



# 2025 U.S. Restaurant Industry Trends

THE ERA OF SUPERHUMAN HOSPITALITY™

How brands are using tech to  
deepen relationships and exceed  
diner expectations.







## FOREWORD

# Entering the era of SuperHuman Hospitality™



In a world where AI and automation are transforming industries, one thing remains constant: people crave human connection. Restaurants and bars are no longer just places to eat—they're sanctuaries for shared experiences, personal interactions and unforgettable moments.

At the same time, operators are under immense pressure, balancing rising costs, labor shortages and increasing guest expectations. They must deliver exceptional, personalized hospitality at scale, all while remaining both efficient and profitable. The good news? Technology, AI and automated systems are helping rewrite the narrative, providing hospitality businesses with the tools they need to enhance—not replace—the human touch.

**This is the era of SuperHuman Hospitality™.**

An era where tech, AI and automation empower operators to work smarter, anticipate guest needs faster and create experiences that are hyper-personalized. Where fully integrated ecosystems put the guest experience at the center, helping businesses drive loyalty, efficiency and profitability.

At SevenRooms, **we believe hospitality is both a science and an art.** Our technology powers the science—using AI, automation and data to streamline operations and personalize experiences—so operators can focus on the art: the creativity, warmth and human connection that make every moment unforgettable.



Allison Page

Founder and Chief Product Officer, SevenRooms

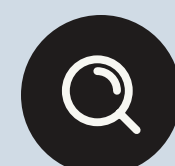
# The tasting menu



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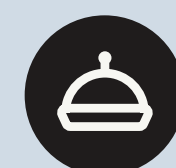
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## INTRODUCTION

# To deliver on rising expectations, high-touch hospitality needs high-tech

Despite inflation being down from its recent peak, 73% of U.S. adults are concerned with rising prices. When consumers do choose to splurge, restaurants, dining out and bars top the list, proving that exceptional hospitality and experiences should remain a top priority.

Just like consumers are a bit more cautious about where and how they spend their money, operators are too. 88% of operators saw increased labor costs in 2024, and 78% saw higher food costs. In response, restaurants are embracing technology to cut costs while still delivering elevated guest experiences.

To guide hospitality strategy in the year ahead, we surveyed 1,000 consumers and 250+ operators, in addition to analyzing SevenRooms global platform data.







## DISCOVERY

# Savvy diners and smarter search are reshaping restaurant discovery

Diners are driving the discovery journey—from social buzz to online searches—while embracing AI for seamless booking. To keep up, operators must meet consumers where they are, both across discovery channels and in reservation tech.







# Social, search & AI: the next phase of restaurant discovery

Social and Google are the top channels consumers use to find new restaurants. **Today, 94% of diners use online resources**—showcasing the importance of having a strong digital presence across multiple channels.

At the same time, AI is becoming part of everyday life, and consumers are adapting quickly. Nearly **three-quarters of diners are comfortable using AI for reservations**, yet most restaurants have yet to integrate AI into their reservation process.

“Restaurants need to feel confident that AI systems are accurate, reliable and ethical—especially with guest data. As AI enhances dining experiences, trust will follow and pave the way for wider AI adoption, transforming the restaurant industry for the better.”



Kinesh Patel

Founder and Chief Technology Officer,  
SevenRooms



## TREND #1

# The restaurant social influencer trend is over—brand collabs are in

Almost half of consumers (49%) use social media to find new restaurants. And this jumps to nearly 7 in 10 (69%) among Gen Zers. However, only 1 in 10 consumers now discover new restaurants via social media influencers.

Operators know that social is key, but influencer reach is drying up as algorithms shift and platforms like TikTok encounter political challenges. They're now turning to brand collaborations where they can reach new, highly engaged audiences. **More than half of operators plan to invest in brand collaborations (54%) this year.**

## Hospitality brand collabs shine on social



Nobu x Golden Globes collab



Komodo x Cloud 23 collab





## TREND #2

# Social is a vibe check, but Google is prime real estate for booking

In 2025, Google is adapting to the modern dining discovery journey, making updates to rankings based on social media, web presence and reservation inventory.

Google Ads are the top marketing channel for operators in 2025, with more than half planning to invest.



**Nearly 1 in 3 consumers**  
discover restaurants on Google



**50% of U.S. operators**  
are investing in organic Google strategies in 2025



**58% of U.S. operators**  
are investing in paid Google Ads in 2025





## Think of your Google listing as your digital window display

Revamp your [Google Business Profile](#) to include experiences that guests may be searching for, like “outdoor dining” or “trivia night.”

Keep your business hours, website, menu, social media links and photos updated. Regularly monitor reviews and post on social to keep your feed fresh.

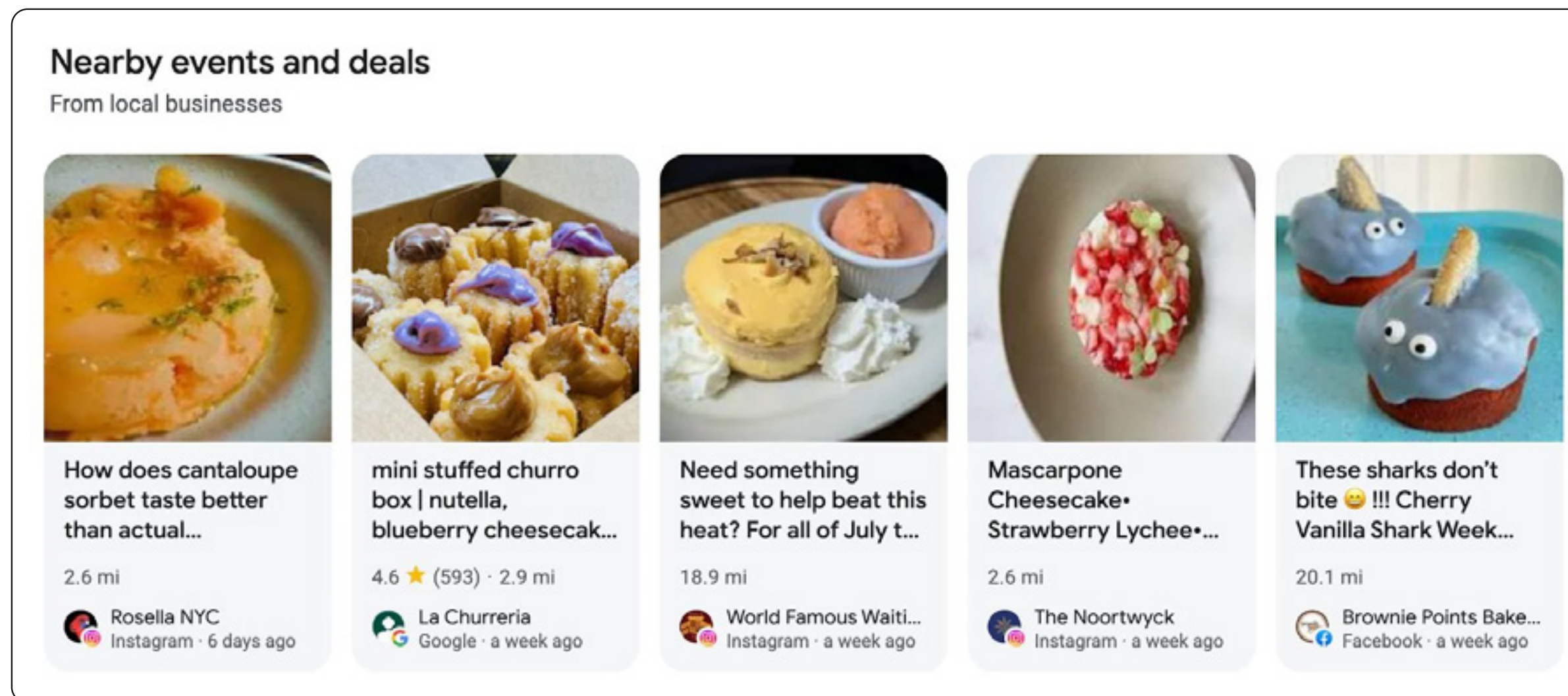


Image courtesy of Google

“An optimized Google Business Profile increases local discoverability and makes it easy for diners to book with you. It’s a tool for local marketing that helps diners find exactly the information they care about and gets them in the door.”



Ashley Do

Global Business Development,  
Google





## TREND #3

# The next big opportunity for AI is in reservations

Diners are adapting faster than restaurants are innovating. Nearly three-quarters of consumers are comfortable using AI in the reservation process, but most operators aren't using AI to process reservations.

Half of restaurant operators currently using AI are using it in marketing—primarily for predictive analysis to inform campaign strategies and content generation—but AI-assisted reservations are lagging behind.



**74% of consumers**

are comfortable with AI in the restaurant booking experience



**29% of operators**

that use AI are using it to process reservations

## Let AI book the tables—so you can craft the experience

To meet consumer demand, set up AI-assisted booking systems to help process phone, email, text and chat reservations.



**More than 1 in 3 consumers**

are open to AI helping out when they're running late (36%).



**One-third of consumers**

are comfortable with AI booking or modifying reservations over the phone (33%).



Good morning,  
Welcome to Apples & Pears 😊



I'm Hannah, here to help with  
your inquiry



Are you interested in any of  
the following?



Book a Table



Private Dining



Weddings



Buy Wine Online



See our Menus



Join the A&P Club



See our Upcoming Events



FAQs



Gift Vouchers





## PERSONALIZATION

# To scale personalization from text to tableside, the human touch alone won't cut it

Guests expect high-end experiences and personalization at every turn. To keep up, operators have to overcome tech hurdles.

