Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy Canadian foodservice findings
for the week of Nov. 2, 2026

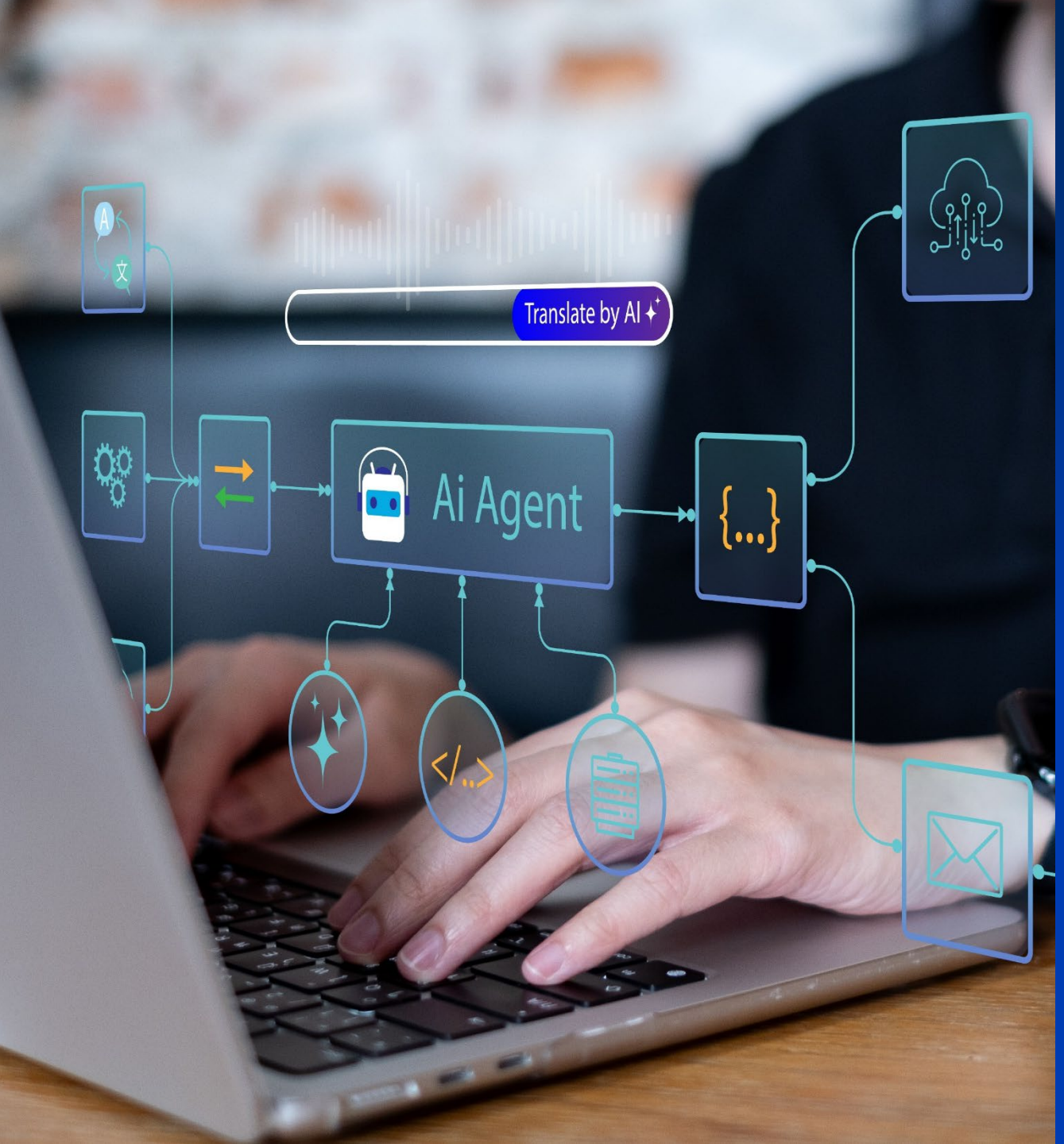





Image Source: Shutterstock

This report is authorized for use solely by the parties noted in the written contract. No part of the publication may be reprinted, redistributed or put into an electronic or information retrieval system without the prior permission of Technomic, Inc.

