

A man and a woman are seated at a wooden table in a restaurant. The woman, on the right, is wearing a white shirt and a flower headband, and is feeding the man with a fork. The man, on the left, is wearing a light blue shirt and is looking at the woman. The background shows a bar with various bottles and glasses. The text 'provoke insights' is overlaid on the image in a light blue color. A horizontal line is positioned below the word 'insights'.

provoke insights

Restaurants: Trends
Spring 2022



Background & Objectives

In today's increasingly digital world, it has become easier for brands to increase consumers' awareness. However, this is useless without loyal customers.

Understanding brand loyalty and the consumer mindset is vital in helping brands manage and grow in today's ever-changing markets.

Provoke Insights, a full-service market research firm specializing in branding, advertising, and content marketing initiatives, launched a new bi-annual trends study to answer these pressing questions.

The goal of this research is to gain a national perspective on the mindset of consumers and their loyalty to brands. The study covers multiple industries, including restaurants.



Methodology

Provoke Insights conducted a 15-minute survey among 1,500 Americans between the ages of 21 and 65. The study was in-field from March 1st to March 10th, 2022.

A random stratified sample methodology was used to ensure a high degree of representation of the U.S. population (household income, age, gender, geography, ethnicity, and children in the household).¹

Results based on this sample have a maximum margin of sampling error of $\pm 2.5\%$ at a 95% confidence level.

Statistical differences between subgroups indicated in this report were tested at a 95% confidence level.

Overview



Concern for eating out is fading

Americans are growing less concerned about eating out compared to the start of the pandemic. However, almost one-third still have apprehensions about going to a restaurant.



Eating Habits are Shifting

Consumers have altered their dining habits since the start of the pandemic. This includes one-fifth of diners who are overall eating out less. Millennials, however, are now eating out more than pre-pandemic.



