

2025

FOOD + BEVERAGE TRENDS REPORT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

03	Key Takeaways
05	Key Segments
10	Quick Service + Casual Dining
20	Spirits Industry
29	Functional Beverages
34	Consumer Preferences
50	Next Steps and Final Thoughts

FOOD + BEVERAGE 2025



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Sustainability Is Table Stakes

83% of Millennials expect brands to align with their values. Prove sustainability with real changes in sourcing, packaging, and waste—not just claims. If it's not verifiable, it's not valuable.

Consumer Trust Is Brittle—and Brand-Killing

Only 62% of consumers trust the U.S. food supply, down sharply from 70%. Transparency in labeling, safety protocols, and sourcing isn't optional. One misstep can erase brand equity overnight.

Fast Food Pricing Is Breaking Perception

47% price growth in the last decade has reshaped how consumers view quick service—80% now see it as a luxury. Value menus aren't optional; they're strategic defense against churn.

Protein Is the New Baseline Expectation

Demand for high-protein products is rising across all aisles, not just performance. Expand protein-forward options in snacks, pantry staples, and RTDs—or risk irrelevance.

**ADAPT OR GET
LEFT BEHIND**



Mobile-First E-Commerce Can't Wait

Mobile is now driving over 60% of online food sales. Optimize digital shelves and UX for mobile-first conversion—especially for impulse categories like snacks, beverages, and convenience foods.

Functional Benefits Must Be Front and Center

Consumers aren't buying food—they're buying outcomes. Reformulate and reframe products around specific health goals (gut, energy, focus). Highlight functional ingredients clearly on pack and in ads.

DTC for Spirits Outpaces Regulation

While 85% of craft spirits drinkers want direct access, only 9 states allow it. Now's the time to build a DTC playbook—so you're ready when legislation catches up.

Plant-Based Isn't Niche

With an 11.5% CAGR through 2030, plant-based is now a structural shift, not a fad. Invest in alternative proteins, dairy-free formats, and flexitarian positioning. This is about mass adoption, not vegan identity.

**BUILD FOR
HOW PEOPLE
ACTUALLY EAT**



FOOD + BEVERAGE 2025

Key Segments





LODGING + KEY SEGMENTS

THE CONFECTIONERY AND SNACKS MARKET

In 2024, the U.S. confectionery and snacks market was the top dog, raking in \$135.17 billion.

This market is a sweet and savory free-for-all, from chocolate and ice cream to cakes, cookies, crackers, and chips.

Globally, this sector is expected to grow at a 5.4% CAGR from 2018 to 2029. In 2024, the average person will put away 32.8 lbs of this stuff. Here's the kicker: consumers are ditching the old-school junk for newer, "better-for-you" options.



32.8

LBS OF CONFECTIONS AND
SNACKS PER PERSON IN 2024




THE DAIRY + EGGS MARKET

The U.S. dairy products and eggs market is a major player, estimated at \$103.93 billion last year.

This market covers a lot of ground: cow's milk, milk from other mammals, plant-based alternatives, and eggs.

Globally, this market is also expanding, with a projected 6.7% CAGR from 2018 to 2029. In 2024, the average person consumed 124 lbs of dairy products and eggs.

Digital is a major force here, with mobile online channels grabbing 39.0% of global revenue in 2023.



124.3
LBS OF DAIRY AND EGGS PER
PERSON IN 2024



THE CONVENIENCE FOODS MARKET

The U.S. convenience food market is worth \$51.3 billion in 2024. Globally, we're talking ready-to-eat meals and soups (hold the fresh salads, frozen veggies, and cut fruit).

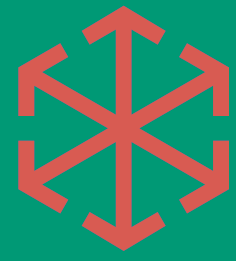
This market is on the rise, with a projected 6.5% CAGR from 2018 to 2029. For now, offline sales are king, but mobile online is coming on strong, claiming 38.0% of the market in 2023.

Bottom line: convenience sells, across the board.



45.6

**LBS OF MEAT PER
PERSON IN 2024**



MARKET OVERVIEW

GLOBAL MARKET SALES CHANNELS



Even with e-commerce growth, offline sales still dominate the global food market. In 2023, brick-and-mortar stores pulled in a massive 95.8% of all food revenue. Online? A measly 4.2%.

But, that's changing.

Online is expected to hit 6.3% by 2028. And within online, mobile is the alpha, driving 61.4% of online food sales in 2023.



FOOD + BEVERAGE 2025

Quick Service and Casual Dining





Consumer behavior trends impacting the industry include an increased need for convenience, a rising tendency towards personalization, and a rising emphasis on unique experiences.



QUICK SERVICE AND CASUAL DINING

U.S. CASUAL DINING



When it comes to casual dining in the U.S., it's cage match out there. Recently, diner loyalty has been stretched thin—no single chain managed to capture more than 20% of the market share.

However, seven chains did secure at least 10% each.

What diners are looking for is a place that's clean, quick, and affordable.



QUICK SERVICE AND CASUAL DINING

U.S. CASUAL DINING: WHAT CONSUMERS SEEK

Monthly casual dining restaurant visitors (66% of Americans) rank features they look for:

- Clean dining area (53%)
- Value / discount menu (45%)
- Short wait for table (44%)
- Open 24 hours (38%)
- Healthy menu options (35%)
- Daily specials / promotions (35%)
- Ability to easily customize menu items (33%)
- Ability to make a reservation (31%)
- Mobile ordering (28%)
- Alcohol / bar (19%)

38%

**OF MONTHLY CASUAL DINERS
SAY THAT BEING OPEN 24 HOURS
IS A DRAW FOR THEM**



QUICK SERVICE AND CASUAL DINING

U.S. CASUAL DINING: WHAT CONSUMERS SEEK

Weekly casual dining restaurant visitors (23% of Americans) have slightly different priorities:

- Clean dining area (58%)
- Short wait for table (47%)
- Value / discount menu (41%)
- Daily specials / promotions (37%)
- Healthy menu options (33%)
- Ability to easily customize menu items (31%)
- Ability to make a reservation (27%)
- Open 24 hours (27%)
- Mobile ordering (24%)
- Kids menu (23%).



47%

**OF WEEKLY CASUAL DINERS SAY
THAT A SHORT WAIT IS A
PRIORITY FOR THEM**



QUICK SERVICE AND CASUAL DINING

FAST FOOD: GROWTH & EVOLUTION

Fast food keeps growing, to the tune of \$645.2 billion in 2024, heading to \$663.92 billion in 2025 (2.9% CAGR).

By 2029?

\$833.43 billion, driven by changing tastes, city sprawl, and the need for speed. The overall food service industry is also giving fast food a boost.

