollars, personalization matters more than ever. 40% of consumers prefer personalized offers from restaurants over general offers and discounts, which is up from 29% last year. Dollar discounts and buy-one-get-one (BOGO) deals are the most attractive general offers to loyalty program members. Specifically, 30% of loyalty program members say they prefer dollar discounts and 26% of them say they prefer BOGO promotions.

42% of diners are part of a restaurant loyalty program
(up from 29% last year)

40% of loyalty program members are engaged once a week or more often
(up from 35% last year)



Loyalty Program Membership by Restaurant Type



92% ▲
Quick service chains
(up from 82% last year)



17%
Full-service chains



7%
Local/Independent restaurants

Top 3 #1 Ranked Factors Influencing the Decision to Join a Loyalty Program



36%
Ability to earn free items



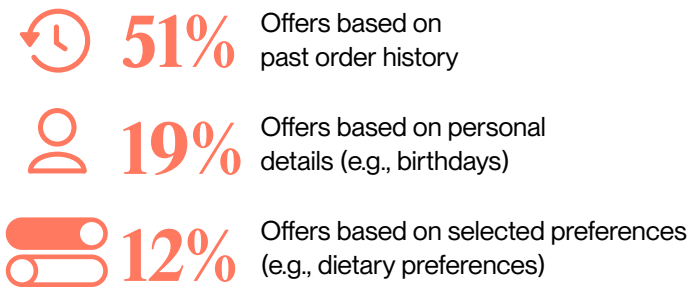
35%
Access to discounts and coupons



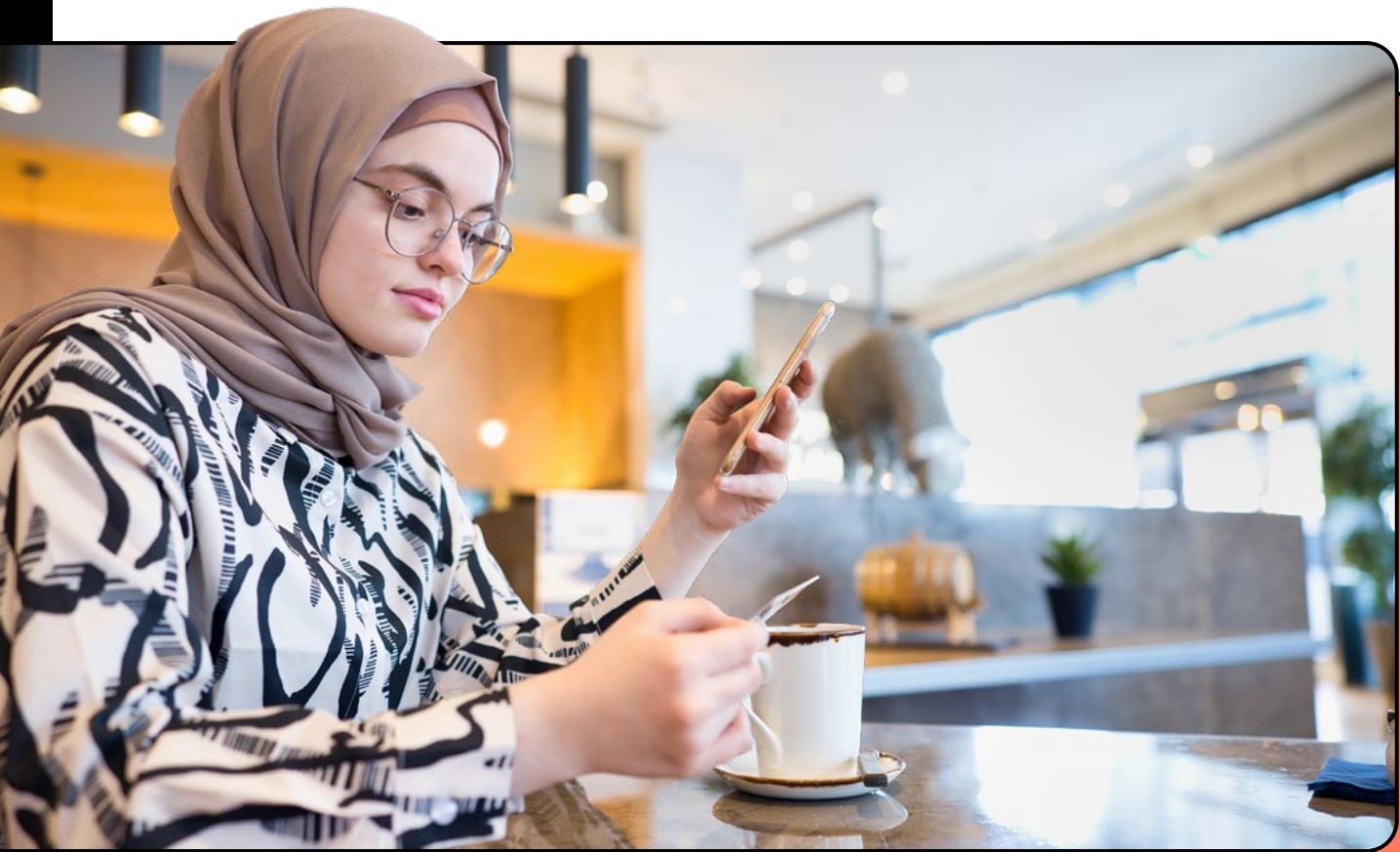
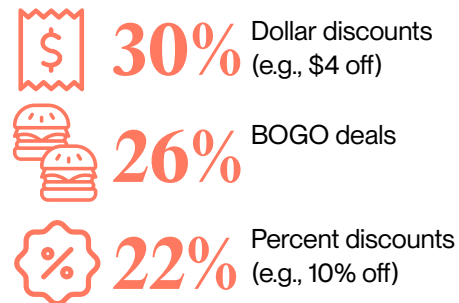
7%
More ordering options (i.e. ability to place mobile pick-up orders)

Top 3 Most-Preferred Loyalty Offers

Most-Preferred Personalized Offers



Most Preferred General Offers



“A couple of loyalty programs were recommended to me by people who said that they are actually quite good in the sense that you don’t have to go there frequently to be able to redeem for something. And others, it’s because maybe I genuinely frequently visit, so why not get something back?”

(Female, 43, Vancouver, BC)

Younger Diners are Scrolling for Their Next Meal

While menu price and value certainly influence Canadians' dining decisions, social media also plays a role. Nearly a third (32%) of Canadian diners say they've used social media to research which restaurant to visit in the past 12 months. Additionally, 88% of diners always or occasionally seek or rely on a restaurant's popularity on social media before deciding whether or not to eat there. Unsurprisingly, some

generations rely on social media for restaurant selection more than others. Almost half (45%) of 18 - 34 year olds said they used social media for this purpose, versus only 19% of Boomers said the same.

So, which social media platforms are diners using to research restaurants? That depends on who is doing the research and how. Instagram has the biggest influence on Gen Zs, even though TikTok is stated more often among them than by older generations. Facebook is the most influential among all of the older generations. And as

for how diners are using each platform, 48% look at a restaurant's Facebook page. Therefore, it's critical for restaurants to keep their social media accounts – especially on Facebook and Instagram – up to date for potential diners.