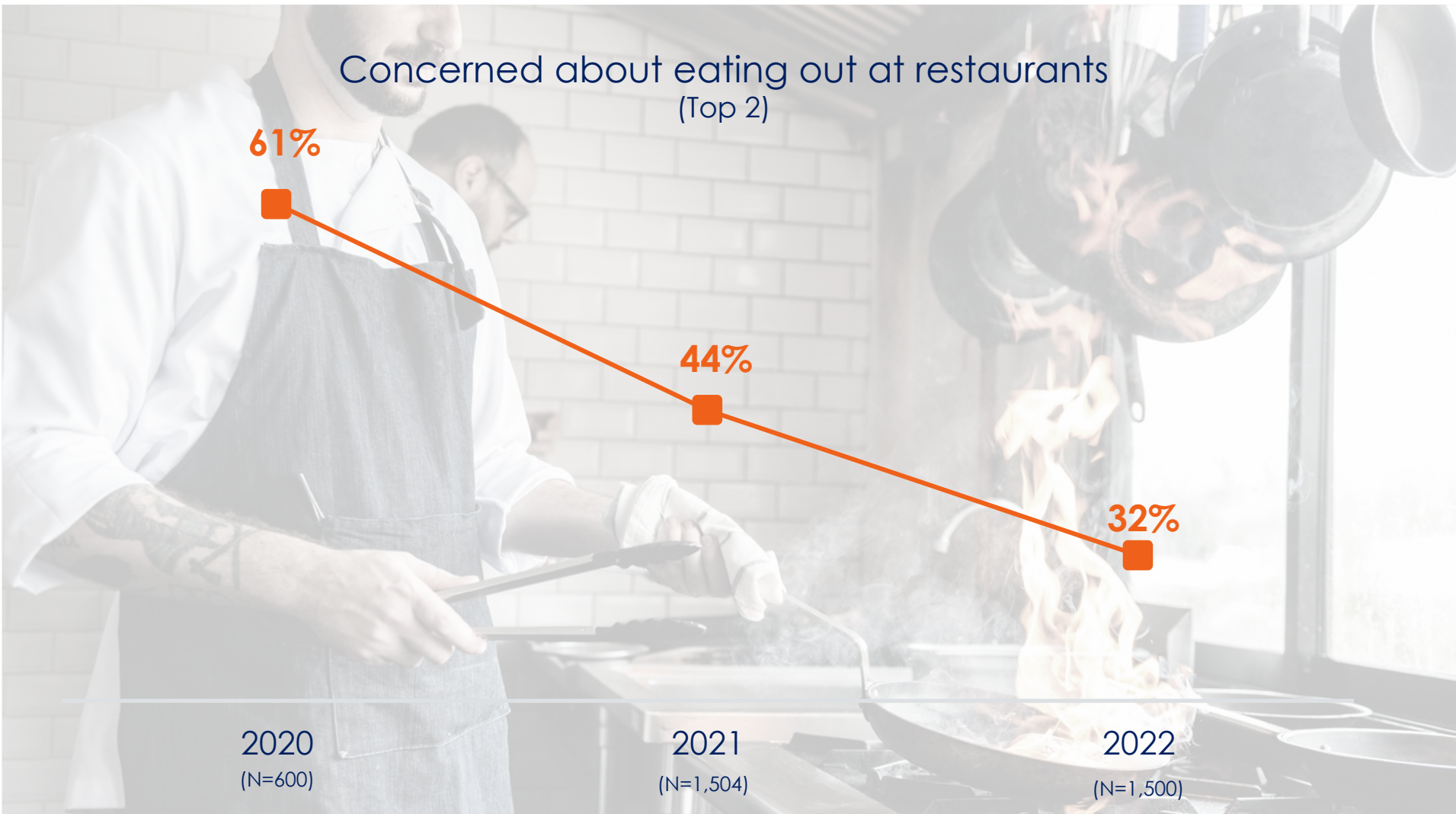
Restaurant Preferences & Perceptions

Fast food restaurants have gained popularity since the start of the pandemic, with two-thirds of consumers eating at these establishments the same or more than before. The popularity of these restaurants may have to do with the fact that fast-food restaurants often have a drive-thru option.

Americans have seen the impact of inflation. One-fifth of consumers rate menu price as poor. Menu cost is seen as a detractor for those living in rural areas, Asians, and the unvaccinated.

Concern For Eating Out Is Decreasing

Fewer Americans are concerned about eating out compared the start of the pandemic. Only one-third are still apprehensive about dining at a restaurant.



A close-up photograph of a person's hands using a knife and fork to eat a salad on a white plate. The person is wearing a light-colored sweater. The background is blurred, showing a table with a patterned tablecloth.