\$833.4B

VALUE OF THE FAST FOOD
MARKET BY 2029



QUICK SERVICE AND CASUAL DINING

FAST FOOD: SHAPING TRENDS

Fast food is morphing.

- Plant-based is exploding, as consumers ditch traditional meat.
- In 2022, plant-based meat and seafood hit \$6.1 billion globally (8% jump).
- Plant-based dairy? \$21.6 billion (7% jump).
- Ghost kitchens are streamlining delivery.
- Contactless is the new normal for ordering and paying.
- Customization is key, and healthier options are a must.

36%

**OF AMERICANS USE
CONTACTLESS PAYMENTS AT
QUICK SERVICE RESTAURANTS**



QUICK SERVICE AND CASUAL DINING

CASUAL DINING: BARRIERS TO VISITATION

- 63% of casual diners find high prices off-putting.
- 58% say 'Not worth the money' is a primary reason they don't visit.
- For regulars, 73% dislike high prices, 67% don't see the value.
- 85% of casual diners visit for food quality.
- 27% would visit for healthy menu options.
- 31% of monthly customers consider healthy menu options.
- Plant-based options drive fast food market expansion, with shifting preferences towards meat substitutes.



27%

**OF FREQUENT CASUAL DINERS
CITE HEALTHY MENU OPTIONS AS
A VISITATION DRIVER**



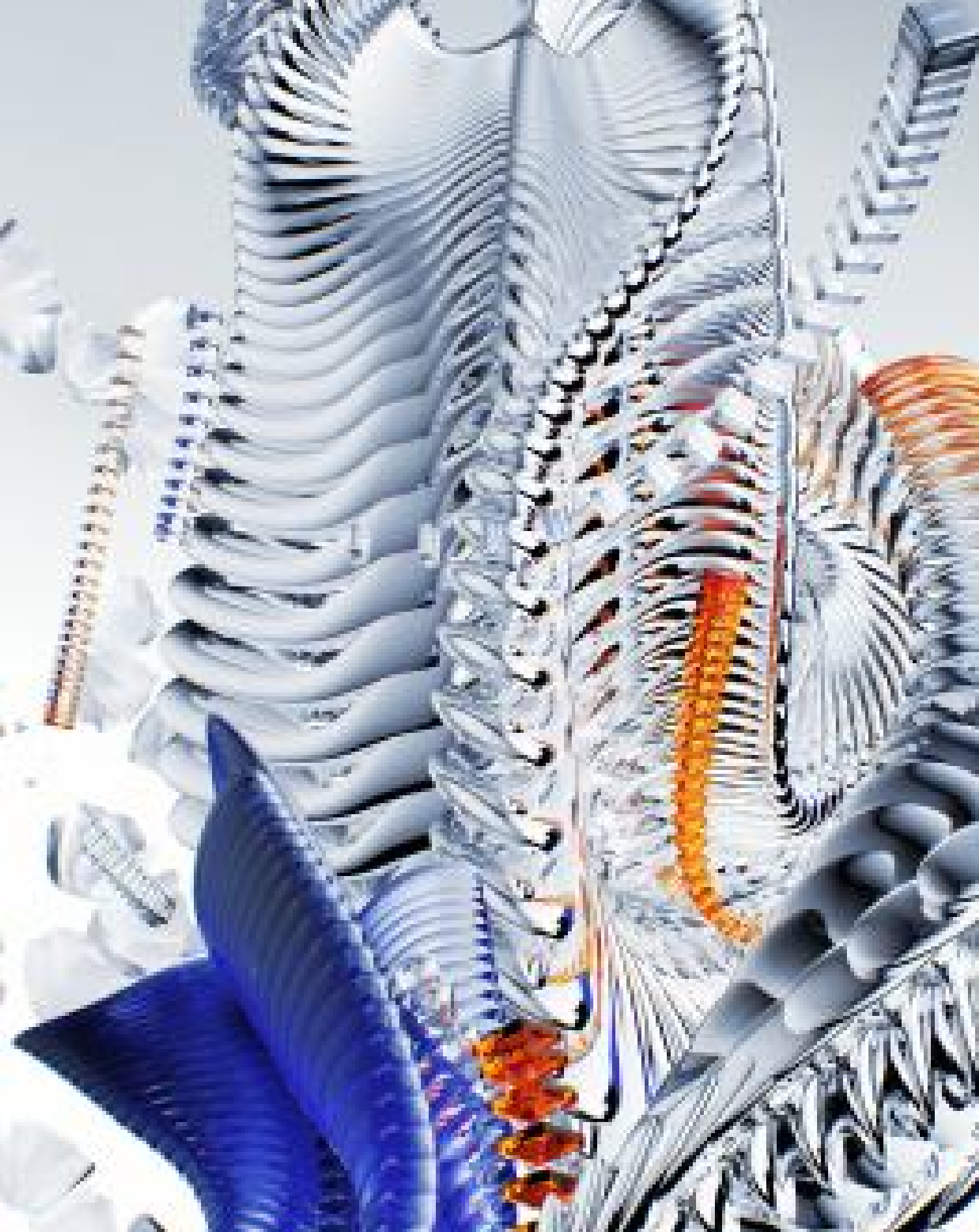
Consumers are reacting to increasing fast food prices, which have jumped 47% over the past decade.

Nearly 80% of Americans now view fast food as a luxury.



QUICK SERVICE AND CASUAL DINING

FAST FOOD: TECH AND PARTNERSHIPS



Online food delivery is shaking up fast food.

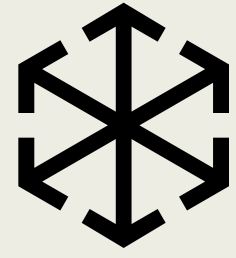
- KFC Australia is even testing drone delivery with Wing. But it's not just about how the food gets there.
- AI is taking over drive-thrus, automating voice ordering.
- CKE Restaurants Holdings is teaming up with Presto Automation, OpenCity, and Valyant AI to make ordering faster, more accurate, and more profitable.



FOOD + BEVERAGE 2025

Spirits Industry





SPIRITS INDUSTRY

THE GLOBAL SPIRITS MARKET OUTLOOK

After hitting roughly USD 797.7 billion in 2023, the forecast is rosy for the spirits industry.

We're talking potential leaps to \$874.36 billion by 2030 (CAGR 5.91%) or some projections forecasting a staggering \$1.22 trillion by 2028 (CAGR 9%).

2024 threw a curveball with a 1% dip in total beverage alcohol (TBA) volumes in key markets compared to 2023. But spirits are resilient. Volume only dipped by less than 1% in 2024—a far cry better than beer's and wine's performances.