The percentage of Canadians using Google to determine where to dine has dipped since last year, which isn't surprising given the growing influence of social media platforms like TikTok and Facebook. More specifically, 35% of diners used Google reviews in the past 3 months, compared to 40% the year prior.



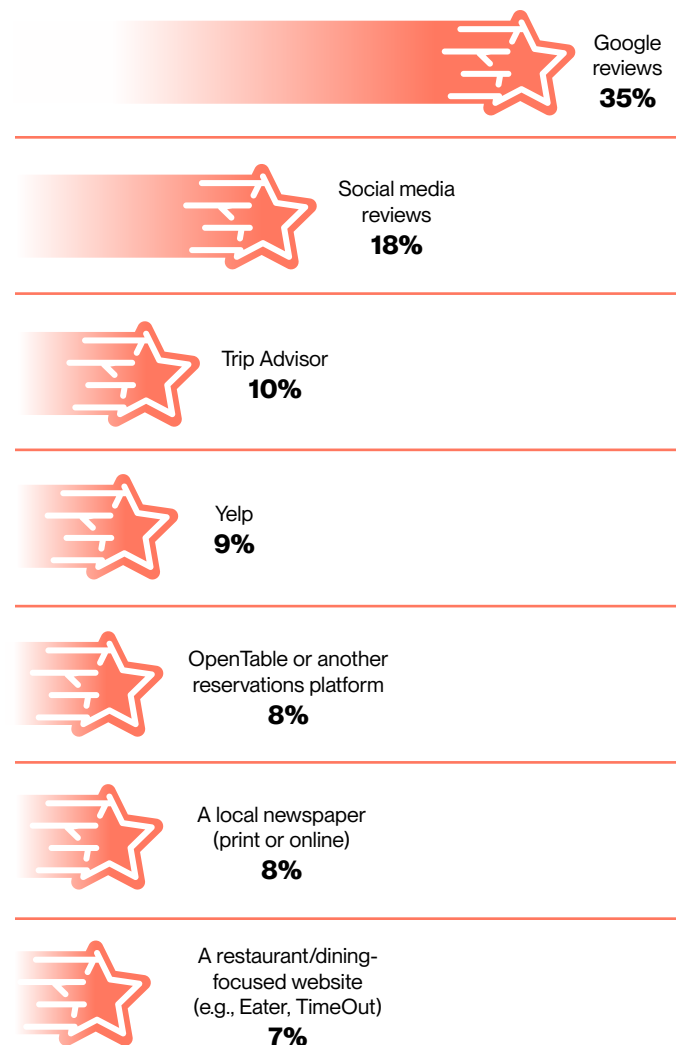
32%

of Gen Z diners have looked at restaurant reviews on social media in the past 3 months







27%

of Millennials have looked at restaurant reviews on social media in the past 3 months

Review Sources Used in the Past 3 Months



The Influence of Social Media Platforms on Where Diners Choose to Dine

	Total	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers
 Facebook	21%	14%	25%	21%	20%
 Instagram	13%	32%	23%	9%	0%
 TikTok	4%	18%	5%	3%	0%
 Twitter (X)	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%
 Snapchat	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
 Threads	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	4%	0%	4%	7%	2%

Why Diners Visit Each Social Media Platform

Instagram
To discover new restaurants

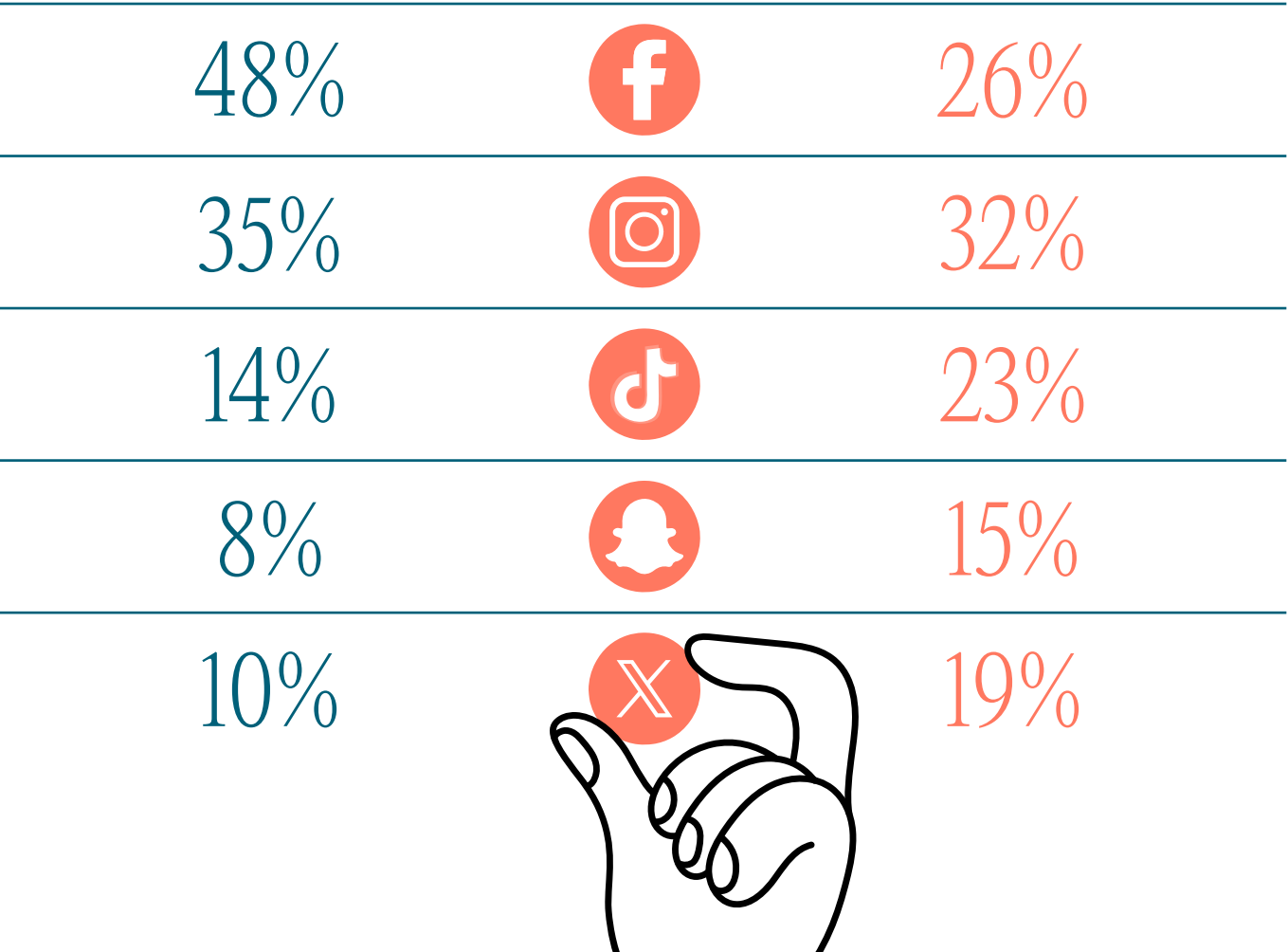
Facebook
To engage with and learn more about restaurants