Technomic by informa



What if you could ask your data anything?

Which chains are growing fastest?

What menu trends are gaining momentum?

Where are my best opportunities for growth?

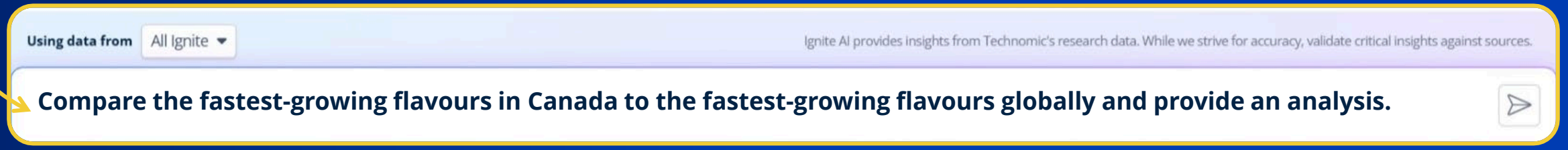
Ignite AI Edge delivers instant answers, powered by Technomic's industry-leading intelligence and advanced AI.

REQUEST A DEMO

Technomic
by informa

Ignite AI Prompt of the Week

In each Industry Insights, we ask Ignite AI a top-of-mind industry question and share the answer with you. Copy our prompt or write your own to answer your industry questions in our Ignite.



Key Takeaways

Over the past year, growth rates on Canadian menus remain concentrated among niche, emerging flavours; Russian (82.35%), Burgundy (66.67%) and Emirati (58.33%) lead the market, but all are operating from small item and operator bases, signaling early-stage experimentation rather than mainstream momentum. By contrast, global flavour growth is more pronounced at the top end, with Emirati flavours growing even faster worldwide (104.17%) than in Canada, with far broader operator reach.

Emirati flavour is the standout cross-market signal, ranking in the top three in Canada and globally—a strong indicator this is a genuinely emerging international trend worth prioritizing for menu innovation, and not a regional anomaly.

High-volume global flavours, such as matcha (1,244 items, 409 operators) and cherry-vanilla (78 items, 55 operators) are posting growth at significant scale, a pattern not yet mirrored in Canada, where growth leaders remain comparatively small and emerging. This suggests Canadian operators have an opportunity to capture share early in several flavours that are gaining traction at scale internationally (e.g., matcha profiles, cherry blossom and gochugaru).

Technomic Ignite clients: Click here for more

Source: Technomic Ignite AI

FASTEST-GROWING FLAVOURS IN CANADA AND IN GLOBAL MARKETS

Canadian Flavours	Growth Percentage	Global Flavours	Growth Percentage
Russian	82.4%	Emirati	104.2%
Burgundy	66.7%	Cherry Blossom	81.3%
Emirati	58.3%	Gochugaru	37.5%
Smores	56.7%	Banoffee	33.3%
Apple-Caramel	54.6%	Allspice	30.8%
Nutty	53.3%	Cherry-Vanilla	30.0%

© 2026 Technomic, Inc.

