

The Future of Eating Out: Inc Impact of COVID-19 - UK - August 2020

Report Price: £2195 | \$2995 | €2600

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This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on the foodservice sector, with a focus on consumers' eating out decision-making process.
- Consumers' home delivery/takeaway habits and how these are impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Improvements that consumers would like to see made to foodservice venues and their food offerings.
- Consumers' attitudes towards the value and quality of eating out of home.

Mintel's Global COVID-19 Tracker shows that consumer confidence in eating out is gradually improving, with 41% of Brits saying they would feel comfortable going to an outdoor restaurant/bar as of 30 July-7 August compared to 27% at the end of June (on the eve of premises reopening).

The government's Eat Out to Help Out scheme will help to kickstart the hospitality industry as consumers are incentivised to visit these venues for a meal during the month of August 2020 (from Mondays to Wednesdays). Meanwhile the VAT cut on food and non-alcoholic drinks will help to keep prices down and will ensure more foodservice businesses stay afloat.

As working from home looks set to remain the norm for many office workers for a while longer, lunchtime sandwich shops/food-to-go formats will suffer from the decline in office working/commuting. A drop in tourism will also impact foodservice outlets, restaurants and pubs/bars situated in city locations.

COVID-19 will accelerate the need for functions in food and drink to improve diets and moods, such as weight management and relaxation. Meanwhile, online events (eg livestreaming wine tasting) are helping operators expand access to a wider audience from all over, unlocking greater brand awareness and ecommerce opportunities. UK's Michelin-starred chef Michael O'Hare, for example, streamed live cooking demonstrations on Instagram to accompany his range of nationwide delivery meal kits/recipe boxes.



"Eating out will become more of a treat giving an opportunity for foodservice venues to create more premium options to fit special occasions. But first, an effective response to COVID-19 is required to safeguard the future of eating out."

Trish Caddy , Senior Foodservice Analyst

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