TikTok
To discover trending or local restaurants

Proportion of Diners Looking for a Restaurant's Business Profile on Social Media

How Diners Use Social Media

Proportion of Diners Looking for Restaurant Reviews from Other Users/Influencers on Social Media

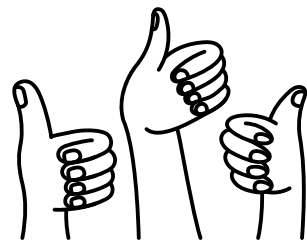


MICHELIN Stars Shine Brighter for Americans Than for Canadians

MICHELIN Stars and features in the MICHELIN Guide matter more to American diners than Canadian diners. More specifically, 35% of American diners would be more likely to visit a restaurant with a MICHELIN Star, versus 21% of Canadian diners who responded the same.

Though Canadians aren't as "starry eyed" as their American counterparts, younger Canadians do place value on whether a restaurant has a MICHELIN Star. 30% of Gen Z and Millennial diners are *significantly* and *somewhat* more likely to visit a restaurant that has a MICHELIN Star.

The MICHELIN Guide only debuted in Canada in 2022, which is likely why Canadian diners are still warming up to this recognition. However, promoting this accomplishment online and in venues is crucial for restaurants to stand out, as the guide continues to evolve and have a greater influence on the Canadian restaurant scene.



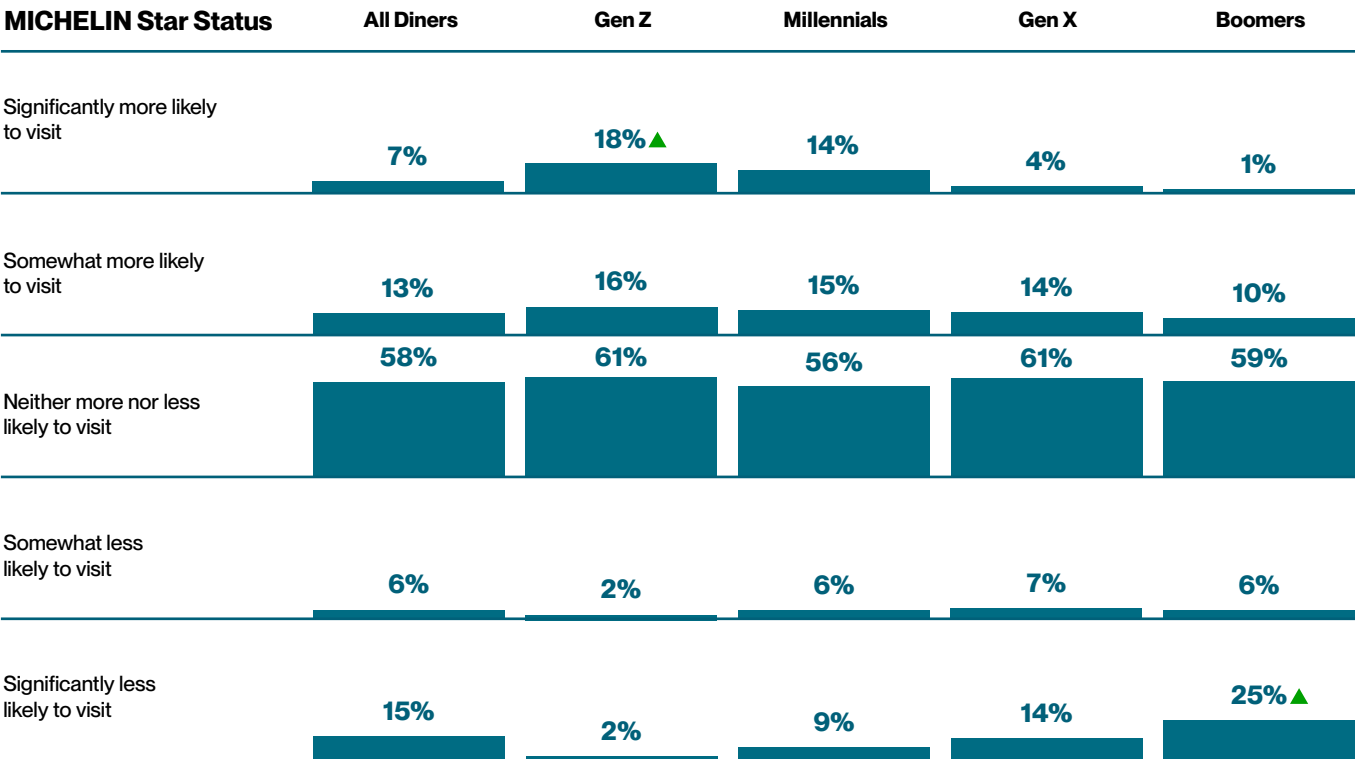
21%

of diners would be more likely to visit a restaurant with a **MICHELIN Star**

19%

of diners would be more likely to visit a restaurant **featured in the MICHELIN Guide**

Likelihood of Visiting a Restaurant Based on MICHELIN Star Status

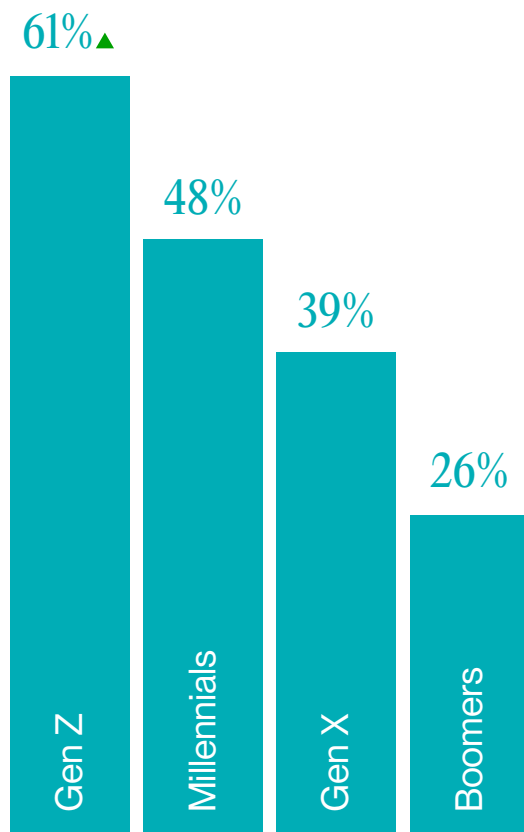


Younger Diners Seek Value in Limited-Time Offers

The fear of missing out (FOMO) is all too real among Gen Z diners, who eat up limited-time offers (LTOs). While the majority of Canadian diners (60%) are not too likely or not at all likely to visit a restaurant if it releases a limited-time menu item, two thirds of Gen Z diners surveyed showed signs of being the exception. When asked, the majority of Gen Z diners are very or somewhat likely to visit if they released a limited-time menu item, versus only less than one third of Boomers saying the same.

