

Menu Trends - UK - 2022

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This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on eating out, with a focus on menu trends
- Annual changes in consumers' preferences when eating out or ordering takeaway
- Consumers' perceptions of their ideal menu
- Consumers' behaviours when eating out or ordering takeaway.

Consumer demand for takeaway food has remained high despite the reopening of sit-down restaurants. 62% of Britons ordered takeaway in the three months to October 2021, with breakfast, brunch and lunch takeaway occasions seeing growth in participation over the past year.

However, rising inflation, including the increased cost of restaurant/takeaway food, will put pressure on household finances and will likely lead to some consumers cutting back on using foodservice. Yet, many people are still tempted out by an increasingly diverse and high quality dining scene, with on-premise participation driven by consumers making intentional and mindful choices about when they spend money on food outlets/restaurants, such as celebrating a birthday. Therefore, a restaurant that emphasises a superior quality and exclusivity in both the ingredients featured in its dishes and premium front-of-house services will appeal to special occasion diners whilst offering an acceptable reason to increase menu prices.

Younger workers have been more exposed to the impact of COVID-19 on jobs by virtue of their greater propensity to work in retail, hospitality and leisure, sectors that already tended to be lower-paid and less secure. Given that 16-24 year olds are far more likely than older consumers to eat in restaurants/outlets (79%) and order takeaway/home delivery (89%), the foodservice market is challenged to retain frequent usage among some of its most loyal customers.

We know that lower prices would encourage 16-24 year olds to eat more plant-based fast food meals, as Generation Zers lead the charge for more



"The proportion of flexitarians continues to rise annually, with one in three meat eaters having reduced/limited meat consumption."

– **Trish Caddy, Senior Foodservice Analyst**

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affordable and sustainable meal solutions. As they also have an innate taste for crispy foods (eg deep fried foods), brands that offer low-cost plant-based fast foods will continue to appeal under-25s.

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