

Rethinking the Lunch Combo



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Sandwiches

are a leading entree on chain menus with **42% of consumers ordering them away from home once a week or more¹**

57%
of those ages
18-34

One of the leading purchase drivers for deciding where to purchase a sandwich is **value**.¹

While value can mean a variety of things, **a common value-based tool is the combo meal.**

43%

of consumers say that when they order a sandwich from a restaurant, they **prefer to order a combo¹**



which may be why **84% of restaurants offer them²**

Combo meals should reflect **current trends and consumer preferences**. Stand out from the crowd with these tips related to sides, sandwiches and drinks.

SIDES

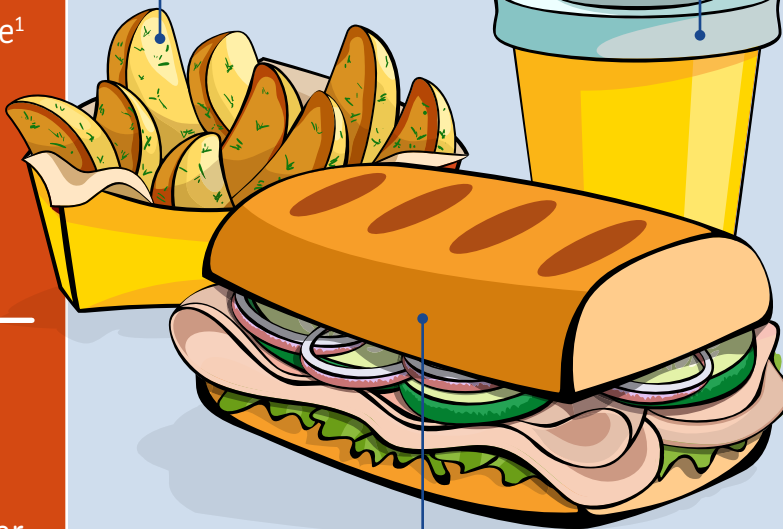
The most popular sides are french fries, potato chips and onion rings, but forward-thinking restaurants are offering better-for-you, vegetable-forward sides, too.



26% of consumers say it's important for restaurants to offer plant-based sides

Take inspiration from these recent menu additions:

- True Food Kitchen's® Roasted Brussels Sprouts
- Chick-fil-A's® Superfood Side (Broccoli, kale, maple vinaigrette, dried cherries and roasted nuts)
- Red Robin's® Zucchini Fries



Allow customers to build their own combos while also offering some ready-to-order options including top trending items.

DRINKS

Fountain soda, bottled water and bottled soda are the three most popular beverages purchased with lunch combos, but operators can offer premium options for those who want a special treat, such as specialty coffee drinks, smoothies, fresh-squeezed/pressed juices and more.



Some of the fastest growing beverages on limited-service menus include:

Flavored water	+19%
Frozen blended tea	+18%
Frozen blended coffee	+13%
Iced coffee	+9%

And consumers say they're ordering more of these drinks than they used to:

Kombucha/shrubs	55%
Coconut water	42%
Cold/iced or blended coffee	39%
Smoothies	38%
Hot specialty coffee	37%

Check out these tasty sips from chains around the country:

- Sonic Drive-In® offers a variety of combo ready drink choices including soft drinks, signature limeades, slushes, iced teas, hand-mixed shakes, blasts as well as the chain's signature Ocean Water, a bright blue, lemon-lime drink with a hint of coconut flavor.
- Panera® offers several types of lemonade, smoothies and frozen coffees, as well as hot coffee, cold-brew coffee, tea, juice and more.

SANDWICHES

When asked what they'd like to see more of:

Variety in sandwich choices	45%
Healthy sandwiches	42%
Sandwiches with new or unique flavors	39%
Ethnic sandwiches	31%



34% of consumers say chain restaurants offer very similar sandwiches

Mix things up – offer interesting or global condiments such as Sriracha mayo, pesto aioli or harissa, and consider unique formats, too. Some recent craveable LTOs include:

- Firehouse Subs® Jamaican Jerk Turkey Club, with sliced smoked turkey breast, pepper Jack cheese, sweet mustard sauce, lettuce, tomato, onion, mayo and a hint of Caribbean seasoning.
- Which Wich's® Paleo Club offered a lower-carb option of roasted turkey, applewood smoked bacon, avocado, fresh tomatoes oil and vinegar, wrapped in lettuce instead of on bread.

Sources:
1: Technomic's 2019 Sandwich Consumer Trend Report
2: Technomic's Ignite menu data