

# TAKE INSPIRATION AND SHARE INSIGHTS FROM THE MOUTH-WATERING GASTRONOMY WORLD.



## A NEW CHAPTER FOR THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

The Restaurant Industry is currently struggling to find its place within this new market reality. It is a sector that helped communities, cities and even countries in developing their own identity and boosting their economy. Unfortunately, it is now battling to survive and in a dire need of reinventing itself, all due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

So let's understand why this is an industry that we all need.

### Why is "eating out" so important to us, humans?

It is not new that humans crave for connections and relationships. We do so since the beginning of times, it's a basic human need. One of the ways we build and maintain close social relationships is, often, a casual dinner out. Just look at romantic first dates, casual lunch business meetings, family celebrations – all usually involve a restaurant experience.

Eating out is seen by social sciences as an act of entertaining oneself and a social activity for entertaining others.

Within the last years, the global trend of eating-out has been increasing due to factors such as easy access, low value acquisition and social media.

Restaurants were opening faster than ever with new and unique experiences (foodwise and more). Yet, an unexpected event hit the world hard, and this social need took a nose dive...

Disastrous is the most appropriate adjective to describe the pandemic's impact on the restaurant industry.

Meanwhile, while most restaurants and bars are looking for ways to open safely and comply with the required social distance, others are exploring new business options.

This can be done by mixing it up with home-delivery options or by replacing difficulties for opportunities – even though it may sound quite cliché.

No one knows if (or when) a new lockdown will be necessary, and business owners everywhere are fighting hard to keep themselves operating daily.

This touch and go reality is now the steppingstone for the home delivery meal-kits rise – people still want to "eat out", even if they are actually "eating in". It is also a window of opportunity for new high-end Gastronomic experiences such as The Residential, where your home is turned into a Michelin kitchen and you have a one-on-one experience with a renowned Chef.

Other restaurateurs decided to charge by the hour instead of by plate ordered, helping those who are struggling with job loss and reduced income.

Unfortunately for restaurants, the home-cooking trend is also on the rise and is now a true competitor to restaurants and delivery services.

*“There is a strong link between scents and emotional memory. The smell of foods can evoke vivid and detailed emotional memories of our past.”*

- Shahrām Heshmat Ph.D. in Psychology Today magazine

## UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF FOOD FOR THE NEW CONSUMER

As we mentioned, the unknown is making the Restaurant Industry adjust to the "new normal" quite quickly. To do so, professionals are taking a new look to consumer insights that, at first, seemed obvious and predictable.

Before the pandemic hit, food was already known for bringing a sense of happiness to consumers – raise your hand if you are a foodie! Now, more than happiness, it provides an escape to the COVID-19 reality – it is a piece of heaven, a source of joy and security.

Research shows that 41% of people in USA use comfort food to bring them a sense of happiness. This search for well-being is also done online and in social media, with a **whooping 90% increase in food inspiration searches during the pandemic.**

This surge is a hard evidence that what we call comfort food is, somehow, wired in our brains to an undeniable feeling of a "secure attachment and a sense of belonging".

So let us go back to the home-delivery. When was the last time you ordered from a restaurant and had the food delivered to your home? Chances are it was not more than 2 weeks ago.

Consumers were already getting used to home-delivery food options around the globe (Uber Eats, Glovo, Bolt Food, iFood are just some examples). With the sudden COVID-19 restrictions the demand has increased even more.

**FACT** in Brazil alone, iFood has grown 50% in orders from March to October with a peak number of 44.600 orders in just one month.

The lockdown made consumers discover new restaurants that were not, apparently, their first choice previously. There is a will to break the routine through food.

New customers also tend to order more 8% than the average customer and to choose higher value items which proves. We all need to feel pampered sometimes, and home-delivery meals are a few of those pampering opportunities consumers can currently enjoy.

Clearly, delivering options have achieved record numbers in May 2020. Nonetheless, this trend met a new rival also on the rise - home-cooking.

