

Fast Casual Restaurants - US - 2023

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This report looks at the following areas:

- Consumers' perception of fast casual restaurants
- Diners' expectations of convenience and versatility from fast casuals
- Diners' experience of and expectations from foodservice technology
- Ordering behaviors and attitudes at fast casuals

Fast casual restaurants occupy a unique position in the foodservice industry, combining the speed and convenience of fast food with the quality and personal touch of full-service restaurants. Menus feature healthy, highly customizable and versatile items designed to meet varied dietary needs, yet the segment has a perception gap: less than a third of diners associate these attributes with the segment.

Rising menu prices in the QSR segment are a boon for fast casuals that offer a higher quality experience at a comparable value. Still, inflation, tipping culture and upcoming loan repayments will force consumers to cut back on dining out. For fast casual restaurants, making a case for the value they provide is crucial to maintaining visitation.

Operators in this segment must lean on their strengths and help diners get the most out of the fast casual dining experience. Consumers' appetite for healthy, accessible and affordable food will only grow, and foodservice technology offers a robust path to meeting these needs.



"Fast casual restaurant menus offer relatively healthy and customizable options at a value comparable to fast food restaurants, yet these attributes aren't always recognized by diners."
- Varchasvi, Analyst, US Foodservice and Mintel Menu Insights

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