Ignite Company

A&W posts steady same-store sales growth

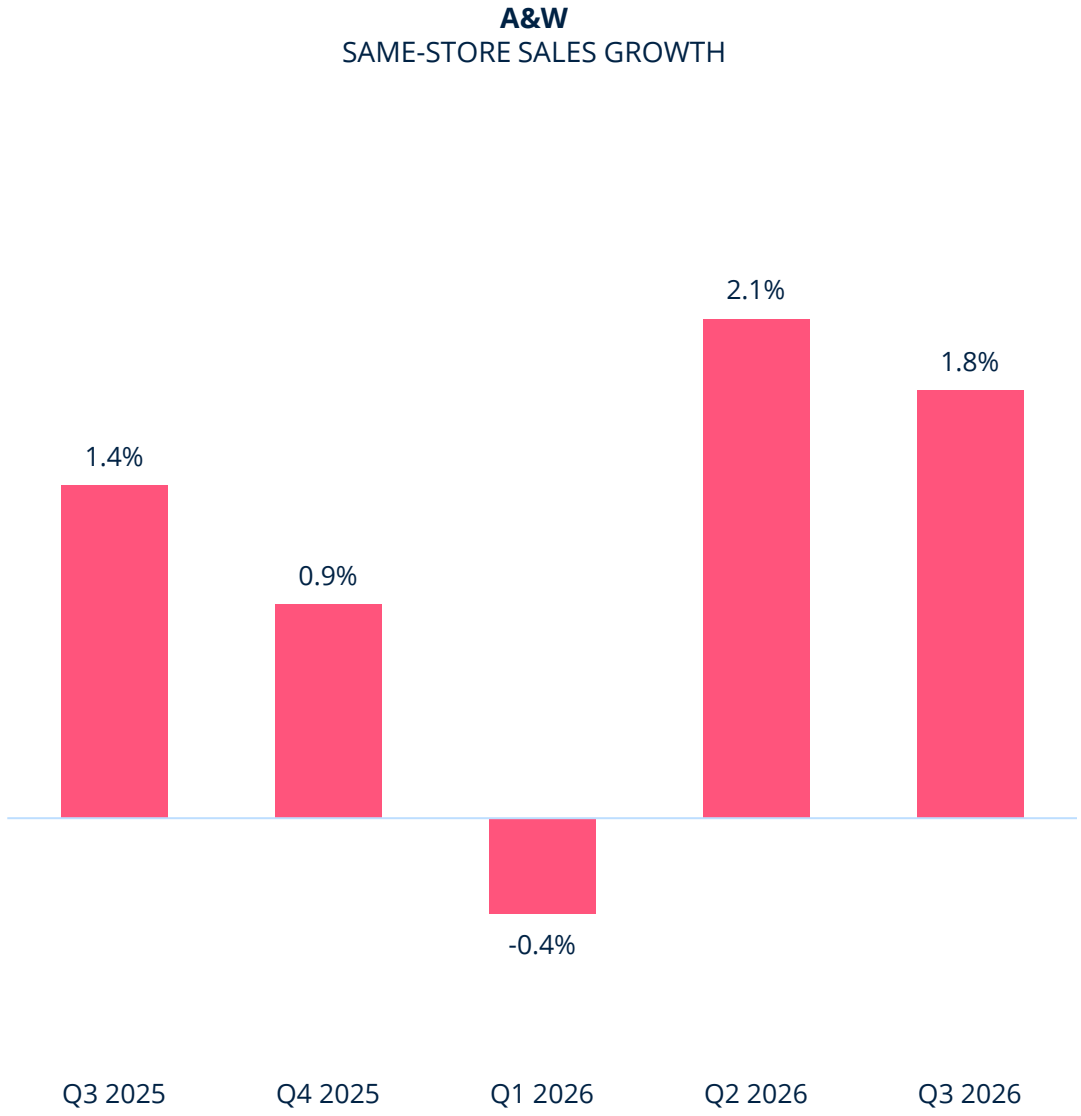
A&W's same-store sales grew 1.8% in Q2 2026 compared to the same period last year, a slight deceleration from the 2.1% increase recorded in the prior quarter.

The brand's smashburger promotion, which launched the previous quarter, continued to drive performance and remained a primary contributor to same-store sales growth during the period. The promotion ran for five of the quarter's 12 weeks.

Year to date, systemwide sales are up 3.1% compared to 2025, approaching $1.4 billion. A&W opened nine new stores during the quarter, bringing its total footprint to 1,113 locations across Canada. The brand's store count has grown 2.7% year to date, an improvement over the 1.4% growth pace in 2025.

Ignite Company clients: Click here for more

Source: Technomic Ignite Company



© 2026 Technomic, Inc.

Ignite Menu

Q3 2026 menu data highlights

With the launch of Technomic's new Ignite Menu data for Q3 2026, here are some key takeaways from menus.

Overall, menu item counts continue to climb moderately year over year, up nearly 2%. Add-ons are leading this growth, up 9.3%, with virtually every topping category trending upward. Fruit toppings (+28.6%) are out in front, followed by pizza toppings (+15.9%) and salad toppings (+15.8%). This surge reflects operators' push toward customization, letting guests personalize dishes without overhauling core menus.