Friend of Chef

Vegetarian

July Birthday







# Guests expect personalization, but it's hard to get right

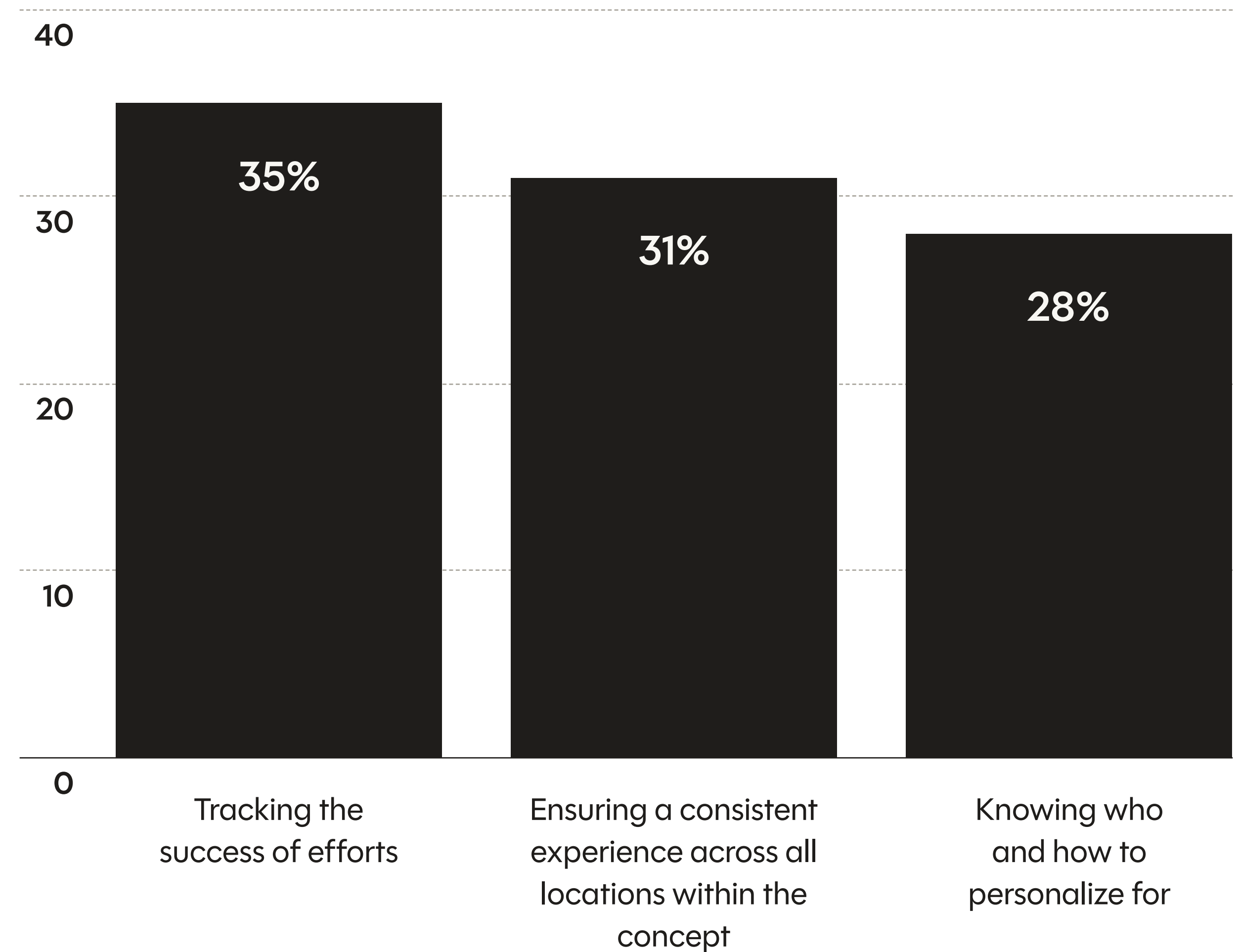
Today, personalization is what drives guest loyalty and engagement. While email remains dominant, text is emerging as a key engagement channel, with consumers eager to exchange their info for VIP treatment and exclusive offers.

Small hospitality touches, like remembering a guest's birthday or offering a commemorative menu, make a big impact.

Yet many operators struggle to scale personalization.

Tech and automation are changing that, empowering operators to deliver **SuperHuman Hospitality™** at scale.

Top operator personalization challenges







## TREND #1

# High-end dining adds personal touches at every turn, but challenges persist

While **40% of operators** claim they already personalize their marketing to a great extent, nearly **8 in 10 (77%)** are dealing with hurdles.

For personalized marketing, **47% of consumers** say the top perk they want from restaurants is birthday and anniversary promotions, but more than a third (39%) of operators don't offer them.

For personalizing the in-dining experience, less than half offer tasting menus customized to preferences (45%) or provide curated appetizer platters (40%), but consumers are looking for these touches.

## Consumers' highest ranked in-dining personalizations



Preferred seating



Tasting menus customized to their preferences



Curated appetizer platters

## Consumers' highest ranked personalized marketing offers



Birthday or anniversary perks



Exclusive offers or early access to events



Reservation offers that match their typical dining schedule

**HOT TIP**

Use a restaurant CRM to personalize guest experiences.

With guest profiles that build themselves and industry-proven marketing templates, SevenRooms' CRM, Marketing and Operations platform helps you personalize every guest interaction and measure the impact on your bottom line.

