



# provoke insights

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Restaurants  
Consumer Trends  
Winter 2023

# Background & Objectives

## Overview

Provoke Insights, a leader in research for branding, advertising, media, and content marketing initiatives, conducts a bi-annual consumer trends study to keep a pulse on the market across multiple industries. The extensive study allows Provoke Insights to stay ahead of the trends and understand consumer mindset in the current moment.

## Winter 2023 Wave

Three years since Covid, fears of the pandemic have decreased, but consumers have other growing concerns, from inflation to the economy. Provoke Insights wants to understand how these new issues impact consumers' buying behavior. In this wave, Provoke Insights dives deep to understand how these new issues have impacted category buying behavior.

This deck focuses on the restaurant industry.

## Methodology

Provoke Insights conducted a 15-minute survey among 1,500 Americans between the ages of 21 and 65. The study was in-field in Autumn 2022.

A random stratified sample was used followed by weighting to ensure a high degree of representation of the U.S. population (household income, age, gender, geography, ethnicity, and children in the household).<sup>1</sup>

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



## Current State of the Market

Consumers fear their financial future as the economy and inflation are major concerns. They are experiencing price increases first-hand, particularly at supermarkets and restaurants. As a result, budgets are tightening. Eating more at home is the number one way consumers are trying to save.



## Inflation & Its Impact on the Restaurant Industry

The prices of items on the menu are the highest area of dissatisfaction when eating at a restaurant. As a result, people are eating out less often, particularly those who eat at full-service restaurants and fast casual. When dining out, most consumers watch their pennies. Selecting cheaper items on the menu to cutting out desserts and appetizers are ways that patrons save on the restaurant bill.



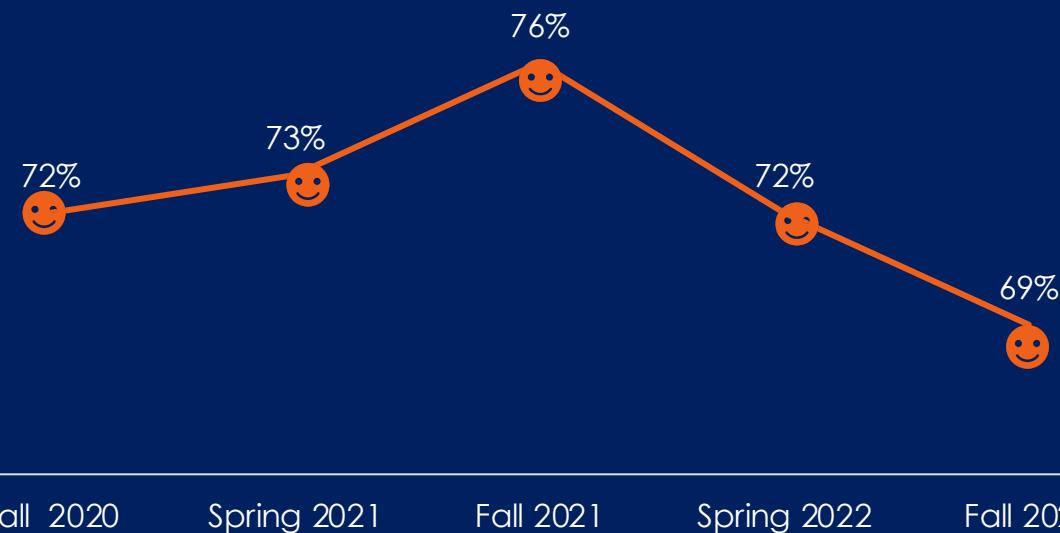
What External Trends are Impacting Brands Today?



# Consumer Optimism

*Optimism levels have declined to below where they were during the peak of the Pandemic.*