The good news is that a comeback's on the horizon. Expect a steady +1% CAGR climb in global Total Beverage Alcohol (TBA) volume and value from 2023 to 2028.

\$1.2T

**THE GLOBAL SPIRITS INDUSTRY
COULD CREST A TRILLION
DOLLAR VALUE BY 2028.**



SPIRITS INDUSTRY

ECOMM AND DTC

Alcohol e-commerce is scaling up rapidly.

Global online alcohol sales were valued at \$24 billion in 2020 and are projected to hit \$45 billion by 2032, with a CAGR of 21.7%.

In the U.S., e-commerce is carving out a bigger slice of the beverage alcohol market. Spirits' share is set to reach 4% by 2027, as the category drives a +7% CAGR in online sales.

Direct-to-consumer (DTC) is where demand is loudest—85% of regular craft spirits drinkers want the option, and 92% say they'd buy those same brands in-store after discovering them online.

But regulation isn't keeping up. As of early 2025, only 9 states (plus D.C.) allow interstate DTC shipping of spirits—compared to 47 states for wine.

85%

**OF REGULAR CRAFT SPIRITS
DRINKERS WANT A DTC OPTION
FOR THEIR FAVORITE BRANDS.**



SPIRITS INDUSTRY

ON- AND OFF-PREMISE SALES

Spirits still sell best off the shelf. In 2023, nearly half of all U.S. spirits sales came through liquor stores, while globally, hypermarkets and supermarkets claimed a 34.8% value share. Off-premise remains the dominant channel—but the story's more complicated on-premise.

Bars and restaurants took a hit. Global on-premise spirits volume dropped 7.6% in the 12 months leading into Q1 2025. In the U.S., on-premise traffic was down 4% in late 2024. Beer fell 6%, wine dropped 5.3%, and whiskey took a sharp -6.7% hit. Tequila was the lone standout, up 6.3%.

Still, there's a faint heartbeat. Younger consumers are signaling a rebound, with rising optimism and plans to spend more on-premise in 2025.



+6.3%

BEER, WHISKEY AND WINE ARE ALL DOWN ON-PREMISE—BUT TEQUILA GREW MORE THAN SIX PERCENT IN 2024.



Low- and no-alcohol (NoLo) drinks are gaining traction as more consumers seek moderation over abstinence.

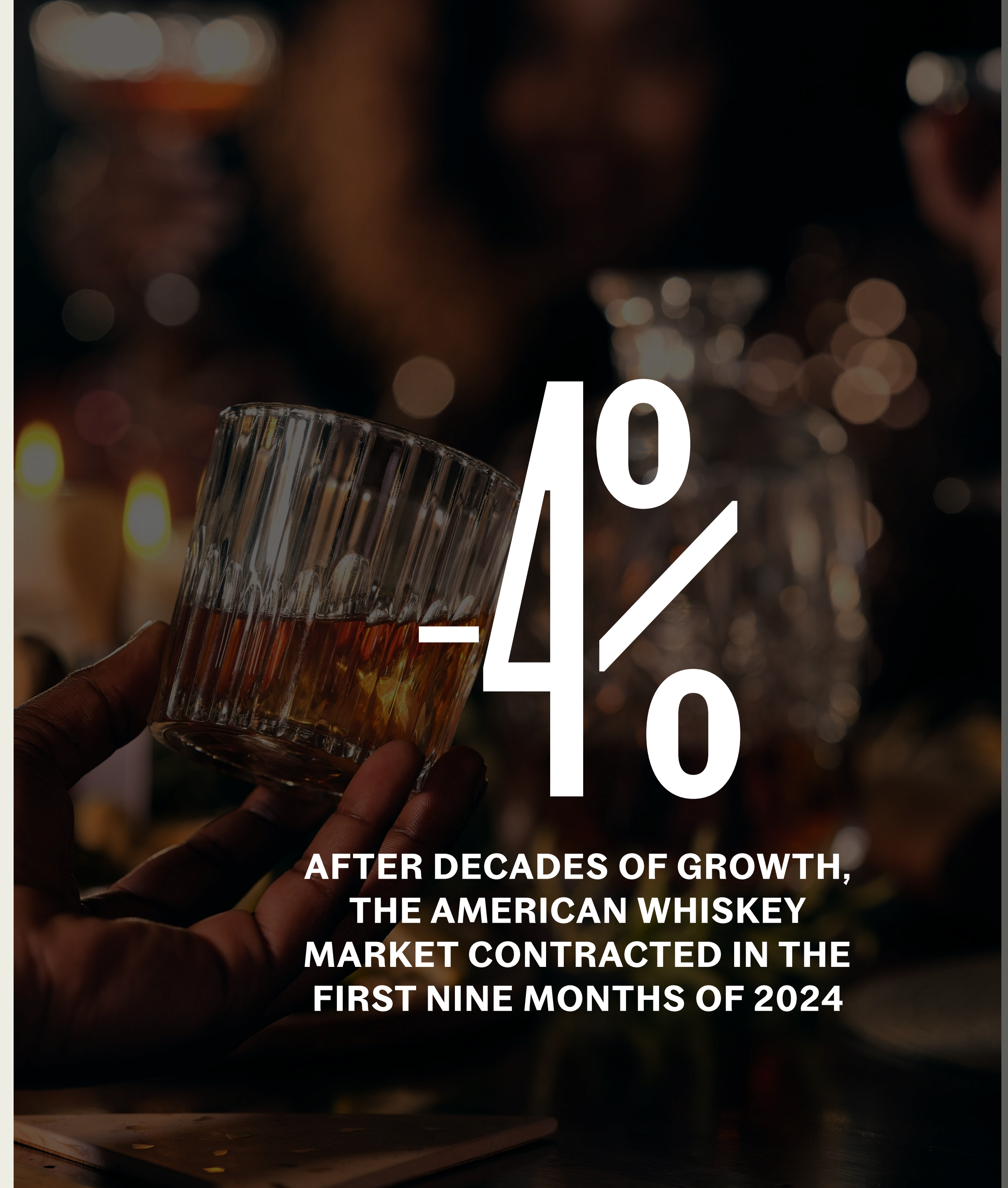


BOURBON'S FALL FROM GRACE

American whiskey is going through a tough time, especially in places like California, Florida, and Kentucky where sales are dropping.

Recent data from IWSR shows that U.S. whiskey volumes fell by 1.2% in 2023 and then by 4% in the first nine months of 2024. This is mostly because fewer people are buying the cheaper whiskeys, which are down by 8% this year, while the fancier ones are up by 6%.

It seems like some folks are splurging while others are cutting back or quitting altogether. The reasons behind this change include money troubles, less exciting new whiskeys, and too much whiskey being made.