Adult beverages (+7.4%) are following a similar upward trajectory, driven in large part by alcohol-free options, which have jumped 38.2% as consumer demand for moderation and mindful drinking continues to reshape beverage programs. That same shift shows up in preparation styles, where alcohol-free (+42.9%) ranks among the fastest-growing descriptors on menus. Other standout preparation claims on the rise like dark roast (+66.7%), refresher (+47.6%) and cortado (+35.3%) are all beverage-driven as well, pointing to a broader wave of innovation happening in the beverage space specifically.

Healthy claims gaining traction include sustainable (+28.0%), Grade A (+23.9%), lighter fare (+14.8%), lactose-free (+9.4%) and clean-label (+9.1%). Together, these claims suggest operators are responding to consumers who want transparency and better-for-you options without sacrificing flavour or quality.

On the condiment side, some of the fastest-growing options point to a clear trend of flavour enhancements; saffron aioli (+20.0%), pesto mayonnaise (+18.5%), chipotle aioli (+13.9%) and garlic aioli (+13.8%) are all climbing. Aioli stands out as the base of choice here and, due to its versatility and familiar appeal, it gives operators an easy way to expand their menus by creating new flavour profiles to existing dishes without adding significant back-of-house complexity or cost.

Ignite Menu clients: Click here for more

Source: Technomic Ignite Menu, Q3 2025-Q3 2026
Image Source: Shutterstock

© 2026 Technomic, Inc.

Item Count Growth in the Last Year
Q3 2025-Q3 2026

+9.3%
ADD-ON

+7.4%
ADULT BEVERAGE

+5.9%
KIDS MENU

+2.5%
NONALCOHOL BEVERAGE

+1.3%
SIDE

+0.7%
ENTREE

+0.3%
DESSERT

FLAT
APPETIZER

OVERALL
+1.8%

Ignite Consumer

Busy Canadians turn to restaurants to help meet daily obligations

Time pressure around meals is intensifying for many Canadian diners. Across the past 11 quarters, more consumers say they almost never have time to stop and enjoy a meal, have no choice but to eat on the run and rely on restaurants to help them meet daily obligations. Agreement that restaurant visits make daily life more manageable rose from 40% in Q1 2024 to 47% in Q3 2026, while eating on the run climbed from 36% to 42%.

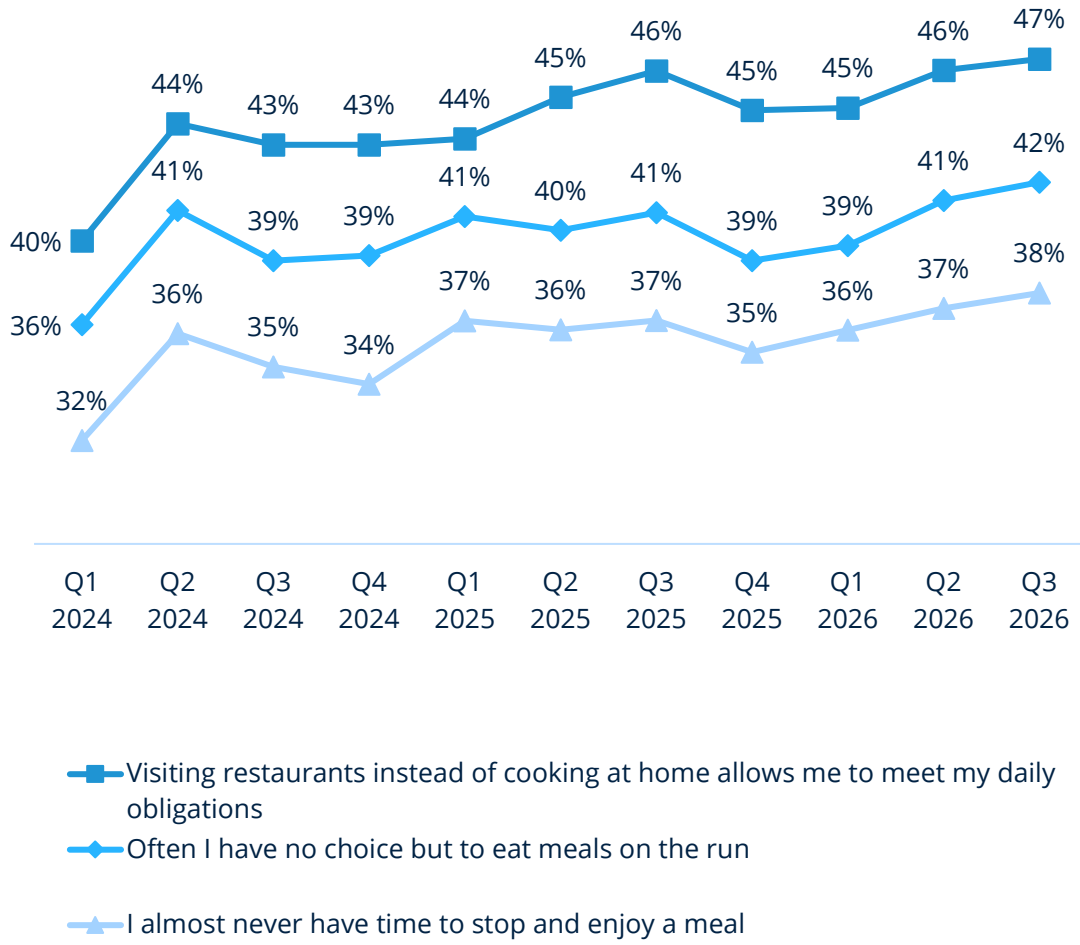
As packed schedules continue to reshape meal occasions, operators have a clear opportunity to position foodservice as a practical solution. Speed, portability, reliability and value will matter most as consumers increasingly turn to restaurants not just for enjoyment, but to keep up with everyday demands.

