

Eating Out: The Decision Making Process - UK - July 2013

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"Product innovation is a key strategy to ensure that eating out operators do not lose further share of the 'leisure pound' by putting the excitement back into what is essentially a leisure experience."

– Helena Spicer, Senior Foodservice Analyst

In this report we answer the key questions:

- How can operators reduce their vulnerability to consumer cutbacks?
- How can product/flavour innovation support the market?
- How can restaurants leverage ingredient sourcing more effectively?
- How can restaurants combat low loyalty levels amongst diners?

This report analyses the decision making process that consumers use to decide on venue and dish choice when eating out of home. Mintel's findings indicate that operators need to engage with diners on levels other than price in order to improve on low levels of brand loyalty, which is a distinct issue in the market at present. For example, menu innovation is now rife in this increasingly competitive and mature marketplace, with current food fashions, including gourmet junk food and artisan pastries, designed to reignite consumers' enthusiasm for spending on eating out. Going forward, the key is to determine which of these food trends and fashions are rooted in longer term trends.

Meanwhile, menu concepts such as chip flights (selection of different chips and dips) enable operators to offer diners affordable variety, which helps to offset the mounting sense of recession- and menu-fatigue. The report also addresses the issues of menu labelling in the wake of the 2013 horsemeat scandal.

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