**AFTER DECADES OF GROWTH,
THE AMERICAN WHISKEY
MARKET CONTRACTED IN THE
FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 2024**



AGAVE ASCENDENCY

Agave spirits are the standout success story in an otherwise stagnating U.S. spirits market. In 2024, Tequila and Mezcal generated \$6.7 billion in revenue—up 2.9% year-over-year. No other major category posted growth.

What's driving the surge? A sharp focus on premiumization—100% blue agave, artisanal methods, and aging tiers—is pulling consumers upmarket.

Celebrity-backed brands have amplified awareness and brought fresh attention to the category. At the same time, lifestyle marketing rooted in Mexican heritage and regions like Jalisco is creating an aspirational pull.

Tequila is also fueling innovation in the ready-to-drink space, becoming the base of choice for flavor-forward, convenience-driven RTDs.



+2.9%

**AGAVE SPIRITS ARE ON THE RISE
IN AN ERA WHERE OTHER SPIRITS
SEGMENTS ARE CONTRACTING.**



READY-TO-DRINK IS BOOMING

Ready-to-Drink (RTD) and No/Low-Alcohol (NoLo) are reshaping the beverage landscape—fast. RTDs are the fastest-growing category in the U.S., with 2024 seeing +17% volume and +16.5% revenue growth.

Globally, RTDs are set to grow at a +3% CAGR through 2028, but spirits-based RTDs in the U.S. are on an even steeper climb: +22.6% CAGR from 2025 to 2030.

At the same time, the NoLo movement is gaining serious ground. Global volumes are expected to grow +4% annually through 2028, led by the no-alcohol segment at +7% CAGR—adding over \$4 billion in value.

The breakout star? No-alcohol spirits replacements, growing +15% globally in 2023 and forecast to hit +18% CAGR in the U.S. through 2028.



22.6%

**SPIRITS-BASED RTDS IN THE U.S.
ARE PROJECTED TO GROW BY
MORE THAN 20% ANNUALLY
THROUGH 2030.**

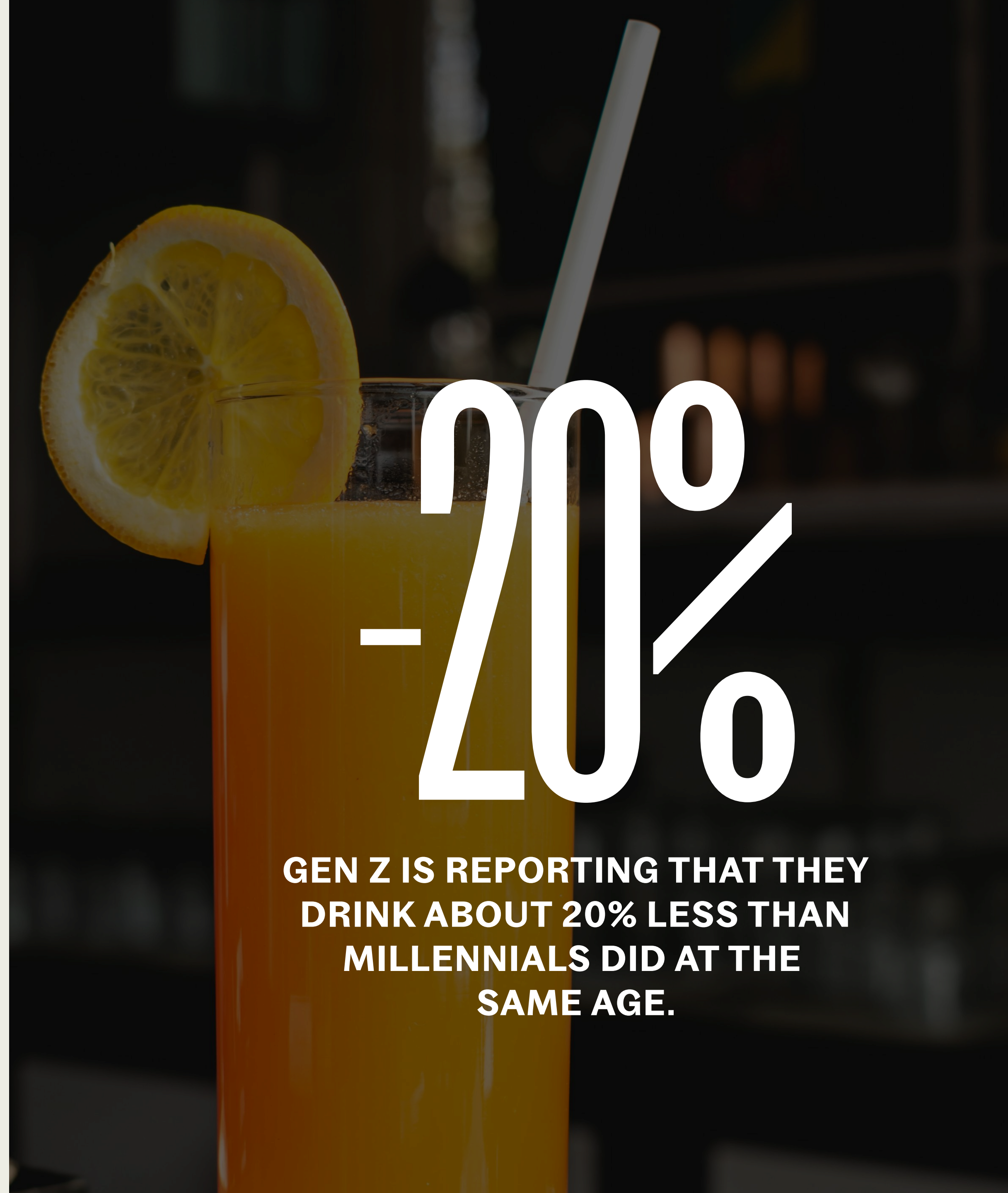


GENERATIONAL SHIFTS

Gen Z is rethinking drinking culture. They consume about 20% less alcohol than Millennials did at the same age, with a clear focus on health, authenticity, and convenience. Their choices reflect that: low/no-alcohol drinks, RTD cocktails, and clear spirits like tequila top their list.

Millennials, meanwhile, are still the engine behind premiumization. They drive demand for craft spirits, explore a wider range of drinks, and bring a “drink better, not more” mindset to both home and on-premise occasions. Peer influence and flavor experimentation remain key for this group—and they’re leading the charge in reviving on-premise drinking in the U.S.

Older generations—Gen X and Boomers—stick closer to established favorites like beer and wine. But Boomers, more than ever, are opting out entirely.