This data shows that LTOs can be a powerful tactic for driving sales, especially among younger diners. If your restaurant implements an LTO, make sure it aligns with Gen Z's values by offering more health conscious items, for example.

More Likely to Visit a Restaurant Offering an LTO by Generation



60%

of diners are either not too likely or not at all likely to visit a particular restaurant if a restaurant released a limited-time menu item





“If someone shares a post or posts a picture of what they are eating and references the restaurant – if it’s appealing to me, I will check out the restaurant’s website and see what their menu is like. Also, sometimes on my Facebook feed, if I’m scrolling and come across a sponsored ad or something from a restaurant, I will click on it and see what the promotion is.”

Male, 26, Toronto, ON

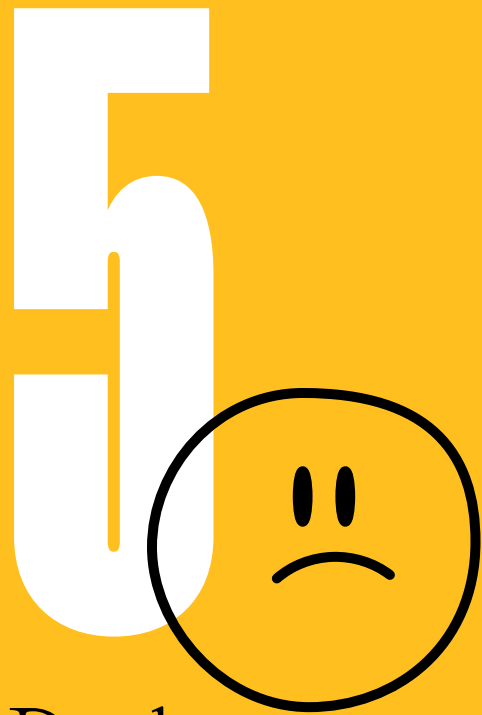




Our Takeaways

Diners are on the hunt for value and are turning to loyalty programs to score the best deals.

- ✓ If your restaurant doesn't already have a loyalty program, consider implementing one with personalized offers.
- ✓ Keep your social media platforms updated – you never know who might discover your restaurant next.
- ✓ Lower menu prices or add more value to attract more diners and boost takeout and delivery orders.



Deal-Breakers

High prices, long wait times, and steep fees drive diners away.



Diners Have No Appetite for Increased Menu Prices

Raising menu prices deters the majority of diners, whether they're going out to eat or ordering takeout or delivery. Our survey found that raising prices would *significantly* or *somewhat* deter 82% of diners from going to a restaurant, and 84% of diners from getting takeout.

It's worth pointing out that increasing menu prices more than 11% could have a big impact on consumers' willingness to visit. This will particularly impact Gen X, as more than one third of Gen X stated that any menu price increase would significantly deter them from visiting a dine-in restaurant (37%) and ordering takeout (34%), compared to their younger counterparts.

How Menu Price Increases Impact Orders by Generation



Dine-In

Gen Z 15%

Millennials 32%

Gen X 37% ▲

Boomers 28%



Takeout/
Delivery

Gen Z 17%

Millennials 29%

Gen X 34% ▲

Boomers 28%

How Menu Price Increases Impact Willingness to Order

● Going to a restaurant ● Getting takeout or delivery

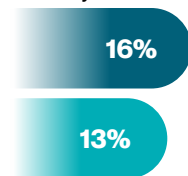
Significantly deter



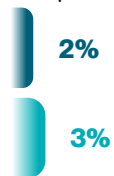
Somewhat deter



Not really deter



No impact at all



Maximum Price Increase Diners Are Willing to Tolerate

10.8%	Dining in at an FSR
10.6%	Ordering takeout or delivery from an FSR
10.2%	Dining in at an QSR
10.1%	Ordering takeout or delivery from a QSR

Cleanliness Still Matters to Diners

Even in a post-pandemic world, cleanliness still matters. Nothing drives diners away faster than a bad health inspection report. A whopping 65% of diners shared that a recent health inspection warning would deter them from visiting a restaurant. Interestingly, Gen Zs are more likely to be forgiving when it comes to a restaurant's cleanliness than their older counterparts. What deters Gen Z more than a poor health inspection result is hearing negative feedback from friends or bad online reviews.

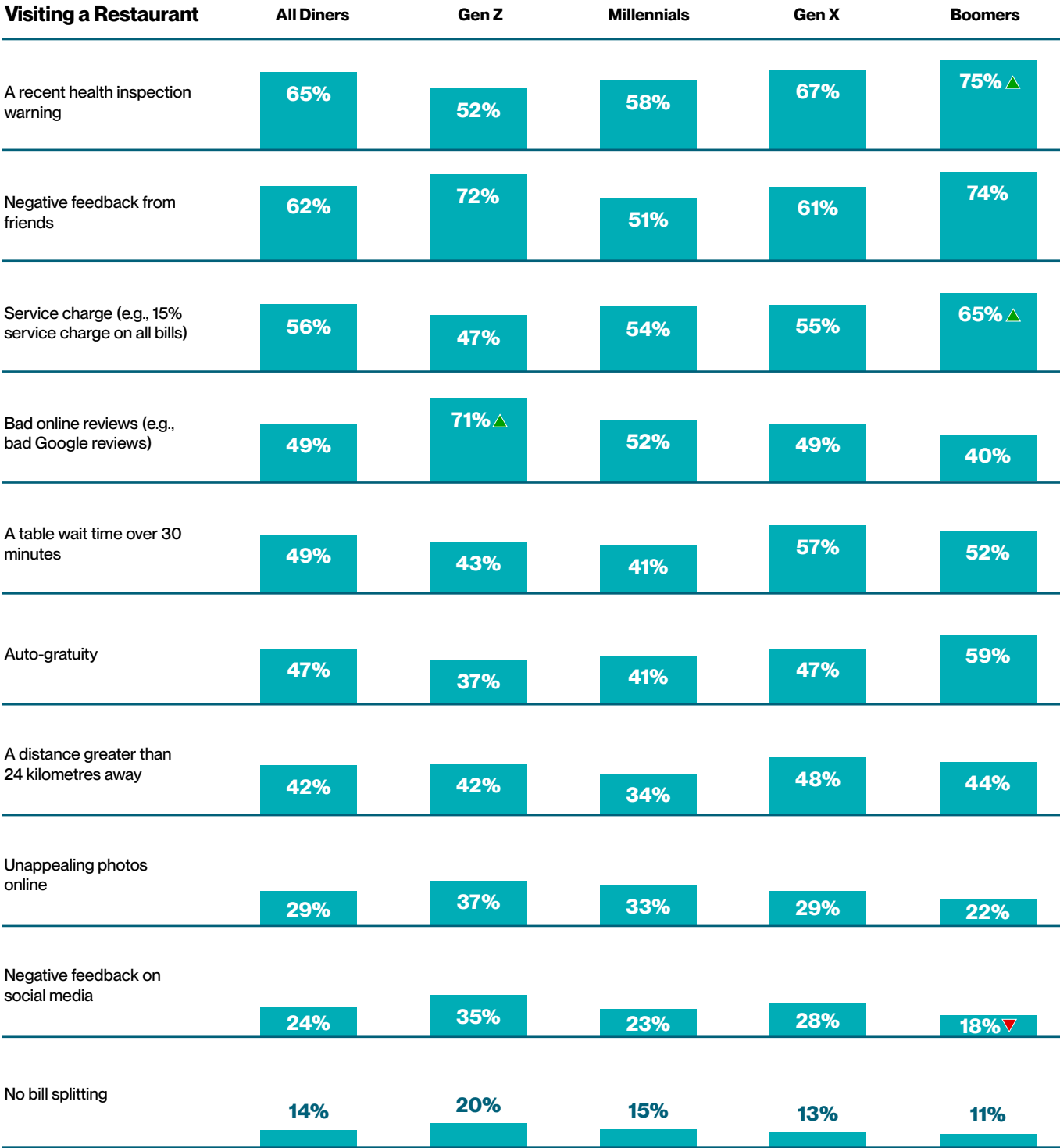
While cleanliness and word-of-mouth input are important to Canadian diners, service fees can also leave a bad taste in diners' mouths and cause confusion, especially among older generations. In fact, 65% of Boomers say service charges deter them from going to restaurants, which is higher than the 56% average among all surveyed diners.