A global research between the 1st and the 20th week of 2020 shows that, while home cooking was slowly decaying until the 11th week, it boomed from that moment until the 17th week - when the trend plateaued for a while.

It comprises the global lockdown dates, when everyone was at home and had little escape options.

Not only consumers were looking for a different physical activity indoors, but they were also more concerned with their overall health – another impact of being amidst a pandemic.

According to Nativo Research & Analytics, these are the top performing keywords during pandemic in the Food Industry:



### SO, WHAT ARE THE INGREDIENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL HOME GASTRONOMY EXPERIENCES?

#### SAFETY

More than ever, consumers need to feel safe and in a good mood.

#### ACTIVE

People need to feel that they are not frozen in time, they are simply at home.

#### HEALTH

Food as fuel to a better health.

#### COMFORT

Home is the place to be.

## NEW WAYS

Worldwide gastronomic events saw their endeavors go out the window with the restrictions and new behaviors consumers are displaying.

But some, like the restaurateurs, decided to look at the challenges ahead with a new light and discovered ways of still delivering unique experiences that allowed brands to engage with their audience.

Let us look at some of these great examples:

#### FARTURA GOES DIGITAL!

Fartura started in 1998 and is the biggest gastronomic festival in Brazil. Aware that this year they would not be able to host the physical feast from the past years, they decided to embrace the digital world.

Exhibiting 48 hours of gastronomy and cultural content, "Festival Fartura" realized its first digital version in June 2020 with more than 160 free attractions online and it was a success, bringing its concept from origin to the dish to everyone across the country.

#### STELLA ARTOIS DOMO'S EVENT

Aware of the need to socialize safely, Stella Artois created a gastronomic festival with iconic restaurants in private homes. Customers would have the possibility of enjoying a beer with friends and try the local delicacies in a cozy and intimate edition of Villa Stella.

#### CINEMA AT THE TABLE

Dinner and movies – seems like just another evening in lockdown but this one comes with a twist. Cinema na Mesa project invites participants to cook a menu inspired by a specific movie and discuss it with other film enthusiasts. In the Kitchen will be Juliana Sabbag, a specialist in cinema and the creator of this project.

## TALKING ABOUT THE FUTURE

### Emerging trends in the food delivery for 2021

Keeping Social distancing, avoiding interactions with the restaurant's staff and less proximity to other diners will probably be some of the behaviors that will be embedded in ourselves after the pandemic is over. But these are not the only ones, and new changes are on the horizon.

Due to the trends we discussed before, food delivery companies are now just as common (or even more) as Amazon package deliveries: Uber Eats or Bolt Food are good examples of this since their cities' expansion was one of their main concerns in 2020.

But what new behaviors will we see next?

#### FOOD TECH

Robot waiters and tablet devices for contactless dining.

The food home-delivery system will not be just limited to motor bikes and bicycles.

One of the innovative online food delivery trends of the next decade will also involve robots: robot waiters, tablet devices and technology in favor of contactless gastronomic experiences.

#### PERSONALIZATION

Will be the next normal.

In the next decade, we already know that Personalization will be able to change the content and the experience without the active knowledge of the consumer.

#### CONVENIENCE

Customers are now valuing their time more than ever.

When connected with a limited mobility and controlled spend allocation more based on needs than wants, we see more consumers buying from local stores for their day-to-day needs (the bakery on your street) instead of big retailers.

#### FOOD WASTE

Food waste apps & concerns about the environment and our communities.

Food waste and its massive numbers led the way for people and brands to opt for a more sustainable consumption. This can be done with the resource of apps that offer discounted rates on restaurant meals close to their closing time. Additional discounts can be added if the consumer brings its own container to the restaurant.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

In order to survive, the restaurant industry must adapt to the new global scenario.

If Covid-19 has mandatory words for any industry who is struggling with it these are Innovation & Adaptability.

These are two imperative states for those who want to remain successful in the industry.

*“This is no time for ease and comfort. It is time to dare and endure.”*

- Winston Churchill