-20%

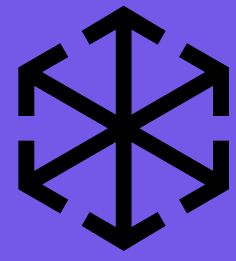
**GEN Z IS REPORTING THAT THEY
DRINK ABOUT 20% LESS THAN
MILLENNIALS DID AT THE
SAME AGE.**



FOOD + BEVERAGE 2025

Functional Beverages





FUNCTIONAL BEVERAGES

THE GLOBAL FUNCTIONAL BEVERAGE MARKET

The global functional beverage market is on a high-growth trajectory, with forecasts ranging from \$174B to over \$600B by 2030, depending on scope and definition.

Whether it's hydration with benefits or highly targeted wellness drinks, the consumer demand is clear: beverages must do more. In the U.S. alone, estimates suggest the category could hit \$80.88B by 2030.

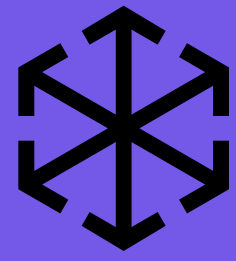
Health, convenience, and efficacy are converging, and brands that deliver on all three will lead.

Global market projections vary, but the trend is clear: explosive growth. From hydration to mental clarity, consumers are redefining what a beverage should do.



\$610B

**PROJECTED SIZE OF THE GLOBAL
FUNCTIONAL BEVERAGES
MARKET BY 2030.**



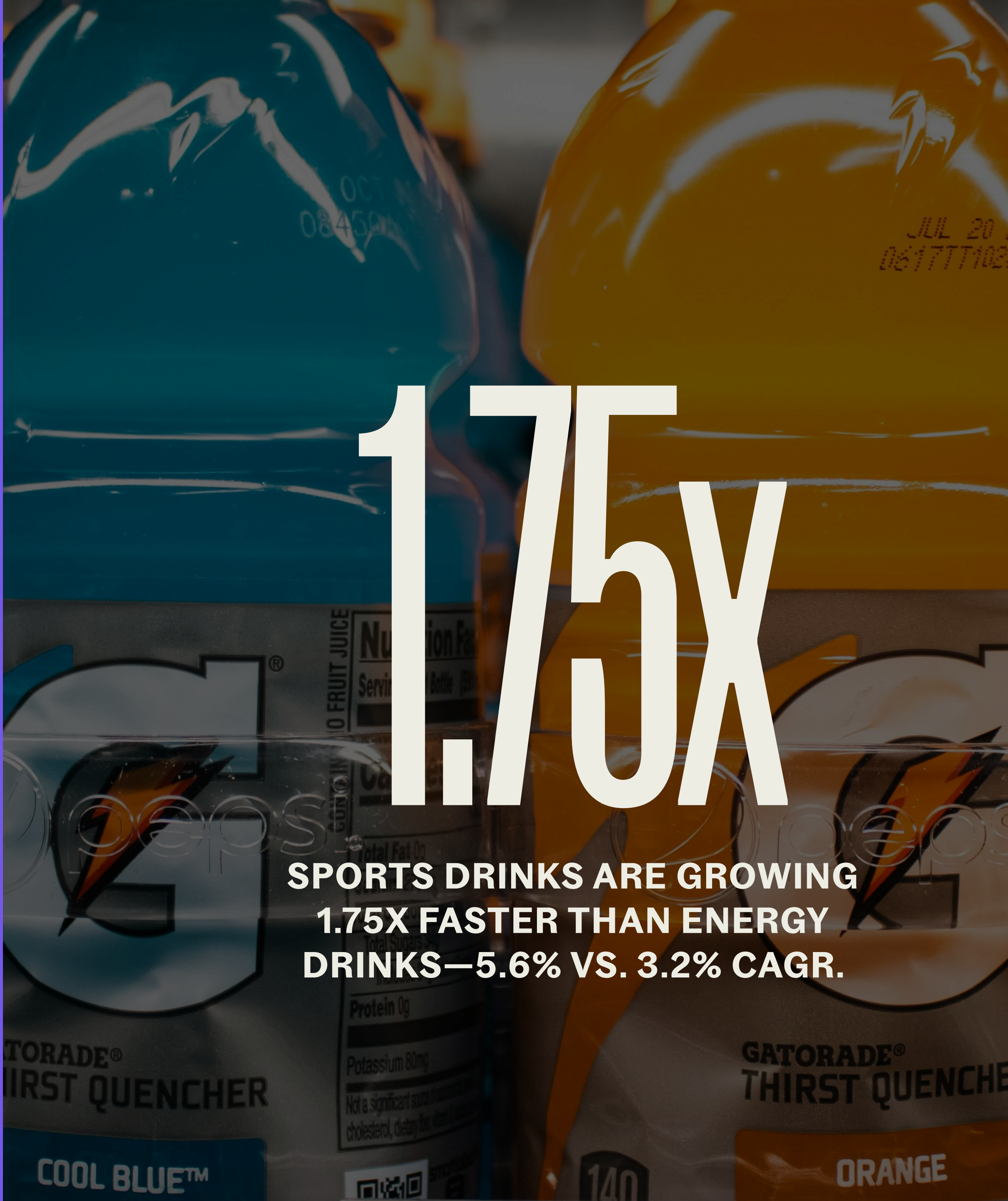
FUNCTIONAL BEVERAGES

BOOMING SEGMENTS IN FUNCTIONAL BEVERAGES

The functional beverage market isn't a monolith. It's a matrix of fast-moving segments, each responding to unique consumer needs—from energy and recovery to gut health and focus.

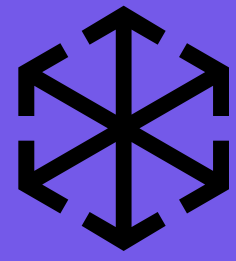
While energy drinks dominate in size at \$16B, sports drinks are catching up with faster growth (5.6% CAGR vs. 3.2%). RTD teas and coffees are evolving into wellness formats.

Functional waters, juices, dairy alternatives, and even carbonates are innovating fast to meet rising expectations around health, convenience, and clean ingredients.



1.75X

**SPORTS DRINKS ARE GROWING
1.75X FASTER THAN ENERGY
DRINKS—5.6% VS. 3.2% CAGR.**



FUNCTIONAL BEVERAGES

WHAT CONSUMERS WANT FROM FUNCTIONAL BEVERAGES

Consumers aren't buying drinks.

They're buying outcomes.

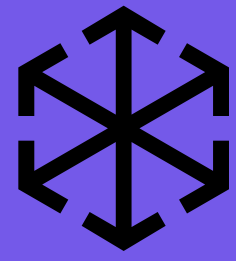
From gut health and immune support to mood, cognition, and even skin health, beverages are being reengineered to serve specific health goals. Ingredients like probiotics, nootropics, adaptogens, collagen, and botanicals are becoming everyday purchases, not niche wellness items.