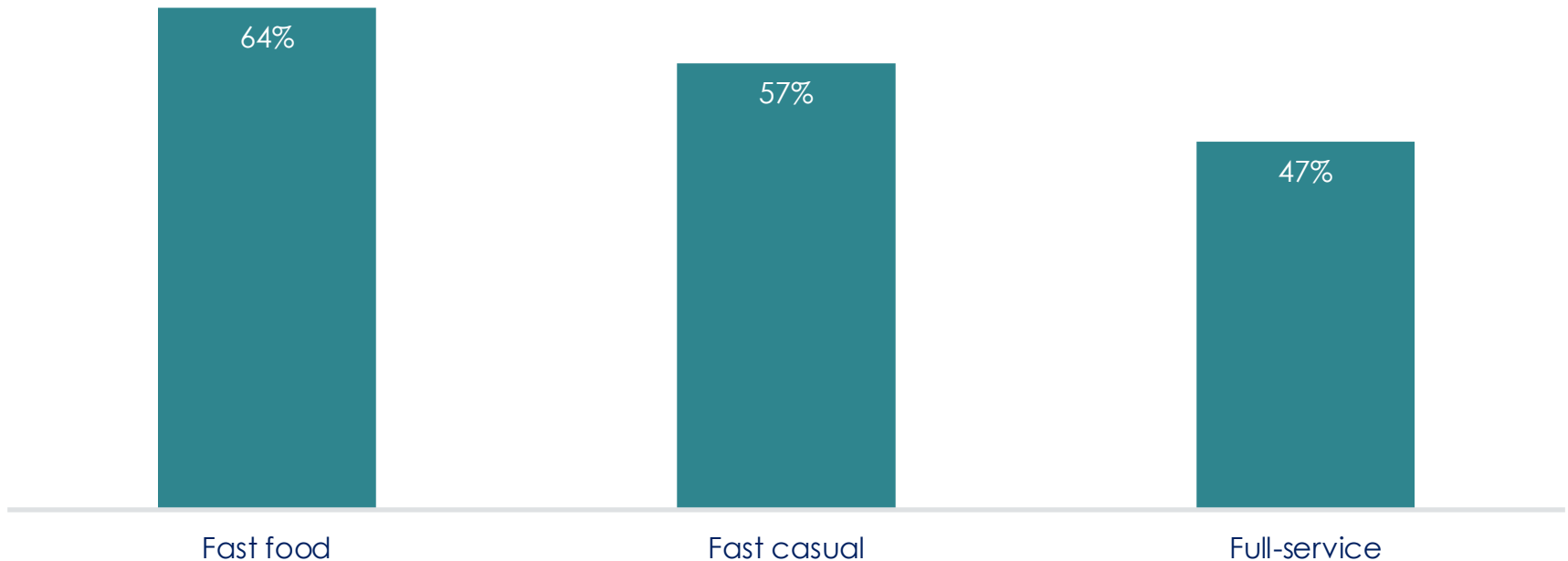
Shifting Habits

78% of consumers report a change in their dining out habits compared to before the pandemic. This includes **21%** who are eating out less often than before.

Fast Food Demand is Growing

Fast food has gained popularity since the start of the pandemic, with two-thirds of consumers eating at these establishments the same or more than before.

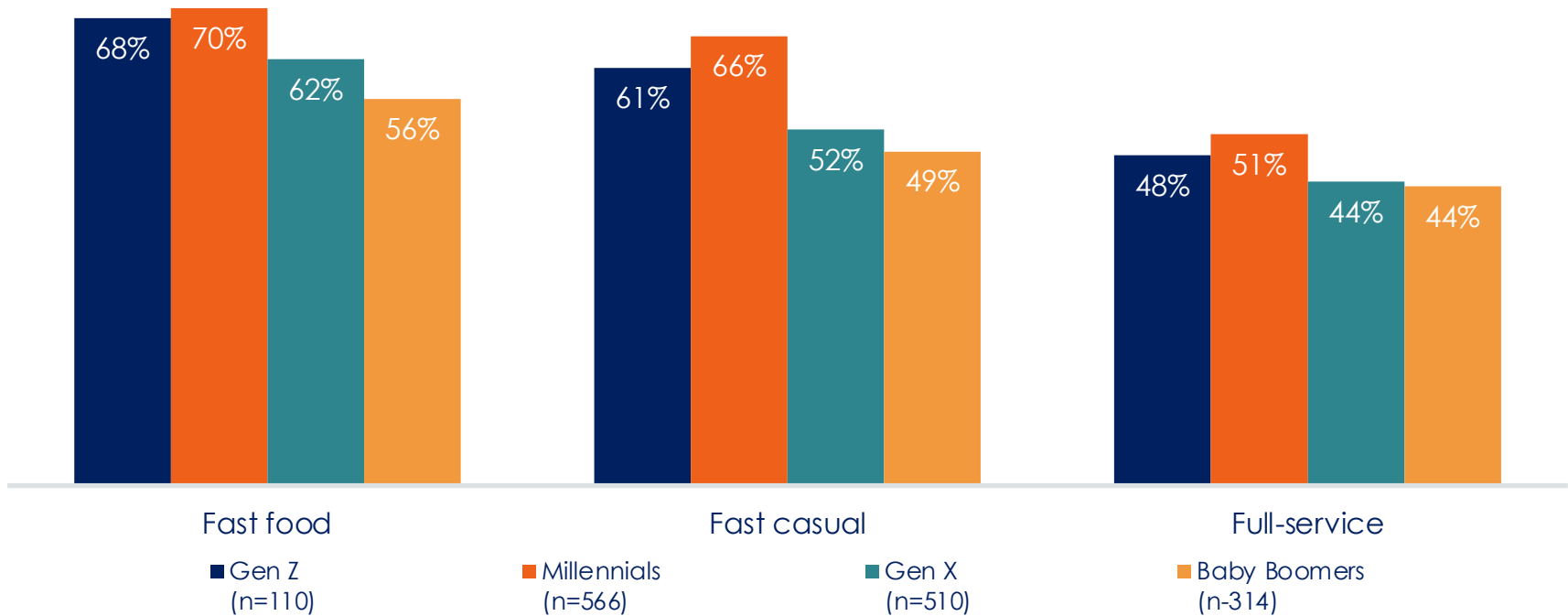
Eating Out More Or The Same As Pre-pandemic
(Top 3)



Younger Americans are Eating Out More

Millennials are more likely to be dining at a variety of restaurants.