“I don’t really understand what service charges are for. You would think that the cost of the food, the labour, etc, is built into the cost of the item. It’s pretty ridiculous when you have to pay for a takeout container in my mind.”

(Female, 43, Vancouver, BC)

Reasons Diners Would
be Deterred from
Visiting a Restaurant



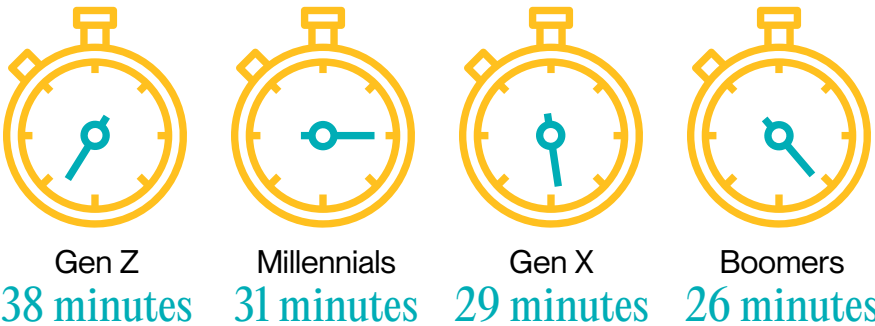
Incorrect Orders and High Fees Turn off Guests

When it comes to fulfilling off-premise orders, restaurants can't let quality take a back seat. About a quarter (27%) of surveyed diners cited inaccurate orders – including missing items – as their biggest frustration when ordering takeout and delivery. High fees, including delivery fees, are their second biggest gripe. Gen Zs surveyed stated that they are concerned with the high fees associated with takeout and delivery orders, while members of the older generations, like Gen X are most frustrated by inaccurate orders.

With 43% of diners opting for takeout and delivery more than last year for convenience, it's clear that speed is king, and the clock is ticking for restaurants to deliver. Diners now expect their orders in 30 minutes or less on average, which is two minutes faster than last year. When it comes to waiting for food, Gen Z is more patient, with an average of 38 minutes for an order, compared to Boomers who are ready to bail after just 26 minutes.



Average Time Diners Will Wait for
a Delivery Order by Generation



30 minutes is the average amount of time diners would wait for a takeout or delivery order

Top 3 Biggest Frustrations When
Ordering Takeout or Delivery

		Total	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers
	Order is inaccurate	27%	11%	28%	31%	24%
	High fees (e.g., delivery fees)	22%	32%	26%	22%	14%
	Food is cold	15%	2%	15%	14%	20%



“Well, because I really don’t go to the restaurant as much anymore. Actually, you know what it is? It’s prices. The price of eating out has gone up so much in restaurants.

But the price to just go, the last time we went out for dinner, I believe the price with the bill was over \$400. But that was with me, and my family, and stuff like that. We had grandkids and everything like that. So more or less, it’s the price.”

Female, 50, Edmonton, AB



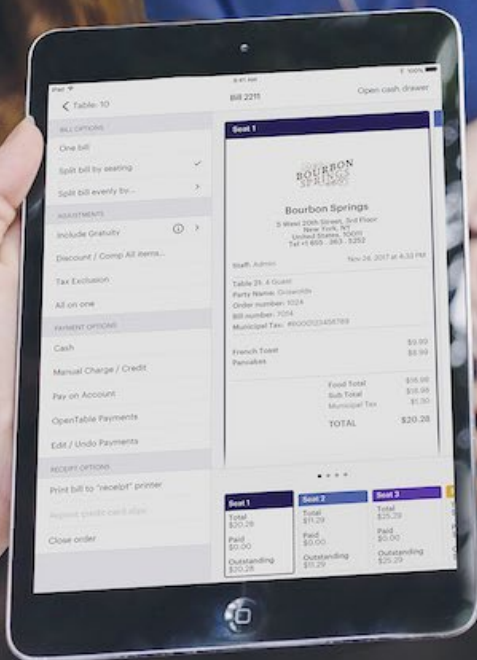
Our Takeaways

By cutting wait times, delaying menu price increases, and skipping service fees whenever possible, restaurants can keep diners happy.

✓ Fulfill takeout and delivery orders quickly and correctly.

✓ Make it fast and easy for diners to earn rewards to keep them engaged in your loyalty program.

✓ Keep menu price hikes under 11% to avoid turning off diners.





Technology

Canadian diners are split on the use of technology and AI in restaurants, so it's important to strike a balance between efficiency and traditional hospitality.

Younger Generations Are More Comfortable With Tech and AI

The majority (52%) of diners either feel *very* or *somewhat* comfortable with the use of technology in restaurants, whether that's servers taking an order tableside with a tablet, self-serve kiosks, or robotic servers delivering food to the table. It's unsurprising that younger generations are generally more comfortable with technology when dining out. In fact, 64% of Gen Z and Millennials feel *very* or *somewhat* comfortable with the use of technology, compared to only 33% of Boomers.

However, artificial intelligence (AI) is a different story for Canadians. Only about a quarter of diners feel very or somewhat comfortable with AI-assisted technology in restaurants – with Boomers feeling the least comfortable. Canadians feel even more uncomfortable with AI when it comes to menu recommendations. While 38% of Millennials are *very* or *somewhat* comfortable with these AI-generated recommendations, only 13% of Boomers feel the same.