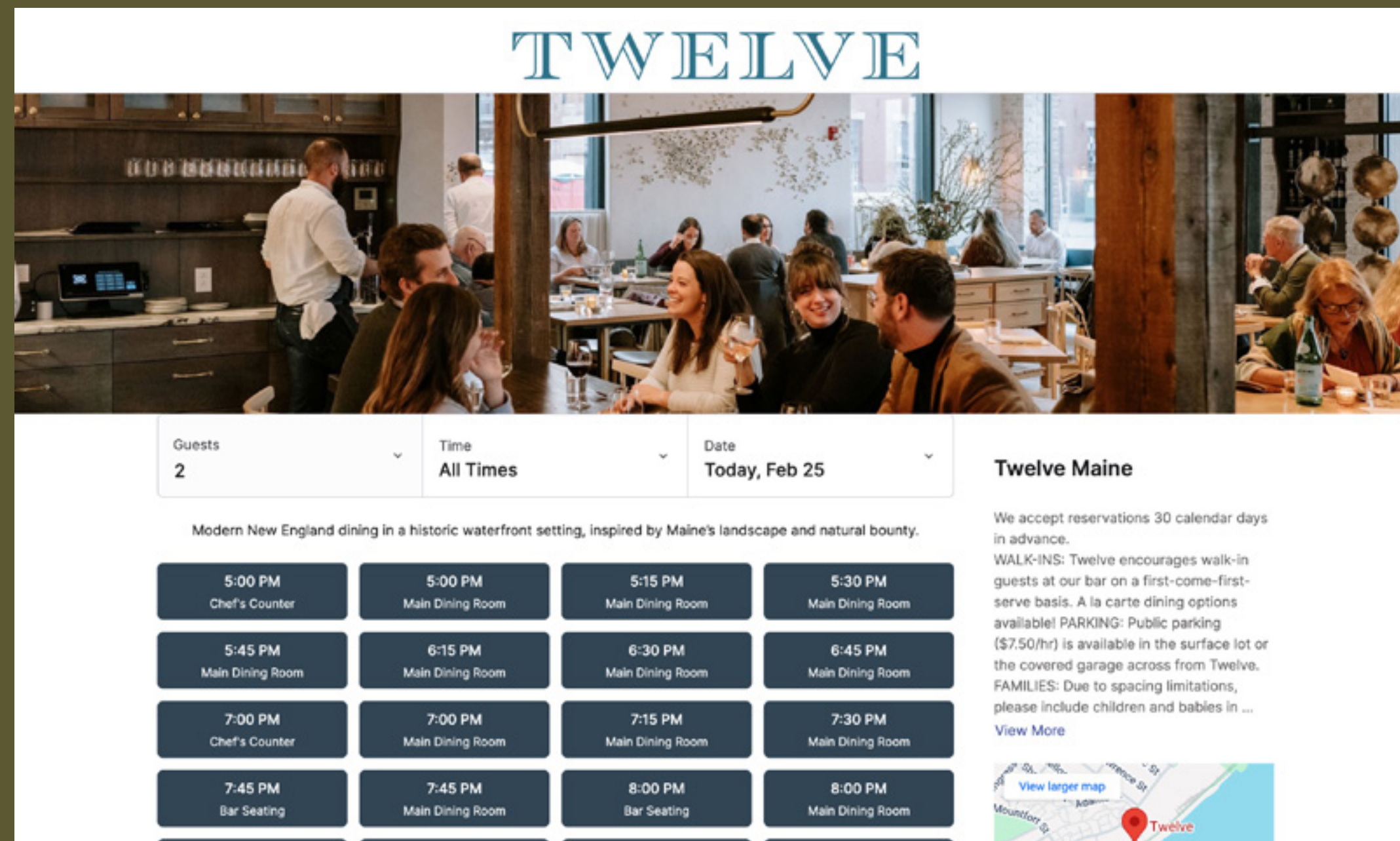




# Leading restaurants offer experiences that draw the eye

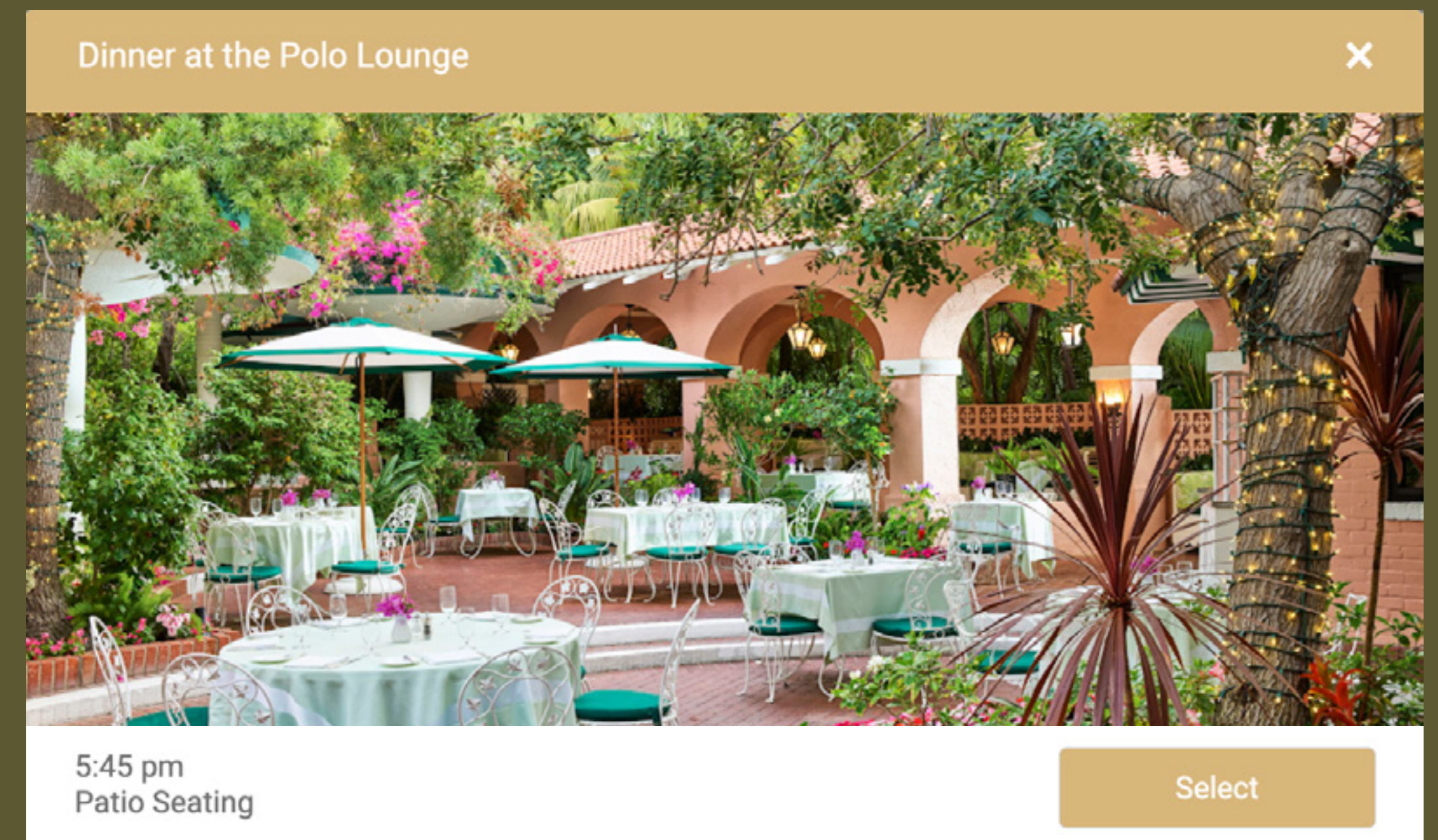
According to consumers, the best booking experiences include knowing which seating area they're reserving, seeing photos of the dining area and being able to text for a reservation.

Guests can book the main dining room, chef's table or bar seating at Twelve Maine



[Twelve Maine](#)

Guests get a glimpse of the picturesque dining area when they book a reservation at the Polo Lounge



[The Polo Lounge](#)





## TREND #2

# Emails are still cool, but texts are coming in hot

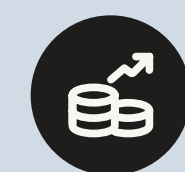
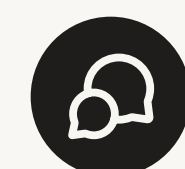
Email and SMS are the go-to marketing channels for both operators and consumers, driving bookings and repeat visits. But when it comes to receiving time-sensitive messages and reservation updates, diners prefer texts.

## Top revenue-generating text campaigns from SevenRooms operators

- Holiday celebrations like Valentine's Day, Mother's Day and St. Patrick's Day
- Weekend on the patio
- Last call for NYE reservations

**48% of consumers**

prefer connecting with restaurants via text

**24X**Average ROI for text marketing on SevenRooms<sup>1</sup>**\$1,800**Average revenue generated per text campaign on SevenRooms<sup>2</sup>**\$70,000**Highest revenue generated from a single text campaign on SevenRooms<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>ROI is calculated by subtracting subscription fees paid by the restaurant from the total revenue generated from text campaigns.

<sup>2</sup>Revenue is calculated based on bookings from text campaigns linked to completed POS spend data; if unavailable, an average spend per cover is used.





## Personalized emails turn clicks into covers

For promotions, menu updates, special events and merch, email is still the top choice for updates. SevenRooms' data shows that personalized email marketing—delivering the right message to the right guest at the right time—drives higher engagement and revenue.



### 62% of consumers

prefer connecting with restaurants  
via email



### 68% open rate

average open rate for targeted,  
automated emails



### 12X more revenue

Targeted, automated emails generate 12X  
more revenue per email than mass sends<sup>1†</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Revenue is calculated based on bookings from email campaigns linked to completed POS spend data; if unavailable, an average spend per cover is used.

<sup>†</sup>Data sourced globally

## Personalized email campaigns driving the highest repeat visit rates<sup>†</sup>



Auto-sending the wine list before the next visit for 'Wine Spenders'



Auto-sending the current menu to first-time diners before their first visit



Tagging 5-star-feedback guests and auto-sending a thank you from GM

## Top-performing email subject lines with 70%+ open rates<sup>†</sup>



Your pre-selected banquet menu



<name>, see you again soon?



A heartfelt thank you from us





## 83% of consumers

could be enticed to sign up for a restaurant marketing program



## More than 1 in 5 consumers

would sign up for restaurant updates for access to 'secret' menu items



### HOT TIP

Leverage access and exclusivity to drive marketing sign-ups.

More than 8 in 10 consumers are open to signing up for restaurant marketing updates—rising to 95% among Millennials. Their top incentives? VIP events, with women especially interested in exclusive tastings, cooking classes, mixology workshops, as well as behind-the-scenes access to food and cocktail recipes.

The Maidstone shares exclusive packages and deals for email newsletter subscribers.







## EXPERIENCE

# Consumers are spending mindfully, but splurging on luxe experiences

Even with economic challenges, guests are willing to pay a premium for special events and luxury experiences.







# Despite economic concerns, guests still value premium dining and entertainment

Consumers who dine out value unique experiences, even at a premium. While consumers are more optimistic about the economy, their intent to spend on everyday purchases hasn't recovered yet. But they are finding ways to treat themselves.

The top category consumers plan to splurge on is restaurants and bars (36%), with out-of-home entertainment also a high priority (19%).



## 74% of consumers

plan to or have already returned to a restaurant after a unique experience



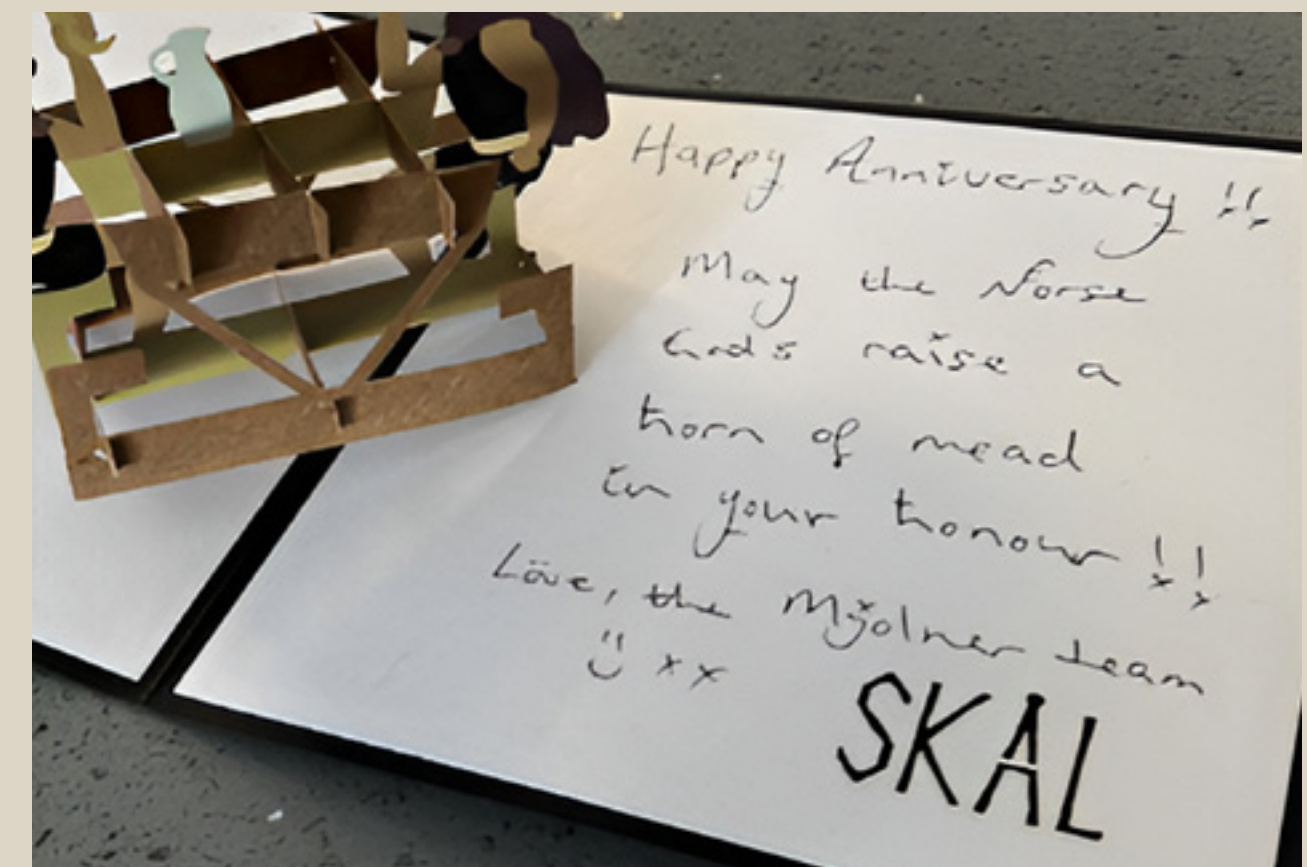
## \$144M+ in incremental revenue

generated by SevenRooms U.S. operators from events, upgrades, experiences and prepayments in the past 12 months

“This thoughtful act has proven to me that not all restaurants ignore the reservation notes section. And because of this experience, I have recommended it to many friends and look forward to dining there again.”

