

# The Future of Foodservice: 2022 - US - 2021

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## This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on consumer behavior and the foodservice market
- The foodservice industry's move towards off-premise and digital experiences
- Restaurant visitation drivers and deterrents and expected consumer behavior in 2022

Consumers are eager to dive into a variety of food experiences in 2022, including cooking more at home and dining out. The pent-up demand for dining out has left consumers wanting new and unique offerings from restaurants through flavors, dishes, and experiences. Many want to use restaurants as a way to socialize, and operators that are able to create space at the table for interaction, celebration, and indulgence will win consumers' loyalty.

The foodservice industry continues to battle several pandemic-related headwinds that will determine its future. Due to the US labor crisis and supply chain issues, restaurants are struggling to provide prepandemic levels of service. Inflation and the emergence of COVID-19 variants continue to add uncertainty to restaurant visitation. Still, the industry is showing signs of recovery, and Mintel estimates foodservice revenues will continue to grow over the next five years.

While the explosive growth of takeout, delivery, and online access to restaurants has been crucial for operators' survival, it also poses a challenge. Operators now need to maintain a balance between serving both off-premise and on-premise consumers. To that end, new and innovative physical layouts are enabling restaurants to operate more efficiently. Automation is also helping curate the best dining experience for consumers, whether they choose to dine in or enjoy meals at home.



"The foodservice industry has been one of the hardest hit by the pandemic, but also saw operators rapidly evolve to serve changed consumer needs related to value, safety, and convenience. Even amid continued labor, supply, and inflation challenges, the foodservice industry is beginning to recover."

– Varchasvi, Analyst – US Foodservice and Mintel Menu Insights

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The foodservice industry is increasingly becoming accessible online, and operators are finding new ways to connect with their consumers in the online space. Restaurants are evolving to meet consumers where they are and enabling them to enjoy not just food and service, but also apparel, cookware, experiences, and more.

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