Diner Comfort with Technology in Restaurants



Very comfortable
24%



Somewhat comfortable
28%



Neutral
24%

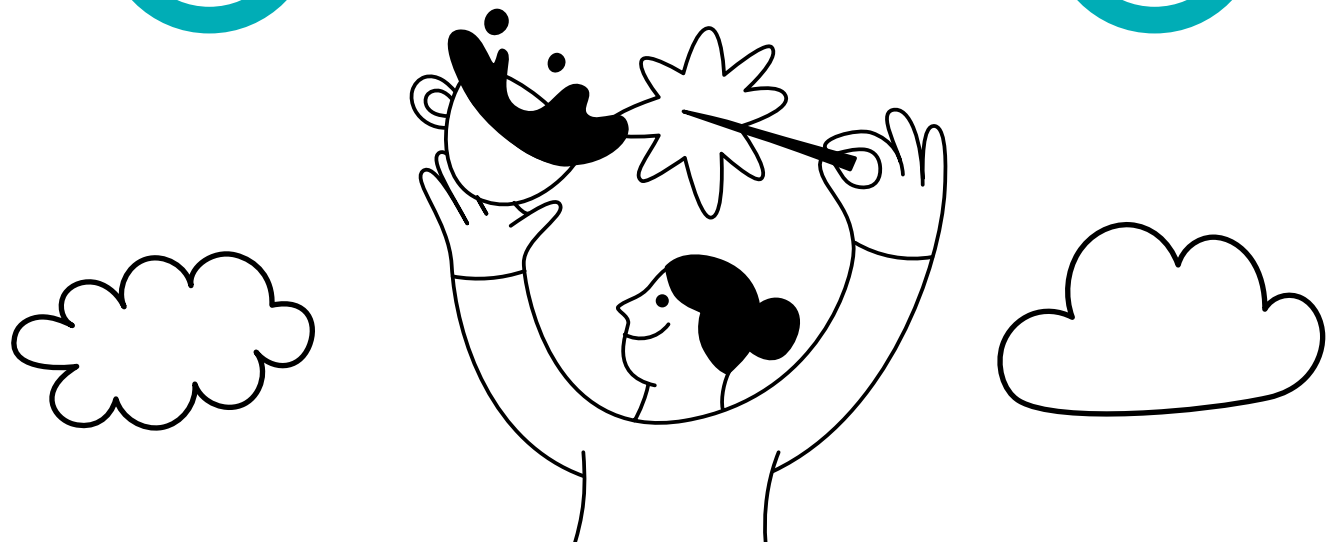
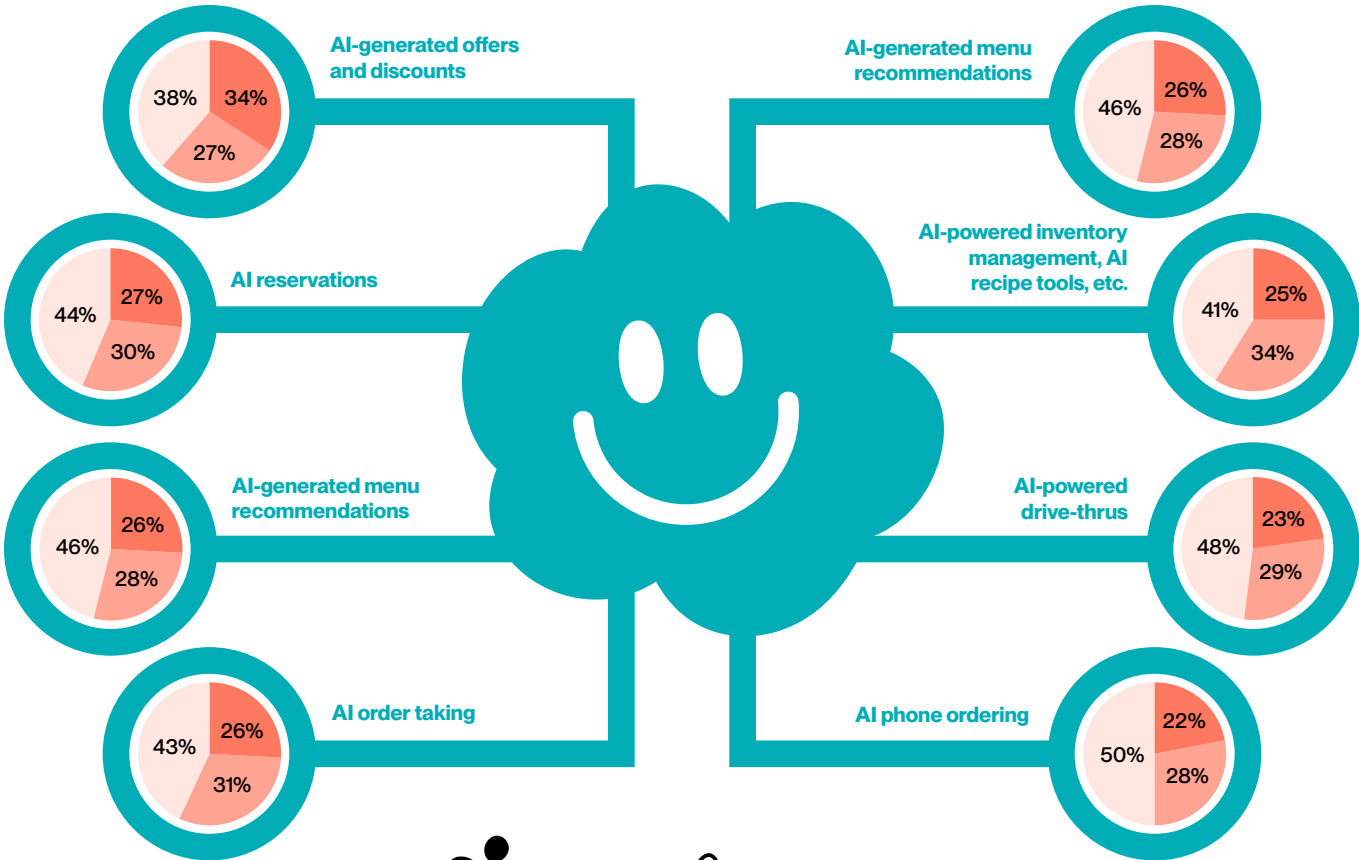


Somewhat uncomfortable
12%



Very uncomfortable
12%

Optimism About AI



Diners Prefer Traditional Service Over Technology

Although 52% of Canadians feel very or somewhat comfortable with technology in restaurants, they still overwhelmingly prefer traditional service over an automated experience in the dining room. In fact, 84% prefer to view a physical menu and speak directly with a server,

which is consistent with last year's survey findings. When it comes to paying the bill, diners prefer when servers bring a handheld payment terminal to the table.

This low tech sentiment applies even before customers enter the dining room, as calling in is Canadians preferred way to make a reservation. Calling is also Canadians preferred way to place an order for takeout or delivery, with 22% of

customers choosing this method over others like using a third-party app or a restaurant's website.

It's crucial to strike the right balance between using technology to streamline operations and maintaining the personal touch that diners crave. The bottom line: efficiency shouldn't come at the cost of the diner experience.