Rachel

A guest who was pleasantly surprised by a restaurant's response to her reservation note







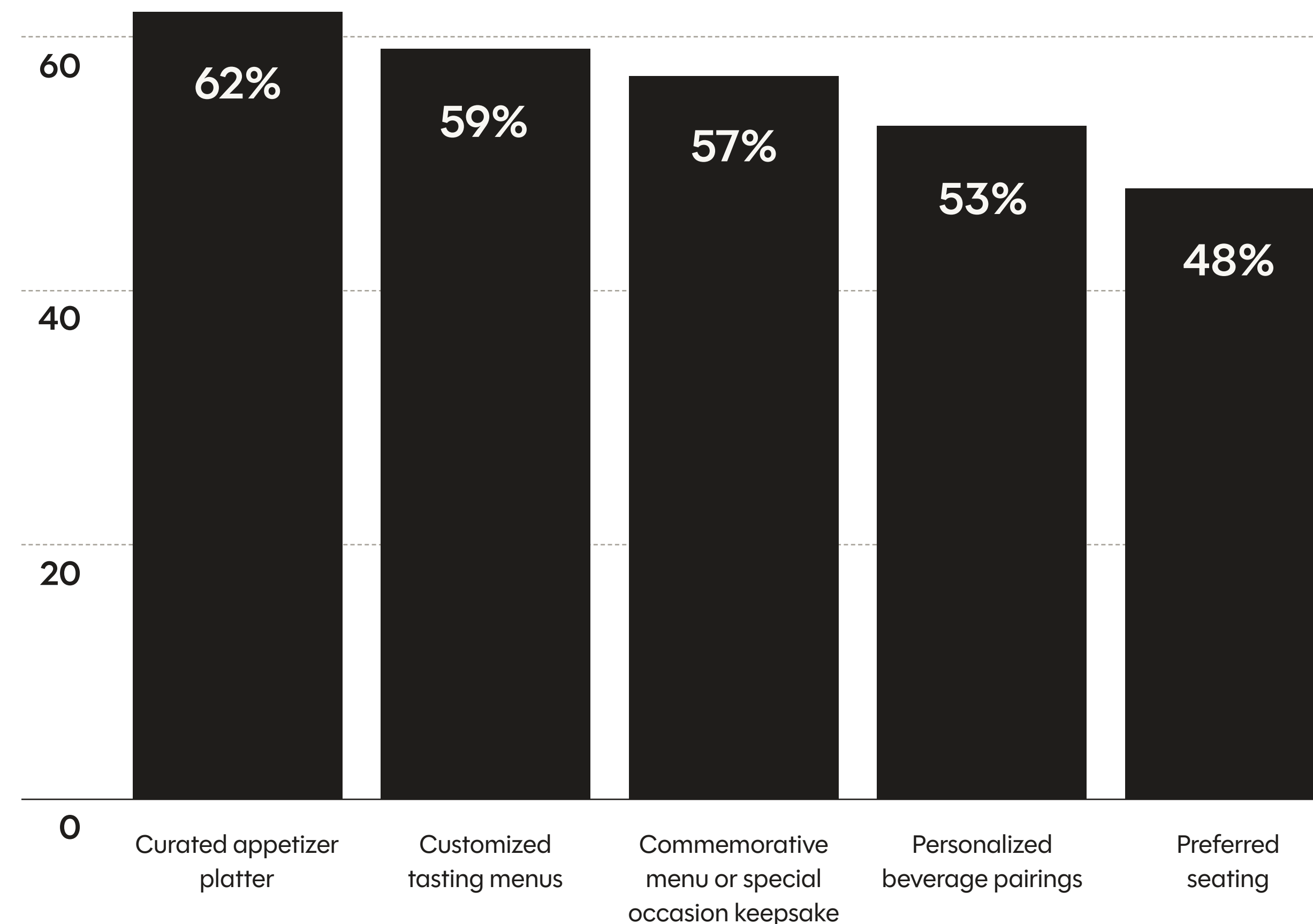
## TREND #1

# Diners are hungry for elevated experiences worth the splurge

Consumers are willing to pay extra for personalized touches, preferred seating and special occasions or events.

They want elevated, Instagrammable experiences and to connect with their community over interests like reality TV premieres or sporting events.

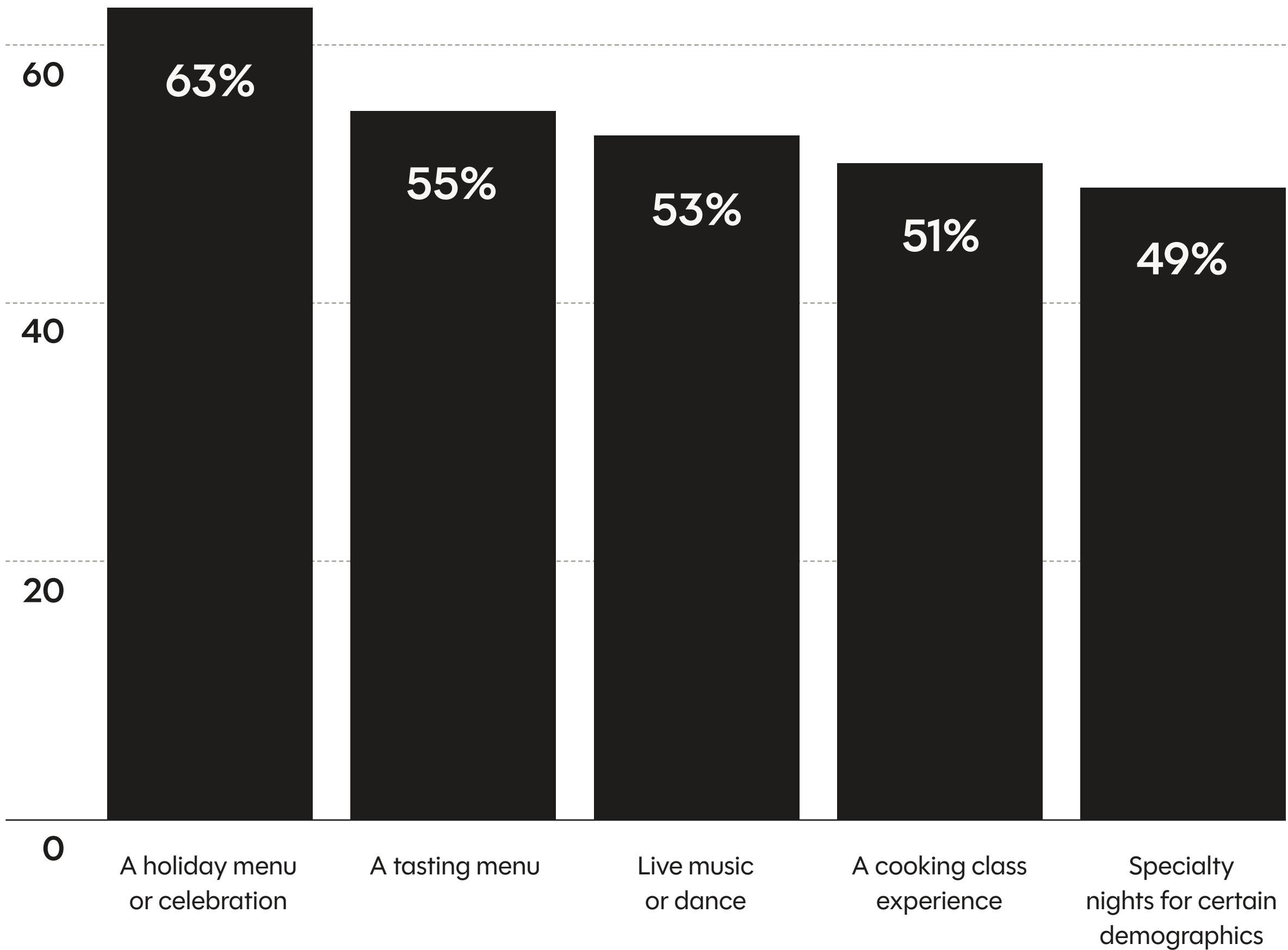
## Personalized experiences diners are willing to pay more for







Types of dining experiences consumers are willing to spend more on compared to a typical meal



# Guests can find an option for every taste at Margie’s

Margie’s at Rockaway has live music nights, jazz brunches and floral workshops that add some flavor to girls’ nights or company off-sites.

THE ROCKAWAY

HOTEL + SPA

718-474-1216

Best Rate Guaranteed

BOOK YOUR STAY

ROOMS

OFFERS

DINE & DRINK

THE POOL

WELLNESS

HAPPENINGS

MEETINGS & WEDDINGS

ARTS & COMMUNITY

SHOP

GALLERY

ON THE AGENDA

SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING

From cozy sit-down dining and elevated snacking to serene wellness, vibrant nightlife, and that essential boost of energy, our hotel offers an eclectic mix of activities, experiences, and specialty sessions designed to delight you without ever needing to step outside.

HOTEL HAPPENINGS AT ROCKAWAY

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28 | 4:00 PM-7:00 PM

ROOFTOP HAPPY HOUR

SATURDAY, MARCH 01 | 2:00 PM-9:00 PM

ROCKAWAY SAINT PATRICK'S DAY

SUNDAY, MARCH 02 | 12:00 PM-3:00 PM

JAZZ BRUNCH



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## TREND #2

# Restaurants tapping into the experience economy are opening up new streams of revenue

Restaurants are finding creative ways to maximize their existing offerings by adding upgrades, whether that's taking advantage of seats with a view or large-format food or drink options to drive revenue.

Think about the experience holistically—when consumers want to “make a night of it,” they’re willing to pull out all the stops. Ai Fiori, for example, offers guests add-ons for Valentine’s Day reservations like bouquets, chocolates and champagne.

**HOT TIP**

Work with what you’ve got

Maximize what’s already in your dining room by offering reservation upgrades, such as priority seating, to drive revenue. Use high-quality visuals to showcase the experience.



&lt; Ai Fiori • Fri, Feb 14 • 5:00 PM • 2 guests ⌚ 4:40

**Valentine's Day Upgrades****Dozen Red Roses**

- 0 +

Romance your special someone with a modern display of a classic dozen roses from Scott's Flowers waiting on the table on arrival.

\$125.00 / each

**New York Crush Bouquet**

- 1 +

Romance your special someone with a beautiful and vibrant bouquet from Scott's Flowers waiting on the table on arrival.

\$125.00 / each

**4-piece Chocolate Box**

- 1 +

Gift your special someone with a 4-piece chocolate box of our house made bonbons....