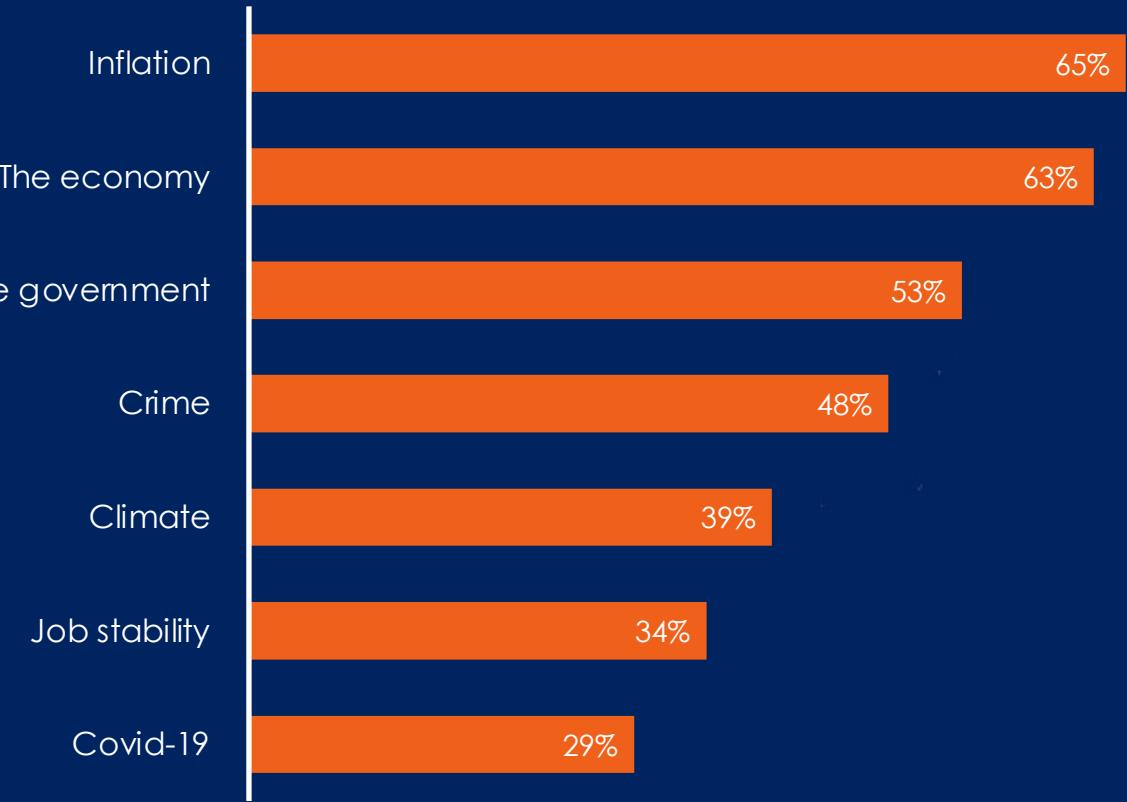
Very/Moderately Optimistic



# Top Concerns Impacting Consumers

*Inflation and the economy are major issues for most Americans.  
Job stability and Covid-19 are not key worry areas.*