52%

of diners say they feel very or somewhat comfortable with technology in restaurants

84%

of diners prefer to view a physical menu and speak directly with a server

Preferred Way to Place an Order



Preferred Way to Pay for an Order





“I’m a people person and I like to be interacted with. I don’t think that I could really have a good conversation with a robot — especially when it comes to my food. If there’s something wrong with my food, I like it to be attended to in a proper way, and I just cannot see a robot correcting it for me at all.”

Female, 50, Edmonton, AB



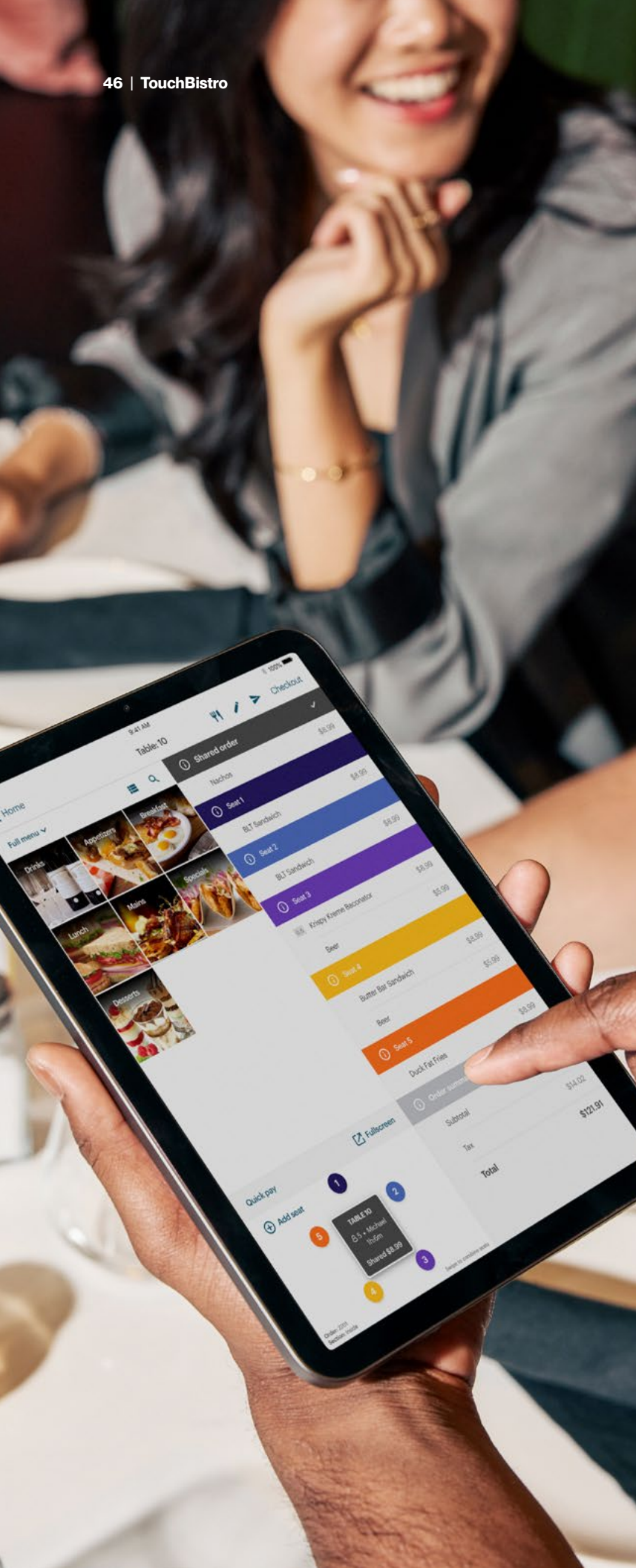
Our Takeaways

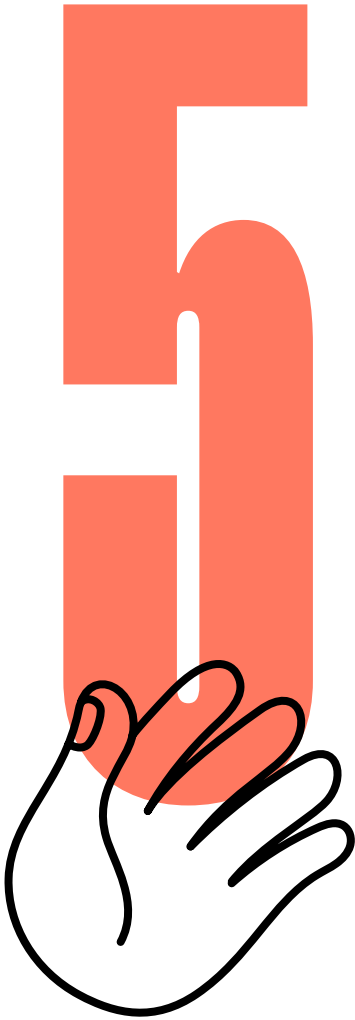
Diners remain divided on technology and AI in restaurants. Operators must weigh the trade-offs between boosting efficiency and preserving the customer experience.

✔ Introduce automation to your takeout and delivery offering, as Canadians are more open to self-serve methods like kiosks or QR codes for off-premise dining.

✔ Prioritize face-to-face and human interaction with guests wherever possible.

✔ Keen to introduce AI in your restaurant? Start with AI-generated offers and discounts, where diners are most comfortable with this technology.





Top Five Trends for 2025

With food costs high and diner expectations even higher, running a restaurant in 2025 can seem particularly challenging. Embrace these trends and opportunities for smooth sailing through uncharted waters.

1 Avoid Price Hikes - While diners aren't completely cutting out restaurants and takeout in 2025, they're spending more thoughtfully than ever before. Keep both your profit margins and customers happy by avoiding major price hikes. Instead, offer budget-friendly options through a happy hour menu and be up front when it comes to service charges. And if you have to raise prices, do so by no more than 11%.

2 Maximize Sales with Off-Premise Dining - Years of sustained growth show that takeout and delivery are here to stay, as many people prefer the convenience and affordability of dining at home. Now is the time to make the most of this lucrative opportunity to boost sales. If you currently only offer delivery through a third-party apps, consider implementing a direct online ordering solution that offers a pick-up option. But don't forget to keep those phone lines open to capitalize on Canadians' favourite way to place to-go orders.

3 Embrace Reservations - As the cost of dining out increases, Canadians are becoming more selective about where they eat and are therefore making reservations more often. Make booking and managing reservations easy for your diners and team, respectively. Offer online and phone reservations for diners, so they can book a table however they'd like, and equip your staff with a reservations management platform to streamline admin.

4 Show Your Social Media Some Love - Social media is a critical marketing tool you should be taking advantage of to ensure your restaurant is showing up in the diner discovery process. Keep your business's social media platforms up to date, especially on Facebook, and partner with micro-influencers to create user-generated content that drives organic discovery among diners.

5 Keep the Heart in Hospitality - While there are many benefits to using technology in your dining room, Canadians prefer the personal touch of interacting with restaurant staff. However, that doesn't mean you should toss out tech entirely. Experiment with technology that can streamline back of house processes, as diners value speedy service and shorter wait times. Ultimately, ask yourself whether restaurant tech will boost or hinder the customer experience – especially if your audience skews older.