And the expectations are evolving—products must work, but they also have to taste good. Function alone isn't enough; drinks that benefit clarity and flavor integrity are now non-negotiables.



36%

OF GLOBAL CONSUMERS NOW CITE EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AS A KEY HEALTH GOAL—EXPANDING WHAT “FUNCTIONAL” REALLY MEANS.



FUNCTIONAL BEVERAGES

CANNABIS BEVERAGES REACH NEW HIGHS

Hemp-based THC drinks are redefining the beverage market—blurring the lines between wellness, recreation, and regulation.

The 2018 Farm Bill opened the door for hemp-derived THC products, and now, with federal cannabis reform stalled, major players are seizing the opportunity.

Companies like Trulieve, Curaleaf, and Green Thumb Industries have launched THC-infused beverages, offering consumers a legal, low-dose alternative to alcohol.

These drinks are gaining traction in states permitting their sale in venues like liquor stores, tapping into the growing demand for functional and recreational beverage options.

327%

**CAGR IN THC BEVERAGES—IN
JUST THE LAST FIVE YEARS.**



FOOD + BEVERAGE 2025

Consumer Preferences





CONSUMER PREFERENCES

HEALTH AS THE UNSPOKEN BASELINE

Shoppers want more than just 'healthy choices'; they expect food and drink items to have a positive impact on their well-being.

There's a big demand in the market for 'clean-label' products—ones with simple, familiar ingredients—and functional foods that offer real benefits like better gut health (probiotics), lasting energy (high-protein), or reduced inflammation.

Brands are feeling the heat to reformulate actively, ditching artificial additives and developing products that suit popular lifestyles such as keto, gluten-free, and, notably, plant-based. Ingredient transparency and proven nutritional value are no longer just selling points; they're must-haves.

60%+

OF MILLENNIALS ACTIVELY
PRIORITIZE HEALTHIER FOOD.



CONSUMER PREFERENCES

HEALTH AS THE UNSPOKEN BASELINE

Shoppers want more than just 'healthy choices'; they expect food and drink items to have a positive impact on their well-being.

There's a big demand in the market for 'clean-label' products—ones with simple, familiar ingredients—and functional foods that offer real benefits like better gut health (probiotics), lasting energy (high-protein), or reduced inflammation.

Brands are feeling the heat to reformulate actively, ditching artificial additives and developing products that suit popular lifestyles such as keto, gluten-free, and, notably, plant-based. Ingredient transparency and proven nutritional value are no longer just selling points; they're must-haves.

69%

**OF AMERICANS SAY THE
INCREASED COST OF HEALTHY
FOOD MAKES IT HARDER FOR
THEM TO EAT HEALTHY.**



CONSUMER PREFERENCES

THE SUSTAINABILITY MANDATE

Consumers are increasingly voting with their wallets for a healthier planet.

This translates to a demand for demonstrable sustainable sourcing, proactive reduction of food waste throughout the supply chain, and innovative packaging solutions that are recyclable, compostable, or minimize environmental impact. It's not enough to claim sustainability; brands need to prove it with transparent practices.

Notably, concern for animal welfare is a unifying issue that resonates across diverse consumer demographics, influencing purchasing decisions beyond just dietary preference.

83%

**OF MILLENNIALS WANT
COMPANIES TO ALIGN WITH
THEIR VALUES ON
SUSTAINABILITY.**



CONSUMER PREFERENCES

SPEED WITHOUT SACRIFICE

The relentless pace of modern life continues to fuel the demand for convenient food and beverage solutions.

Ready-to-eat meals, intelligently portioned single-servings, and snacks that offer functional benefits (e.g., energy boosts, focus enhancement) are thriving. However, this is not convenience at any cost.

Consumers are unwilling to compromise on health, quality, or increasingly, taste. The challenge for manufacturers lies in a sophisticated balancing act: leveraging innovations in food processing and packaging to extend shelf life and maintain freshness and nutritional integrity, all while delivering on the promise of speed and ease.



-8%

PER CAPITA FOOD CONSUMPTION IS DOWN SINCE 2021, SIGNALING MORE DISCERNING, VALUE-DRIVEN CONVENIENCE CHOICES.



CONSUMER PREFERENCES

PLANTS ON THE PLATE

The shift towards plant-based eating is one of the most significant and structural transformations in the food and beverage industry.

This is far more than a dietary trend; it reflects a deeper change in consumer values related to personal health, environmental impact, and animal welfare.

Leading manufacturers are making substantial investments in developing sophisticated meat alternatives, expanding dairy-free portfolios, and even exploring frontier technologies like lab-grown proteins. This signals a long-term strategic pivot to meet evolving mainstream demand.



11.5%

**PLANT-BASED FOOD SALES ARE
SET FOR 11.5% CAGR THROUGH
2030.**



CONSUMER PREFERENCES

TRANSPARENCY AND TRUST

Today's consumers are investigators. They demand clear, accessible information about what's in their food, where the ingredients originate, and how the products are made.

This scrutiny extends to ethical sourcing practices, sustainable farming methods, and the humane treatment of animals.

Building and maintaining consumer trust is paramount, and any lapse, especially concerning food safety, can have severe and lasting consequences for brand loyalty.



50%

OF CONSUMERS WOULD DITCH A
BRAND AFTER EVEN ONE FOOD
SAFETY SCARE.




CONSUMER PREFERENCES

FOOD SAFETY CONFIDENCE IS FALLING

Confidence in the safety of the U.S. food supply is slipping. In 2024, only 62% of consumers say they feel confident—down from 70% just two years ago. The sharpest declines come from Millennials and Hispanic consumers, who are expressing growing concern over what’s in their food and how it’s handled.

The top fears are carcinogens, bacterial contamination, and pesticide exposure.

Most consumers recognize “best by” dates, but when it comes to taking action, awareness drops. Only two-thirds know what to do during a food recall. Even fewer—just 39%—are familiar with the USDA’s Meat and Poultry Hotline.



62%

**OF CONSUMERS TRUST SAFETY
OF THE FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN—
DOWN 8%.**



CONSUMER PREFERENCES

DIGITAL DOMINANCE EXTENDS TO FOOD

The digital realm is no longer just a sales channel; it's the primary arena for brand discovery, trend creation, and consumer engagement in the food and beverage sector.

E-commerce platforms for groceries and meal kits continue to redefine distribution models and consumer habits.

More profoundly, social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube act as real-time incubators for viral food trends, capable of generating massive, often unpredictable, spikes in demand virtually overnight.