Eating Out More Or The Same As Pre-pandemic
(Top 3)



Menu Pricing

One-fifth of consumers are unhappy with menu pricing at restaurants. Republicans and people who live in rural areas are more likely to share this sentiment.



People who rate menu pricing poorly are more likely to have these characteristics:



Rural (25%)



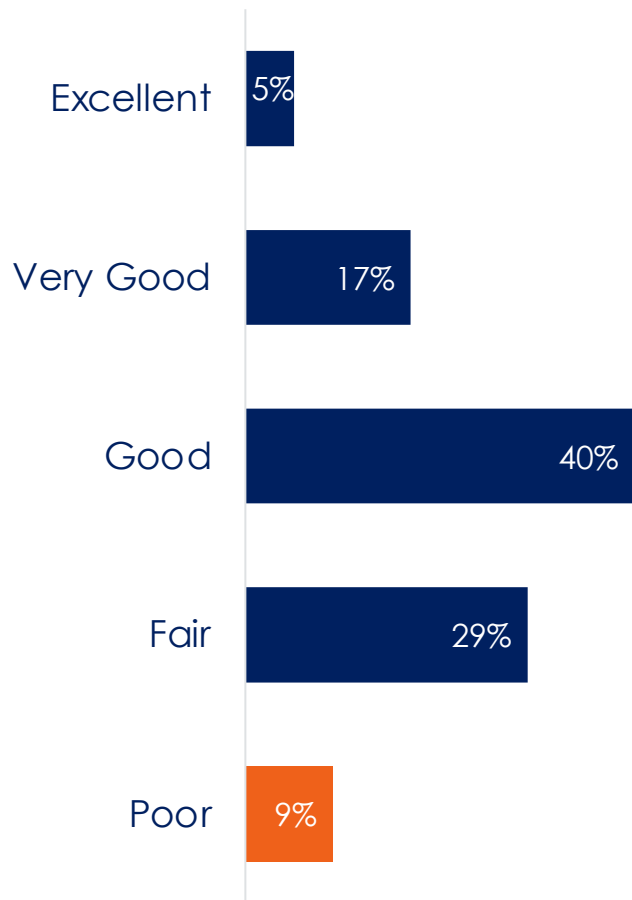
Asian (24%)



Republican (23%)

Customer Service

While most Americans are satisfied with customer service at restaurants, unvaccinated and rural consumers are the most likely to report this area needs improvement.



People who rate customer service poorly are more likely to have these characteristics:



Not vaccinated (12%)



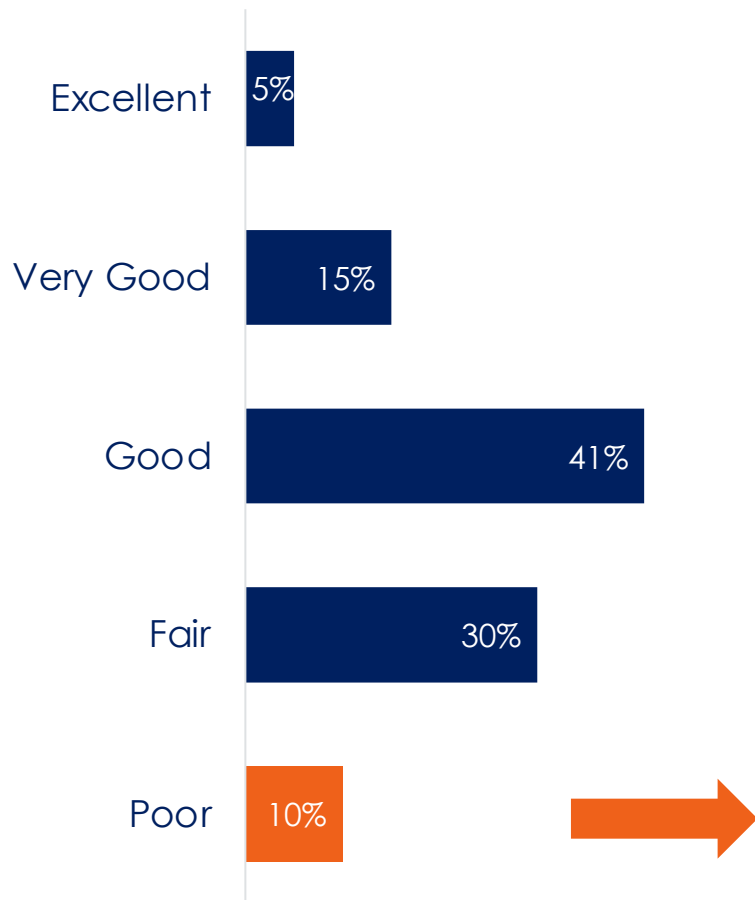
Rural (12%)