[View more](#)




\$20.00 / each








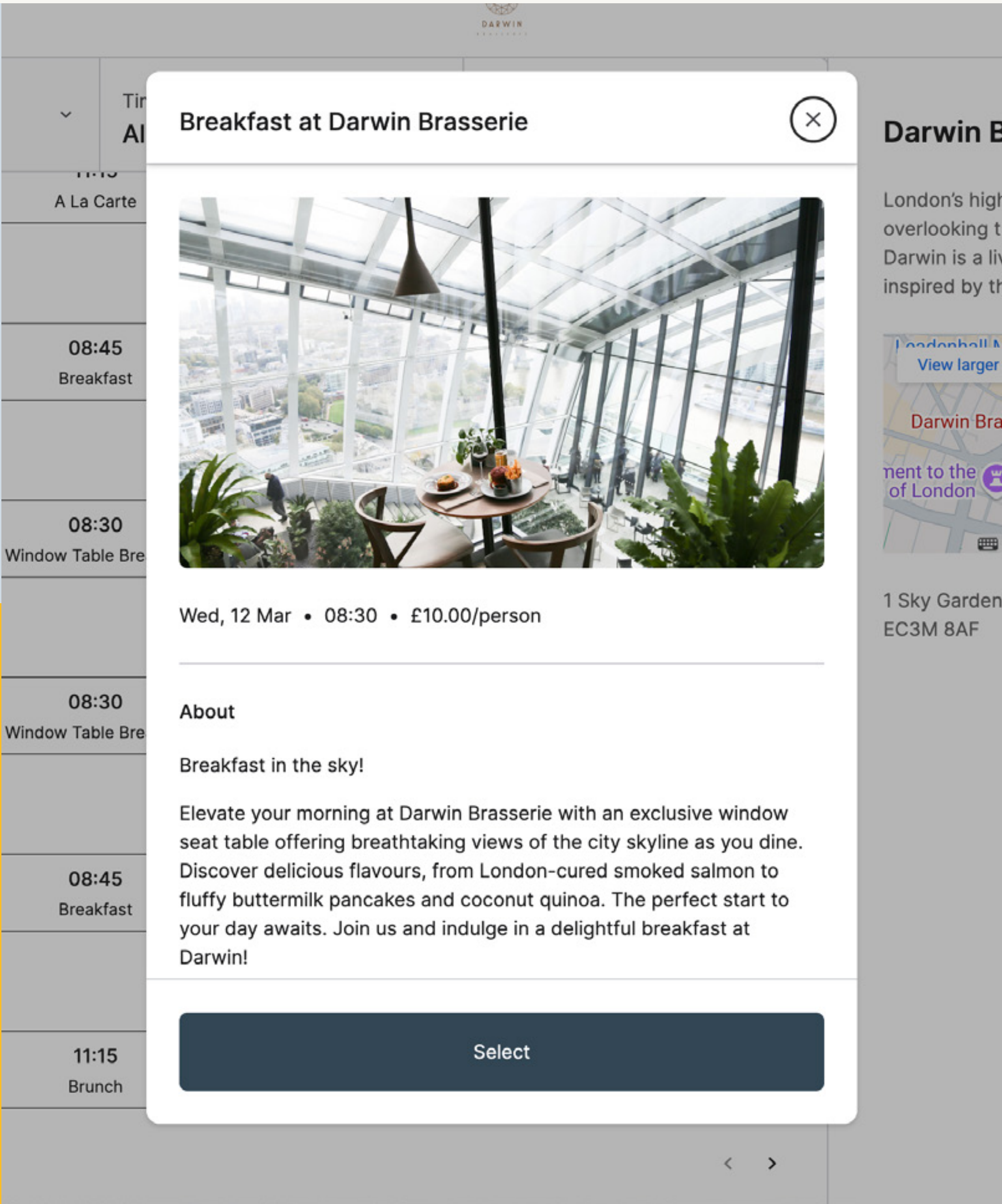


# Types of experiences at SevenRooms venues with the highest price points

-  Scenic views
-  Chef's tasting menus
-  Shared premium drinks and meals, like margarita pitchers, Guinness kegs or Tomahawk steaks

# Most popular upgrades for SevenRooms venues beyond the dining experience

-  Picnic box or tableware for on-the-go dining
-  Birthday gift bags
-  Seasonal bouquets from a local florist







## TREND #3

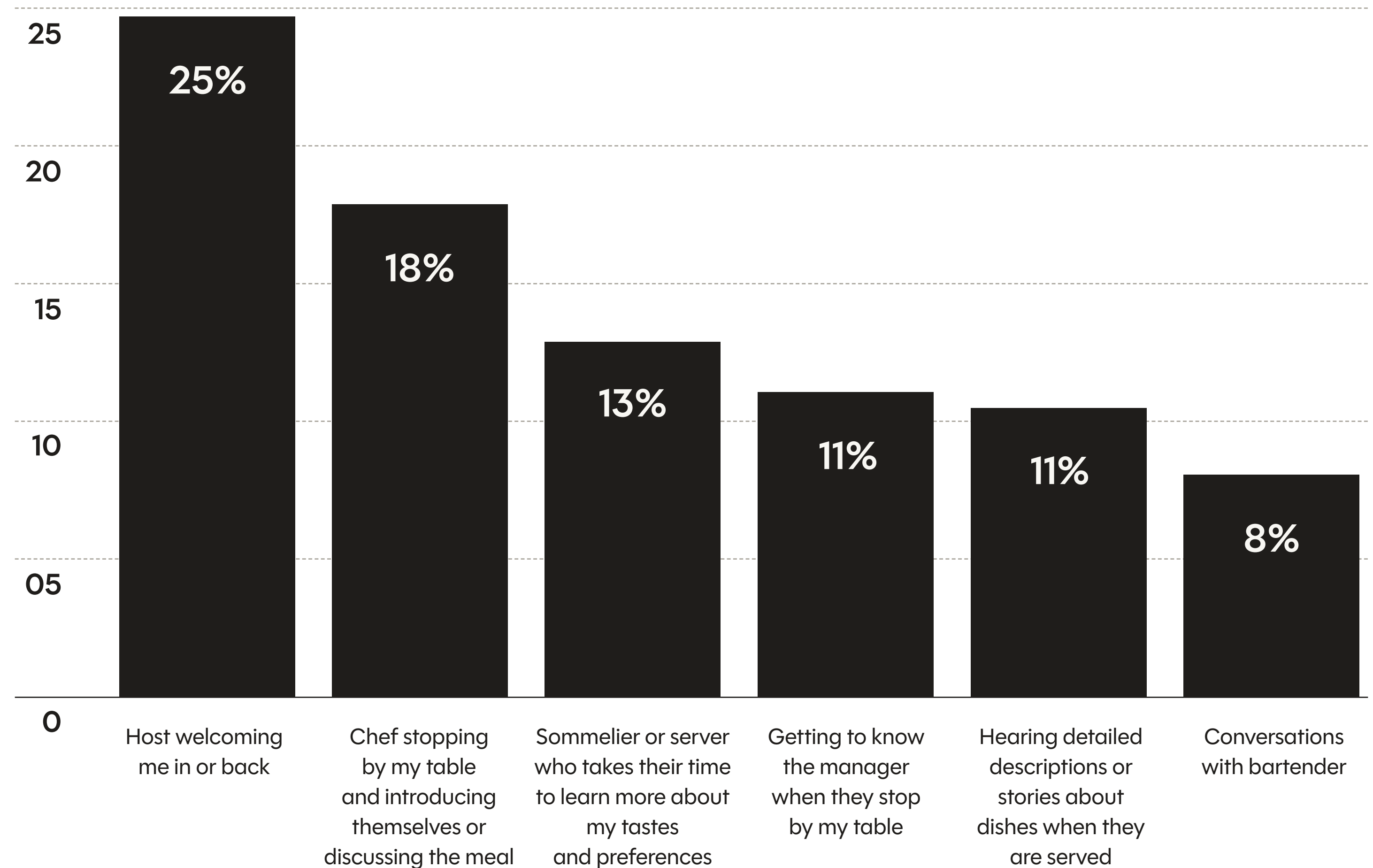
# Don't overlook the impact of 'back-to-basics' hospitality

The most-valued staff interaction by guests at a restaurant? **Saying *welcome back*.**

Simple measures go a long way with diners, driving them to recommend restaurants to their networks and return for future visits.

Guests appreciate these gestures and many are even willing to pay more for them—**1 in 3 customers would pay for a welcome note from staff.** Yet, less than half of restaurants offer welcome notes, leaving both revenue and connection opportunities on the table.

## What interactions with staff do you value the most while dining out, if any?







## CUSTOMER JOURNEY

# Restaurants are growing revenue and relationships beyond the dining room

Restaurants are increasingly showing up for consumers in new ways pre- and post-dining, opening up new revenue channels.





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# Restaurants are selling more than meals, they're selling a lifestyle

Consumers want to stay connected to their favorite chefs and restaurant brands beyond the dinner table. From exclusive recipes to curated merchandise and special treats, these offerings create a deeper relationship with guests while unlocking new revenue streams for restaurants.

Restaurant merch and gifts also serve as built-in brand awareness tools, turning loyal guests into ambassadors and amplifying word-of-mouth recommendations—a critical strategy for any restaurant marketer.

At the same time, **personalization is key to enhancing the digital guest experience**. Diners are not only willing to share their information for a more curated experience, but they're actively seeking tailored recommendations pre-and post dining.