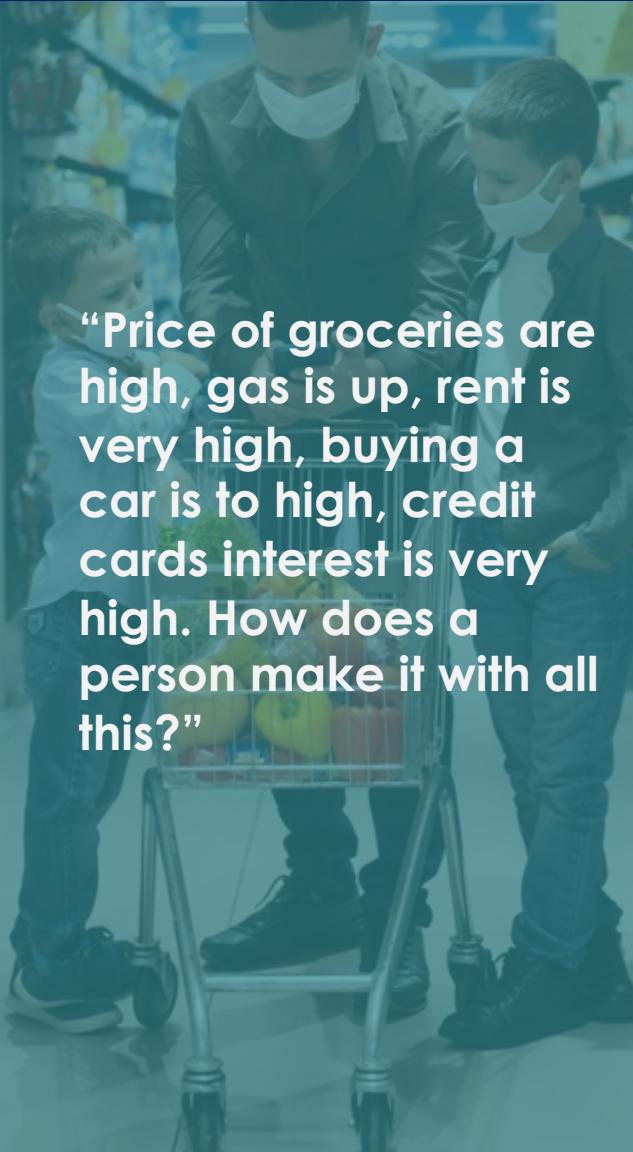
## Extremely/Very Concerned



# Optimism Will Grow As The Economy Improves



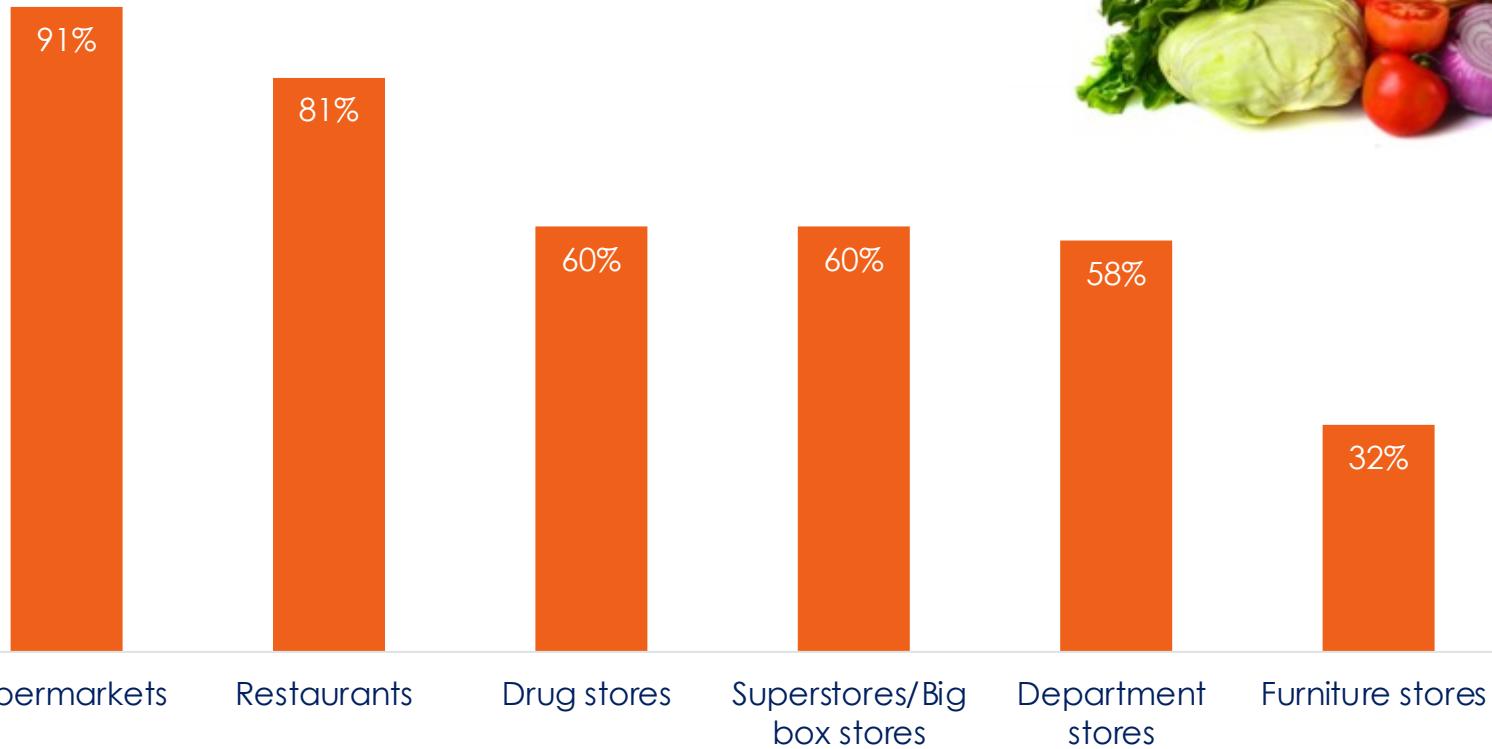
**“I’ll be more optimistic when inflation is finally curbed, and prices drop so that we all can afford to purchase the things we need instead of doing without to make ends meet.”**



# Price Increases



Americans see the impact of inflation at food establishments such as supermarkets and restaurants.