Republican (11%)

Menu Item Availability

Most consumers say that menu items are available at restaurants. The unvaccinated and those living in rural areas are more likely to say menu availability is not meeting their standards.



People who rate menu item availability poorly are more likely to have these characteristics:



Not Vaccinated (14%)



Rural (14%)

Respondent Overview

Gender



53%
Female



47%
Male

Generation

44 years old
Average Age



Z

7% Gen Z

X

34% Gen X

M

38% Millennials

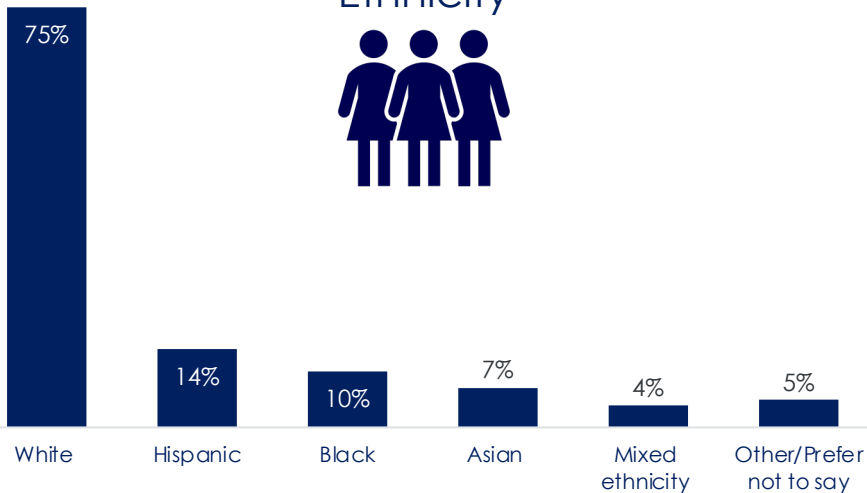
B

21% Baby Boomers

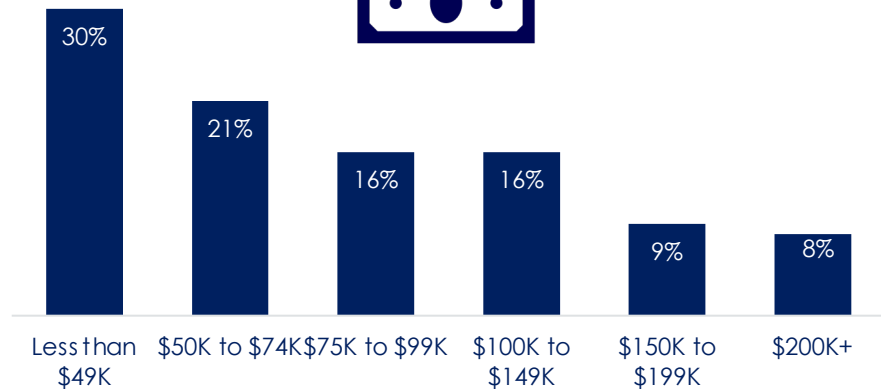
Parental Status



Ethnicity



Household Income



About Provoke Insights



Founded on the premise that research should better align with marketers' needs, Provoke Insights empowers brands to navigate through today's cluttered advertising space. This full-service market research firm solely focuses on research for **branding, advertising, and content marketing** initiatives.

At Provoke Insights, you work with a research expert who is also a seasoned brand strategist; this ensures that questions are deeply explored, and insights are cultivated and capitalized. We develop insights from the data to help guide growth for your company's vision.

For more information or press inquiries, reach out to breeda@provokeinsights.com.