## Consumers are embracing their favorite restaurant brands



### 87% of consumers

would buy a different type of offering from restaurants, like cookbooks or cocktail kits

Coffee subscription



Chocolate gift set



Home cookbook







## TREND #1

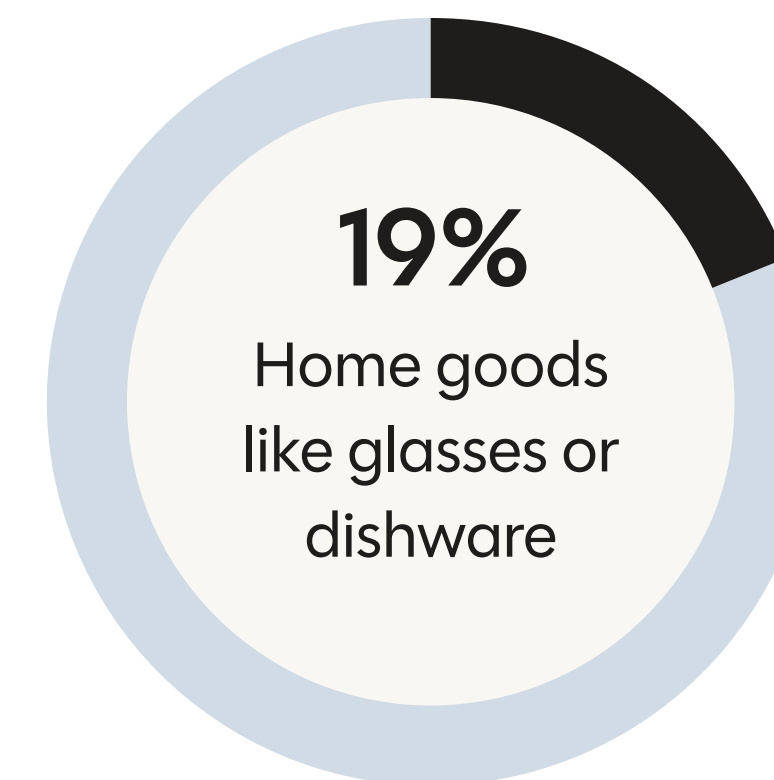
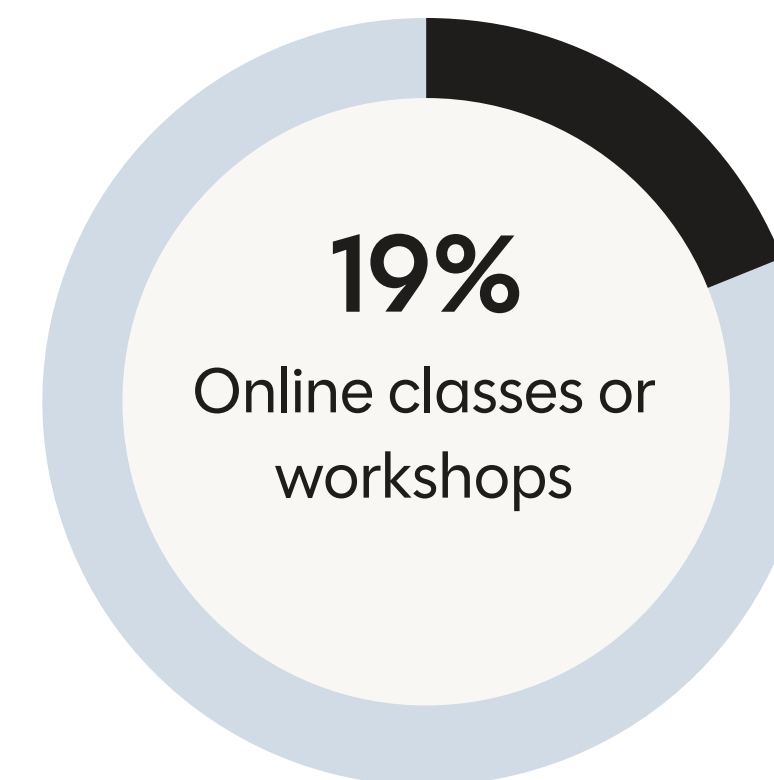
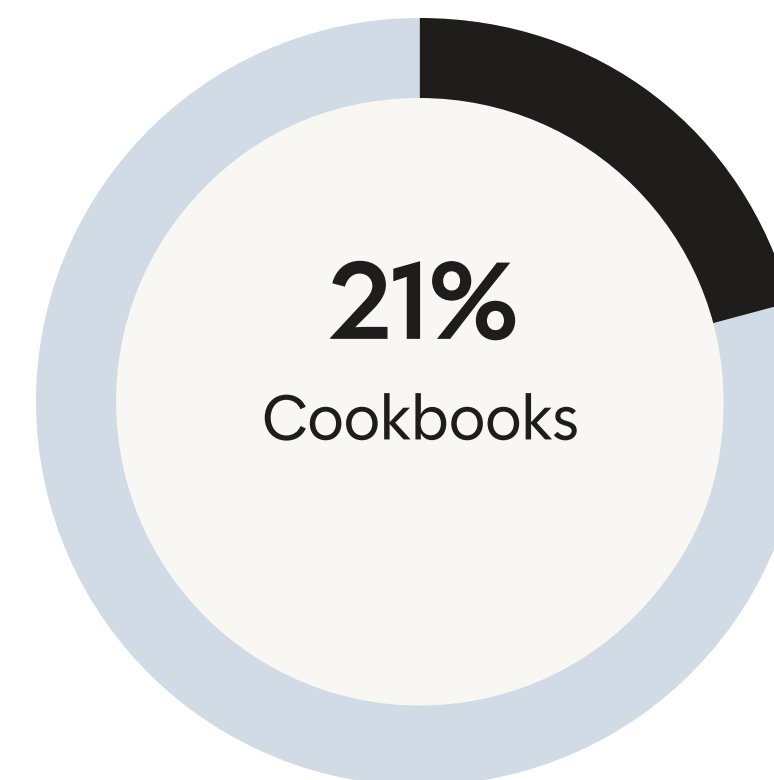
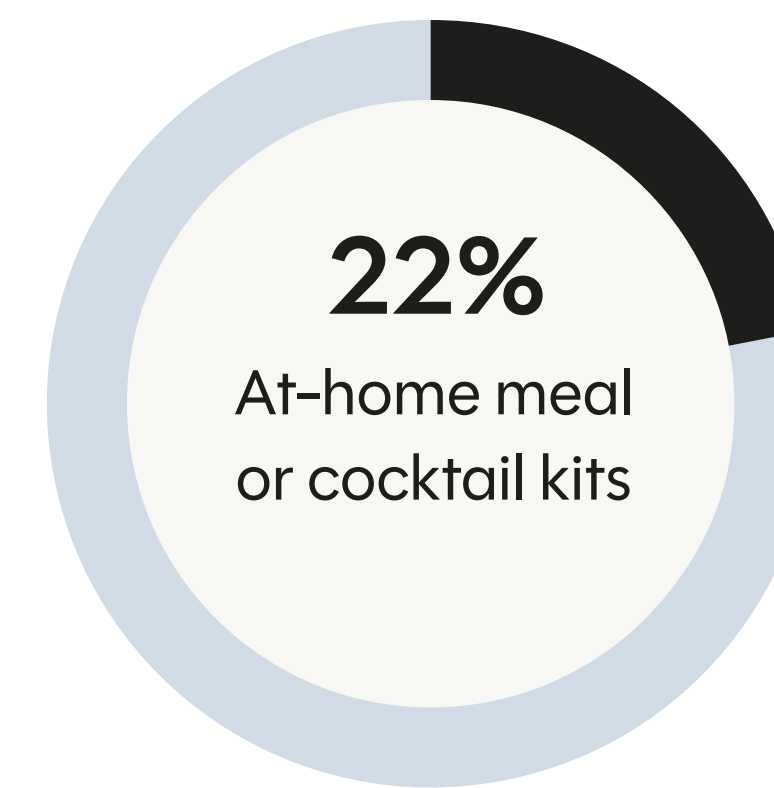
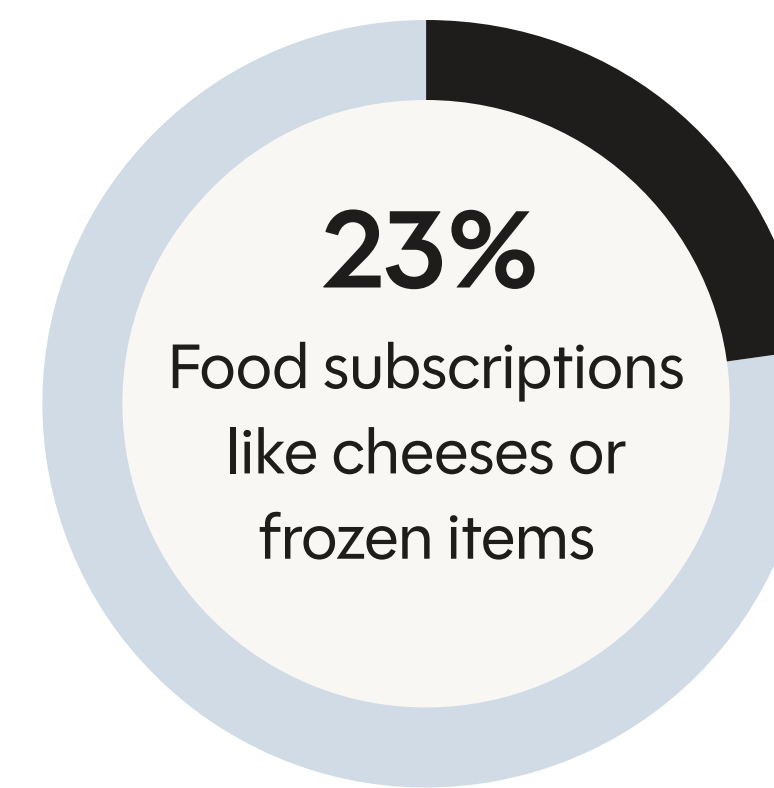
# Move over, gift cards! Consumers are hungry for more diverse offerings

Today's diners want more than just a meal—they want a piece of your brand. From cookbooks to wearables, restaurant-driven retail is on the rise.

**Women are more interested in one-time food items, and 1 in 4 men are interested in branded merch.**

Expand beyond the dining room and give guests new ways to show their love.