75%

**OF GEN Z CONSUMERS DISCOVER
NEW FOOD PRODUCTS ON
SOCIAL MEDIA.**



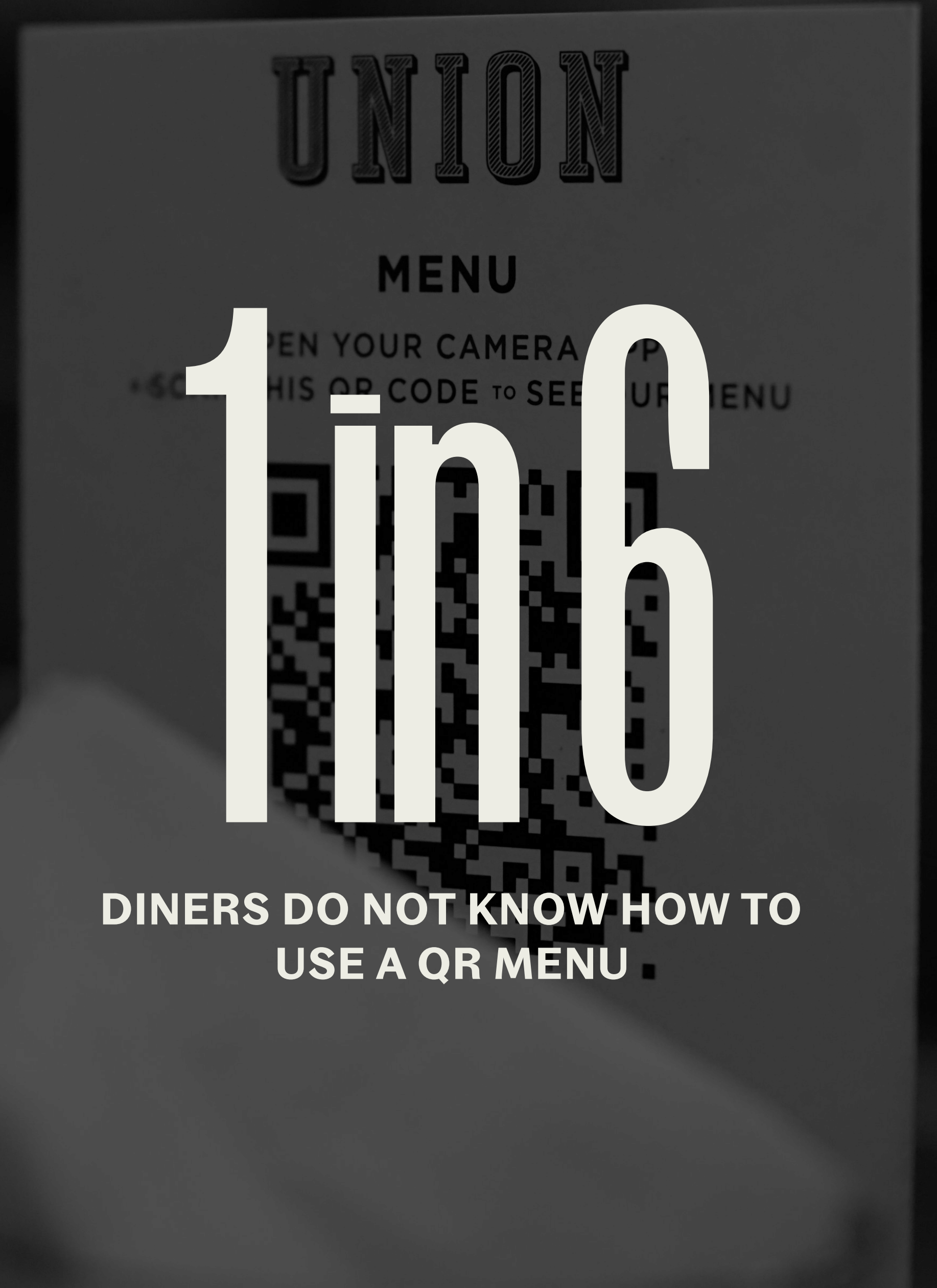
CONSUMER PREFERENCES

RE-THINK QR CODE MENUS

QR code menus might be a time and money saver for restaurants, but most diners would prefer that this vestige of the COVID era go away.

One in six diners don't know how to use a QR code menu, and 95% believe that restaurants should always have physical menus available.

51% say that QR menus slow down their ordering process, and 87% report that they'll spend more time exploring the options on a physical menu.





CONSUMER PREFERENCES

THE DECISION JOURNEY

When faced with the age-old inquiry, 'What would you like for dinner?' Americans typically take approximately 12 minutes to respond. It's clear that, for 82% of diners, convenience plays a significant role in their dining choices.

Location and cost are the primary factors influencing their decisions, with 73% prioritizing proximity and 72% considering their budget.

When it comes to selecting between breakfast, lunch, and dinner, dinner poses the greatest challenge for 1 in 4 Americans when deciding what to eat.



12

**THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF
MINUTES IT TAKES, ON AVERAGE,
TO DECIDE WHERE TO EAT FOR
DINNER.**



CONSUMER PREFERENCES

VALUE-FIRST MINDSET

Persistent economic pressures and inflationary memory have conditioned consumers to be highly discerning with their food and beverage spending.

"Value" is a multifaceted concept: it can mean opting for private-label alternatives, which are seeing significant volume growth, or investing in premium brands that deliver demonstrably superior quality, unique benefits, or align strongly with personal values.

Shopping behavior reflects this, with consumers making more frequent, smaller purchases, suggesting more strategic, less impulsive buying.

+3%

**PRIVATE LABEL FOOD VOLUMES
GREW IN 2024 AS MAINSTREAM
BRANDS DIPPED.**



CONSUMER PREFERENCES

REVIEWS ARE THE LIFE BLOOD

Most people won't step into a restaurant without checking reviews first. In fact, 76% look them up beforehand, and 79% say those reviews influence their decision to go—or not.

Photos matter just as much as words. 84% of people prefer reviews that include pictures of food. But if those photos are bad? 76% say that alone could drive them away.

Three stars isn't neutral; it's a warning sign. 61% say that's the lowest rating they'll tolerate. And it doesn't take a flood of complaints to tip the scale—just five bad reviews or photos are enough to turn nearly a third of potential diners away.



61%

**OF DINERS SAY A RESTAURANT
WITH THREE-STAR REVIEW IS THE
LOWEST RATING THEY'D
CONSIDER.**



CONSUMER PREFERENCES

HOW COUPLES NAVIGATE DINING DECISIONS

Most couples say picky eating isn't a dealbreaker, but it still causes friction. Nearly half say one partner is picky; 1 in 10 say it actually affects the relationship. And 21% admit they regularly disagree about where or what to eat.

Still, most keep it collaborative. 82% decide where to eat together. But once they sit down, it gets more personal—only 29% split food evenly. The rest guard their plate or share selectively.