Ignite Consumer clients: Click here for more

Base: 6,200 consumers ages 18+ per quarter
Source: Technomic Ignite Consumer

© 2026 Technomic, Inc.

% OF CONSUMERS WHO AGREE/STRONGLY AGREE



Ignite Global

Chicken in Poland

Starting in 2027, Ignite Global will be adding five new markets to its ongoing global coverage: Egypt, Guatemala, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland.

As seen below, our global chain news coverage has already begun to cover these new markets.

Dave's Hot Chicken is set to enter Poland. The U.S.-based chicken QSR intends to open 25 units in the market in partnership with U.K.-based franchisee Azzurri Group.

KFC operator AmRest reached 700 systemwide locations in Poland. The Spain-based multichain operator ended 2025 with more than 2,100 units in about 20 global markets.

Popeyes operator Rex Concepts plans to reach 50 locations by the end of 2026. The Poland-based operator ended 2025 with around 20 locations of the chicken QSR in the market.

Wingstop is set to enter Poland. The U.S.-based chicken QSR is partnering with U.K.-based franchisee Lemon Pepper Holdings on the market entry.

Global Navigator clients: Click here for more



© 2026 Technomic, Inc.

Future of Beverage by informa | BEVVY AWARDS



Sip Into the Future: Insights, Innovation, Impact.

The industry's destination for beverage trends, big ideas, and the inaugural Bevvy Awards.



Cultivate your Canadian menu strategy from ideation to launch

Discover market-level food trends, track limited-time offers and test new menu items on the fly with Ignite Menu

Learn more

Technomic
by informa

Want more insights?

You can get this report delivered to you biweekly!

Sign up here>>

Ignite Company

See where restaurant chains are, how many units they have and how well they're doing. **Explore>>**

Ignite Menu

Pinpoint the latest menu trends and see what's on the horizon. **Explore>>**

Ignite Consumer

Get to know your customers' customers through 60+ attributes and visit occasion metrics. **Explore>>**

Global Foodservice Navigator

Understand the global industry, from menu trends to consumers, in 25 markets. **Explore>>**

© 2026 Technomic, Inc.

Technomic by informa

Since 1966, we have produced in-depth research focused on the foodservice industry.

We provide insights into consumer, industry and menu trends in the U.S., Canada and 23 markets around the world.

Our team of experts helps leaders in the industry make complex business decisions, set strategy and stay ahead of the curve.

Have questions?
Reach out to us today.

312-876-0004
info@technomic.com
technomic.com