## Products consumers would buy from restaurants







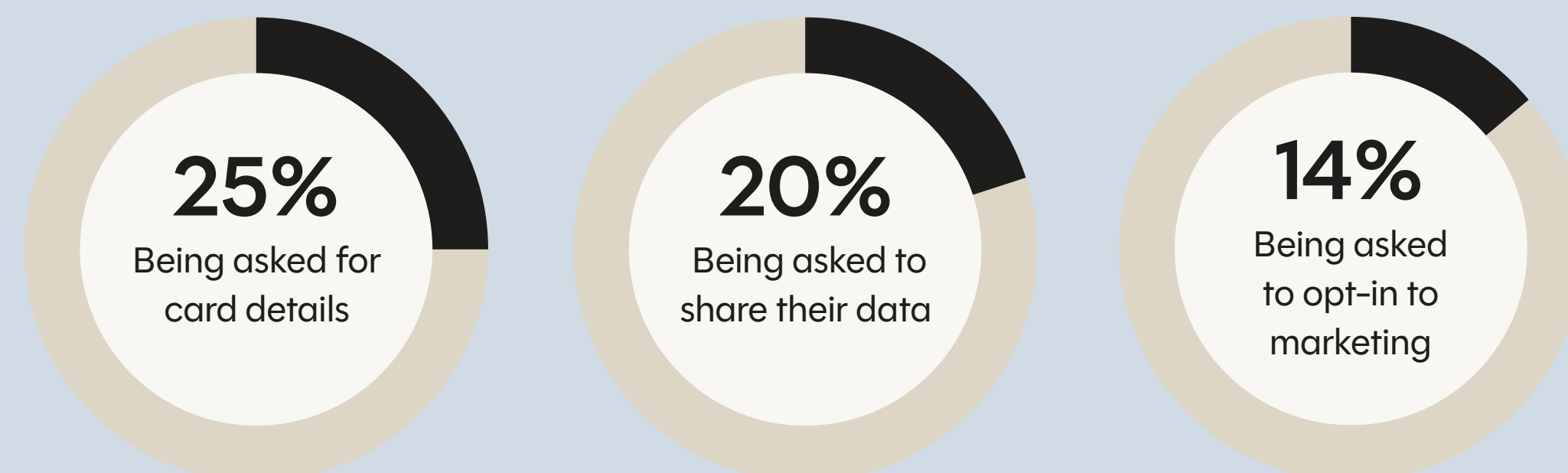
## TREND #2

# Asking diners for data and deposits isn't a dealbreaker

Our research shows that guests are not only willing to share their information with restaurants but are also open to opting into marketing, making the reservation process a key opportunity to encourage opt-ins.

At the same time, providing credit card details to secure a table or join a waitlist has become standard practice, and many diners are comfortable paying reservation deposits. These strategies help secure bookings and reduce last-minute cancellations, yet only 22% of venues on SevenRooms in the U.S. charge cancellation fees. On average, U.S. cancellation fees are \$52.

## What has recently deterred you from making a restaurant reservation?



- ☐ I agree to the Cancellation Policy ①
- ☐ I agree to the venue's required policy ①
- ☐ I certify I am above the age of 21
- ☒ Receive news and offers via email for Apples & Pears
- ☒ Receive news and offers via email for all our locations
- ☒ I agree to receive automated text messages, such as reservation reminders, at the phone number provided

**Submit**

By clicking "submit" you agree to SevenRooms' [Terms of Service](#) and [GDPR Policy](#)

For SMS, reply STOP to unsubscribe. Reply HELP for help. Message frequency varies. Message & Data rates may apply





## TREND #3

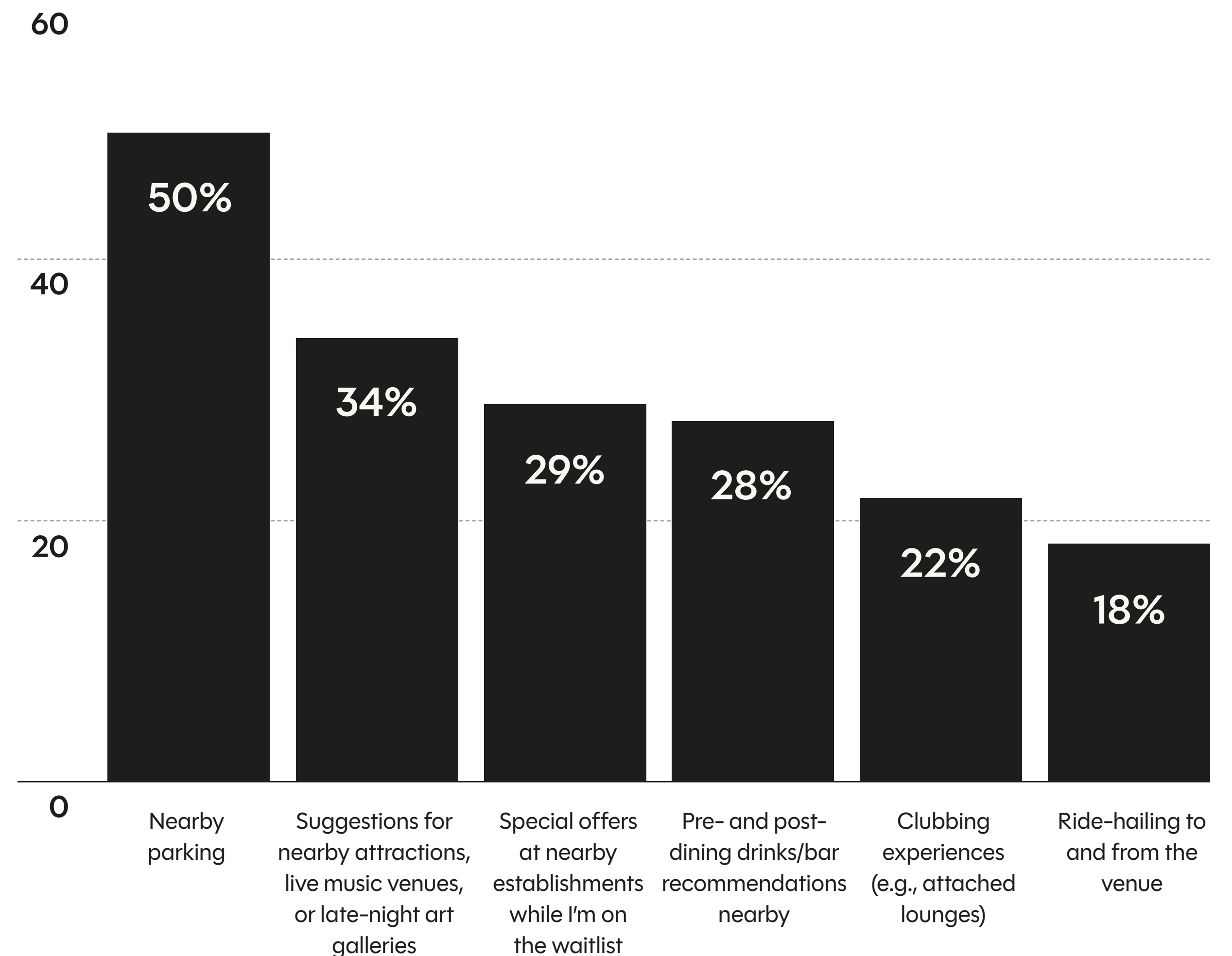
# The rise of concierge hospitality in restaurants

Consumers find thoughtful outreach pre- and post-dining valuable. They're looking for more holistic, curated dining experiences than just brunch or dinner alone—they want to 'make a night of it'.

Try partnering with other brands and offering thoughtful recommendations as a way to grow within your local community.

And consider your audience—**Gen Zers are more likely than other generations to prefer restaurants to suggest nearby attractions, live music or art galleries that align with the restaurant's vibe.**

Which restaurant services, if any, are valuable to you pre- and post-dining?







## BRAND

# A strong brand flavor fosters long-term loyalty

It's more important than ever for restaurants to lean into strong brand positioning to build deeper connections and speak to what their audience wants.







# Trust wins tables: why brand equity matters

Brand equity drives decisions—57% of consumers seek out brands they know and trust.

To stay relevant and build loyalty, restaurants must continuously analyze customer behavior, sentiment and interests, refining their brand to attract the right guests.

“For us, it’s not just about sharing a photo or product online, but the authentic storytelling of the experience, and how to circulate it on channels that are going to most resonate with the guests that we want in our restaurant.”

Kayla Bolyai

Marketing Director, Altamarea Group



ALTAMAREA  
GROUP





## TREND #1

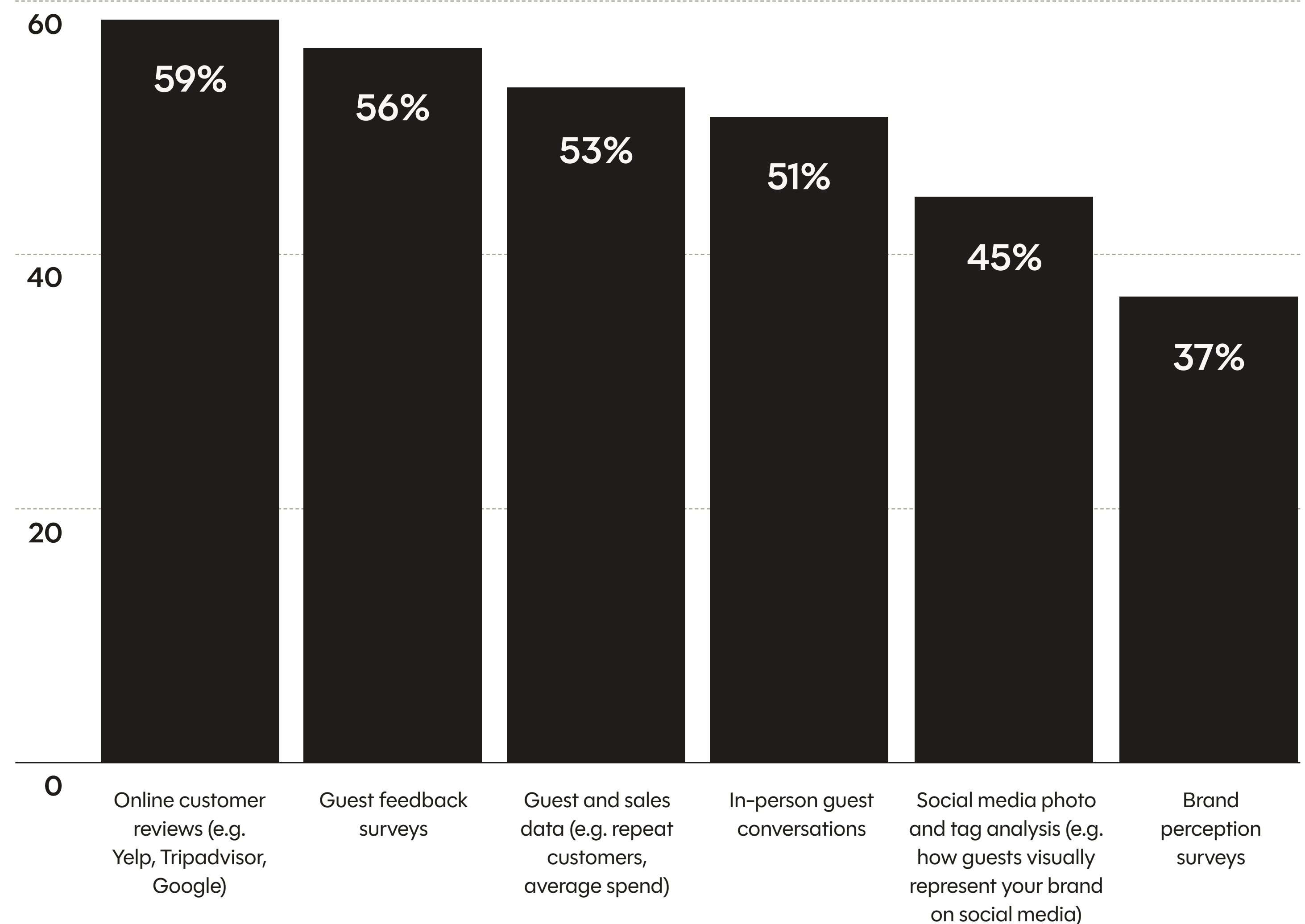
# Restaurants are over-reliant on reviews

Around half of operators (49%) use online reviews to determine their ideal guests. And **59% use reviews to evaluate guests' perception of their brand**. Reviews, though, can be skewed or fake, and often only represent a sample of your audience.