Consumers are in saving-mode; using multiple techniques to reduce their spend including dining out less.



**More Budget Conscious in  
the Last 6 Months**

Base: All Qualified Respondents (N=1,500)

Q. Compared to six months ago, how budget conscious are you?

Q. In what ways are you more budget conscious?

## Top Ways They're More Budget Conscious

-  39% Eat at home
-  29% Less impulsive with purchases
-  22% Buy generic/store label brands
-  19% Use coupon
-  17% Less discretionary spending
-  15% Shop at discount store

Base: Slightly/More Budget Concern (n=1,051)



## The Dining Experience

# Dining Experiences

Americans do not rate certain aspects of the restaurant experience favorably. Prices of items on the menu are the highest area of dissatisfaction.

Rate Very Good/Excellent on a 5-Point Scale



Menu Item Availability

29%



Staffing

23%



Menu Item Price

18%



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# Frequency Dining Out Compared to Six Months Ago

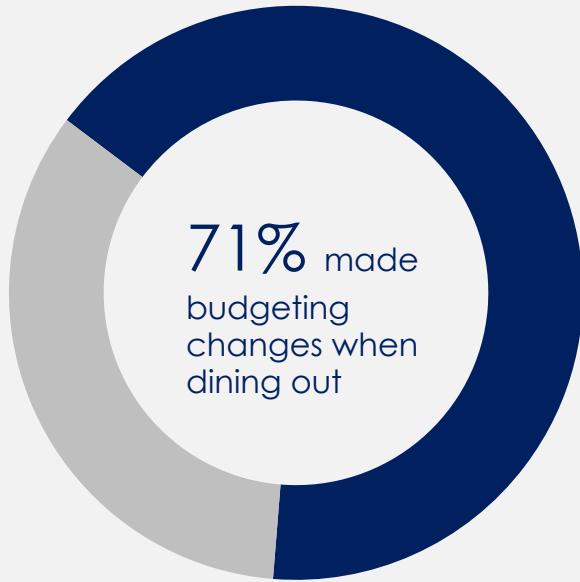
People are eating out less often, particularly those who eat at full-service restaurants.



(Top 2/Bottom 2 on a 5-Point Scale)

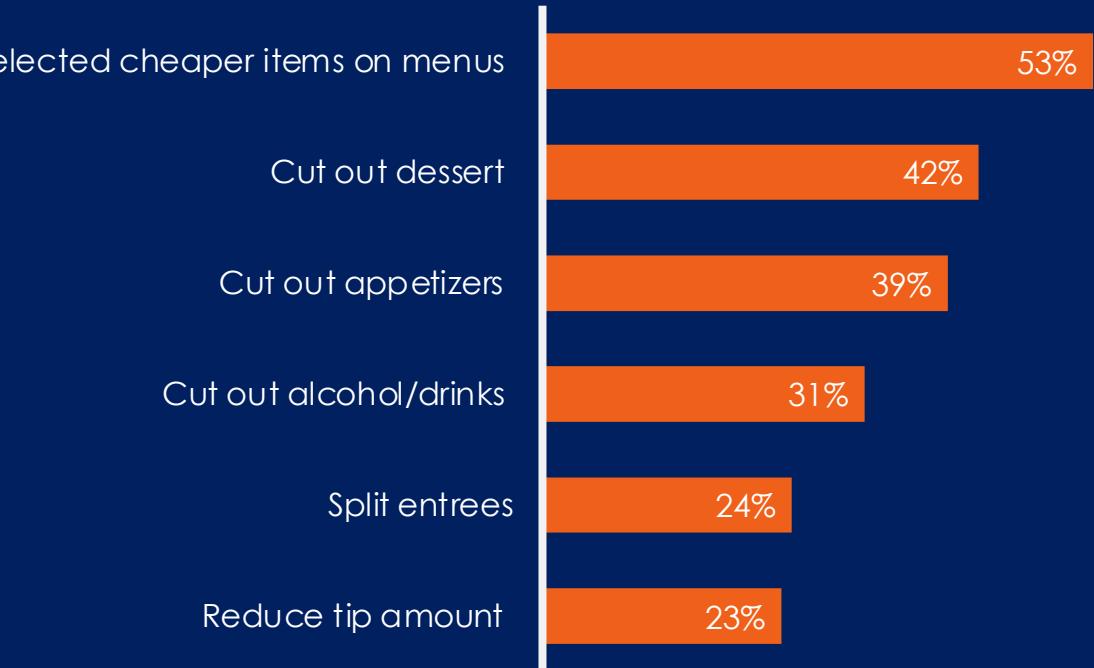
# Budgeting Changes

Patrons are watching their pennies when dining out, with over half selecting cheaper menu items.