CONCLUSION

In light of inflation and the post-pandemic push for working from the office, it's no surprise that Canadians' dining habits have changed quite a bit.

While the rates at which consumers are dining out and ordering in have stabilized, there are still diners, like Gen Zs and Millennials, who primarily turn to restaurants instead of cooking at home. Diners who are more cautious with their spending are shifting their dining habits and seeking more value for their dollar.

Although the country is facing a tough economic climate, Canadian restaurant operators can drive traffic and sales in 2025 by making some changes. From offering value-added promotions, introducing more pick-up options, or prioritizing human connection, there is a path forward for operators to successfully

navigate the changing habits and preferences of Canadian diners.





Tackle 2025 & Beyond with TouchBistro

TouchBistro is an all-in-one POS and restaurant management system that makes running a restaurant easier. Providing the most essential front of house, back of house, and customer engagement solutions on one easy-to-use platform, TouchBistro helps restaurateurs streamline and simplify their operations, increase sales, and deliver a great guest experience.

✓ Exclusively Designed for Restaurants

TouchBistro was born out of a mission to make running a restaurant easier and continues to provide solutions exclusively for restaurant businesses.

✓ Easy to Learn, Easy to Use

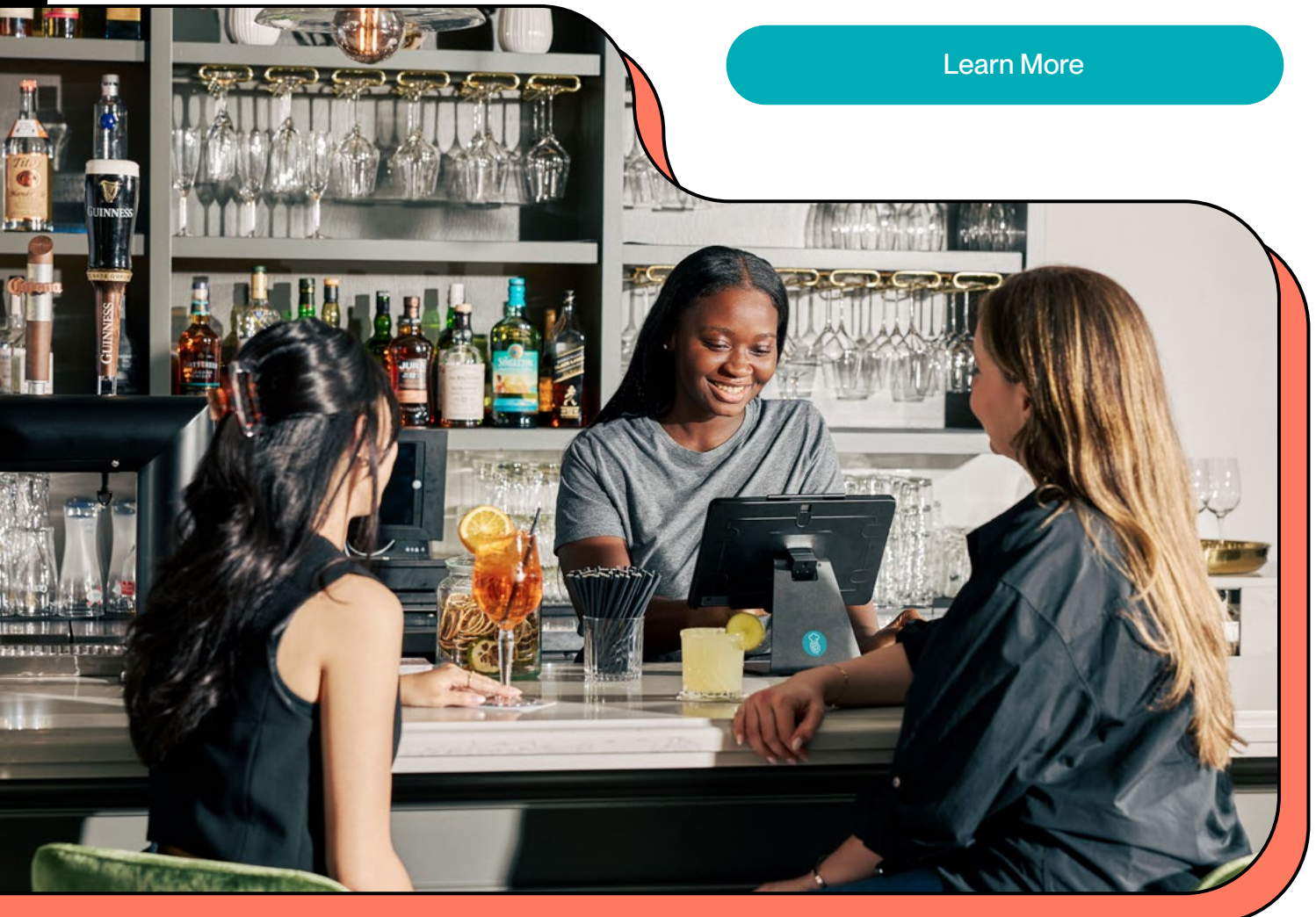
Intuitive software makes TouchBistro easy to learn and even easier to use.

✓ Round-the-Clock Support

Get up and running quickly with TouchBistro's one-box POS solution and enjoy the peace of mind of 24/7 support, available 365 days of the year.

To find out if TouchBistro is the right fit for your restaurant, get in touch today.

[Learn More](#)



Respondent Profile

Gender

Male: **49%**
Female **51%**

Age

18-34: **29%**
35-54: **34%**
55+: **37%**

Generation

Gen Z: **7%**
Millennials: **35%**
Gen X: **31%**
Boomers: **25%**
Silent Generation: **3%**

Household Income

Less than \$50,000: **22%**
\$50,000-\$99,999: **29%**
\$100-000-\$149,999: **17%**
\$150,000-\$199,999: **12%**
\$200,000+: **6%**
Prefer not to say: **13%**

Household Members

Children in the household: **24%**
No children in the household: **76%**



Region

British Columbia: **17%**
Alberta: **14%**
Saskatchewan: **4%**
Manitoba: **4%**
Ontario: **46%**
Quebec: **7%**
Nova Scotia: **3%**
New Brunswick: **3%**
P.E.I.: **1%**
Newfoundland and Labrador: **2%**

Toronto: **76%**
Vancouver: **24%**

Urban: **50%**
Suburban: **30%**
Small town/rural: **20%**



Methodology

We partnered with research firm The Harris Poll to survey 1,000 diners in Canada, which includes an oversample for Toronto and Vancouver. Our research was conducted from October 15 to October 25, 2024. Survey results are accurate +/- 3% for the general population of American diners.



The Harris Poll is a global consulting and market research firm that provides the insights needed to build a better tomorrow. Since 1956, The Harris Poll has been using hard data to uncover essential insights about our society, which has helped win elections, pass legislation, and drive change around the world.



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