Smart tools like automated reputation management help restaurants proactively collect guest feedback, helping them understand guest sentiment in their dining rooms to inform and enhance dining experiences.

This feedback is then combined with guest data from sources like your CRM, point of sale (POS) system and social media to keep a more accurate pulse on who your guests are, and what they think of your brand.

How, if at all, does your organization evaluate your guests' perception of your brand?







## TREND #2

# Top-notch restaurant vibes bring in younger consumers and keep guests coming back

More than 1 in 3 consumers (35%) connect with restaurants through design and atmosphere.

For Gen Zers it's all about the vibe, with recent research showing that visually appealing spaces drive satisfaction and repeat visits.

A strong, on-brand aesthetic isn't just social media bait—it enhances the in-service experience and increases retention.

LDV Hospitality brands each have a signature guest experience that matches the setting



[Dolce Italian, Miami](#)



[Scarpetta, NYC](#)





## LABOR

# AI is serving up smoother restaurant operations

When AI takes over the heavy lifting, restaurants can deliver better experiences, with most operators already seeing the benefits of using AI in their operations.







# If restaurants haven't jumped on the AI train, they're behind

Hospitality operating expenses have skyrocketed in recent years, forcing restaurants to raise menu prices by upwards of 25% and reduce labor costs to stay afloat.

AI offers a lifeline, helping operators streamline manual tasks, cut costs and optimize efficiency in an era of rising expenses and shrinking margins.



**79%**  
**of operators**

are already using AI,  
up 9 percentage points  
since 2024



**99%**  
**of operators**

using AI have already  
seen benefits



Write a message to Jack Dylan  
thanking him for his recent visit.



Hi Jack 🖐️  
I just wanted to thank you  
for visiting us last night. I trust your  
meal lived up to expectations.  
We hope to see you and your wife  
very soon.



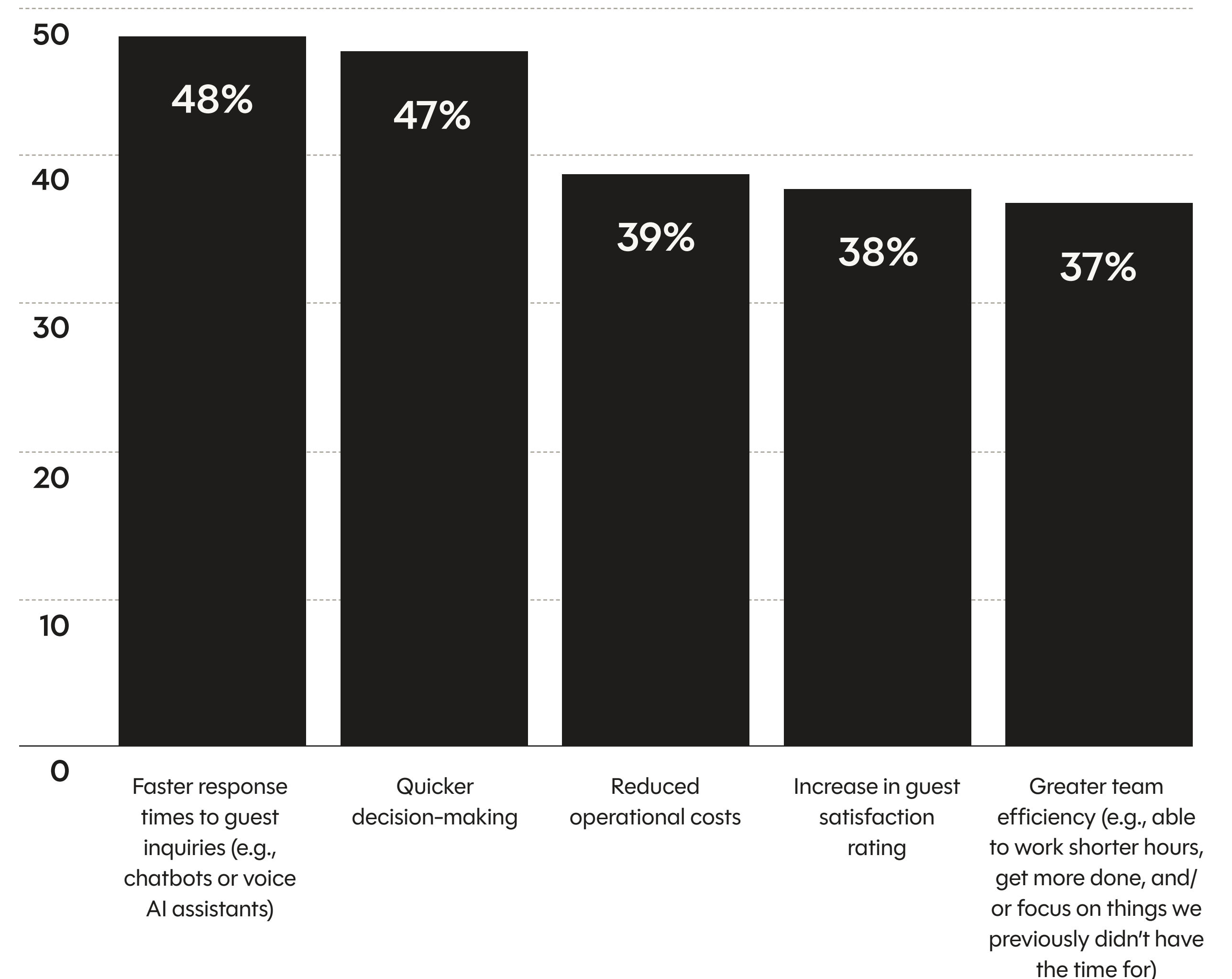


## TREND #1

# The data's in— AI improves guest satisfaction and streamlines operations

Top areas operators are seeing benefits from AI are faster response times, quicker decision making and reduced operational costs.

What benefits, if any, has your organization already seen from using AI?







## AI speeds up review management and customer service workflows

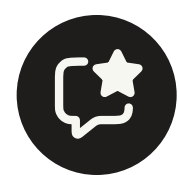
According to SevenRooms operator data, customers get faster responses from restaurants using AI.



### 27% decrease

in time to respond to guest messages including emails, SMS and reviews\*

February 2024 - November 2024



### 35% increase

in the number of responses to reviews from the restaurant\*

February 2024 - November 2024



### 50% increase

in the number of messages written and sent in 60 seconds or less\*

October 2024 - December 2024

\*Global data

“SevenRooms AI has offered a highly efficient and effective way to respond to reviews. It changed responding to multiple reviews from a 30-minute task to a 5-minute task, creating more time to focus on remedying “Guest Low Lights” and our in-person presence.”

Chloe Zachary

Manager, Innovative Dining Group







TREND #2

# By delegating manual tasks to AI, operators can focus more on the art of hospitality



**28% of operators**

Use AI for customer service and phones



**28% of operators**

Use AI for revenue management



**27% of operators**

Use AI for staff hiring and training



**21% of operators**

Use AI for dynamic pricing



**HOT TIP**

Top areas to invest in AI & Automation

For operators looking to get started using AI, top investment areas include: guest feedback summaries/responses, reservation and table management, voice AI, automated booking confirmations and guest profile building.

## Where consumers are comfortable with AI handling restaurant communication

Communication to the restaurant that they're running late and ensuring they don't lose their table

**36%**

Booking or modifying a reservation for them over web chat or text message

**36%**

Booking or modifying a reservation for them over the phone

**33%**

Booking or modifying a reservation for them over email

**32%**

Conveying reservation needs (e.g., dietaries, accessibility needs, highchairs, etc.)

**27%**

Processing payment-related requests for them (e.g., I'd like to purchase a celebration cake for my reservation)

**26%**

0 10 20 30 40



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# Making hospitality SuperHuman

Join 13,000+ global restaurants that trust SevenRooms

By embracing tech, AI and automation to enhance—not replace—human connection, restaurants can scale high-touch experiences, deepen guest relationships and drive long-term success.

SevenRooms' automated CRM, Marketing and Operations platform is powering this transformation, helping restaurants streamline operations, increase revenue, delight guests and keep them coming back.

[GET A DEMO](#)



# Research methodology

## U.S. CONSUMERS

SevenRooms partnered with Censuswide Research—a third-party, professional research and consulting organization. Total sample size was 1,000 U.S. consumers. Fieldwork was undertaken between December 12, 2024-January 6, 2025. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all U.S. adults (aged 16+).

## U.S. OPERATORS

SevenRooms partnered with Censuswide Research—a third-party, professional research and consulting organization. Total sample size was 257 U.S. operators (hospitality decision-makers). Fieldwork was undertaken between December 24, 2024-January 15, 2025. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of U.S. hospitality operators.

## SEVENROOMS PLATFORM DATA

Anonymized internal data representative of U.S. and globally-based restaurants using the SevenRooms platform from January 2024-December 2024.

\*Unless otherwise indicated, all statistics reflect the survey results collected by SevenRooms.

Report created in collaboration with Datalily.  
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