Base Dine Out (n=1,448)

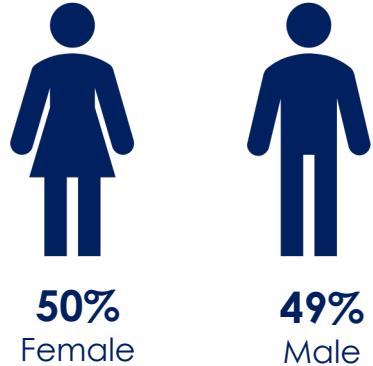
## Types of Budgeting Changes When Dining Out



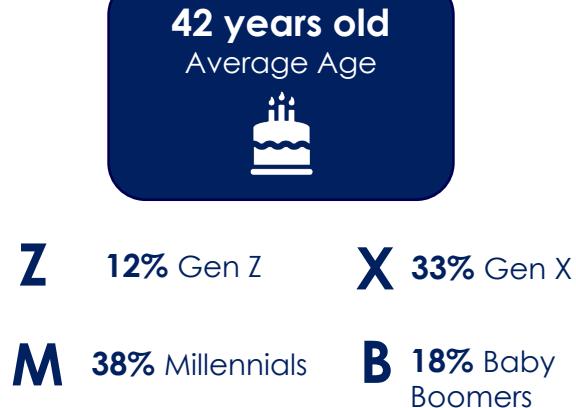
Base Made Changes when Dining Out (n=1,024)

# Respondent Overview

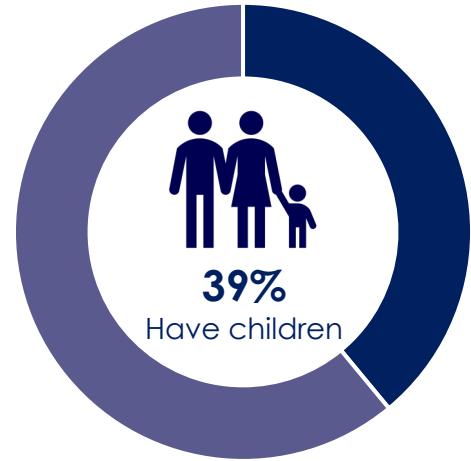
## Gender



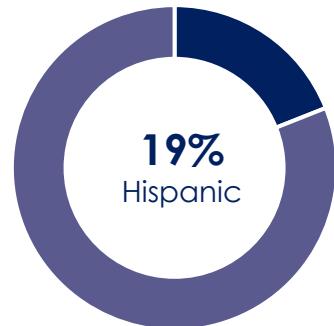
## Generation



## Parental Status



## Ethnicity



69%

14%

7%

5%

4%

White

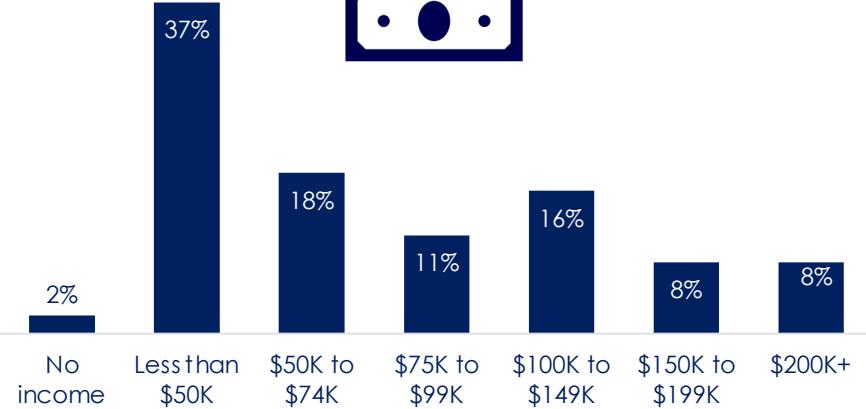
Black

Asian

Mixed ethnicity

Other/Prefer not to say

## 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 [info@provokeinsights.com](mailto:info@provokeinsights.com).