And yet, 59% say they share meals when dining out. So even if tastes clash, food is still a point of connection.



21%

**OF COUPLES SAY THEY
REGULARLY DISAGREE ABOUT
WHERE TO EAT**



The share of consumers
trying to eat **more protein**
continues to rise:

59% in 2022

67% in 2023

71% in 2024



CONSUMER PREFERENCES

PROTEIN PRIORITIES

The high-protein trend is reshaping consumer behavior and retail strategies. Consumers increasingly view protein as a means to maintain energy, build lean muscle, and manage hunger. This shift is evident in the growing demand for high-protein products across various categories, including snacks, beverages, and meal replacements.

Retailers are responding by expanding their high-protein offerings and highlighting protein content on packaging to attract health-conscious shoppers.

Overall, the high-protein movement presents opportunities for innovation and growth in the retail sector, as consumers seek products that align with their wellness goals.

6.2%

CAGR THRU 2030 OF PROTEIN-FORTIFIED PANTRY STAPLES LIKE PASTA, CEREAL AND BREAD.



READY TO LEAD THE MARKET? LET'S GET TO WORK.

We've spent more than two decades helping brands grow by thinking differently—and acting decisively. If you're in food, beverage, or hospitality and you're done chasing trends—and ready to lead them—let's talk.



Lauren Schuster
Senior Director, Client Growth
lschuster@designsensory.com



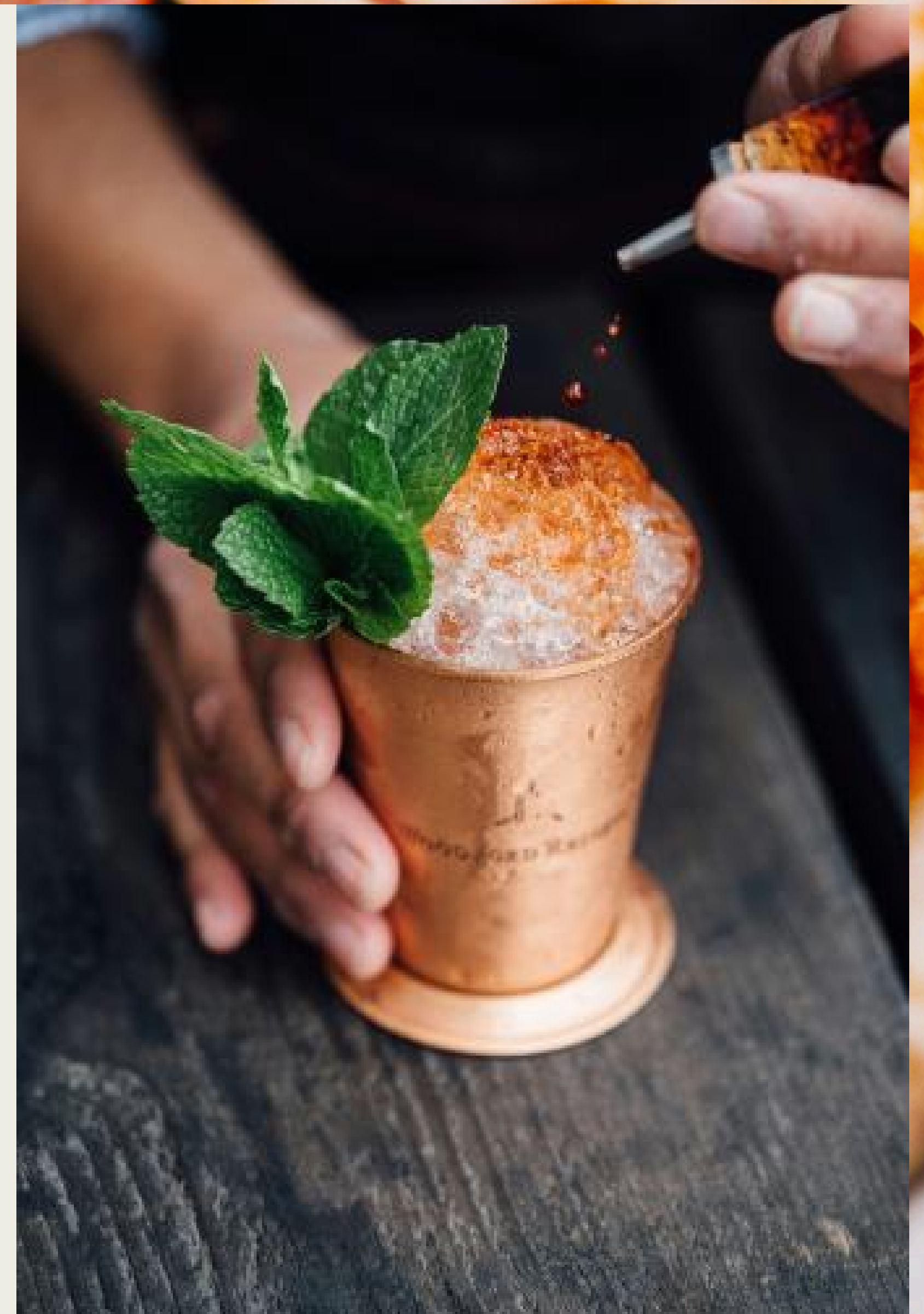
SOURCES

- 360iResearch. (2025, April 10). Ready to drink cocktails market size & share 2025-2030.
- Accelpay. (2025, April 10). Payment gateways and age verification: Alcohol eCommerce essentials.
- Agility PR Solutions. (2025, April 10). 5 stellar big-brand food and beverage digital campaigns of 2025, including McDonald's and Coca-Cola.
- Alchemist Beverage Company. (2025, April 10). Top liquor trends to watch in 2025.
- Attest. (2025, April 10). US Gen Z alcohol trends: Insights & innovations for 2025 | Attest.
- Bartenders Business. (2025, April 10). Building buzz for brands & bars: Activations and marketing in the beverage industry.
- Bartenders Business. (2025, April 10). Premiumization in the U.S. spirits industry: Still thriving or reaching its peak?
- Beverage Dynamics. (2025, March 10). Social media best practices for beverage alcohol retailers.
- Brewers Association. (2025, April 10). Submit your input on proposed TTB and FDA labeling regulations.
- Brewers Association. (2025, April 10). TTB proposes sweeping new regulations mandating alcohol content, allergen, and nutritional information on labels.
- Cin7. (2025, April 10). Biggest food & beverage inventory market trends in 2025.
- Convesio. (2025, April 10). Age verification for online alcohol sales: What you need to know.
- Cool Nerds Marketing. (2025, April 10). Finding the right social media agency for beverage brands.
- Craft Brewing Business. (2025, April 10). Escoffier's report uncovers shifting alcohol trends in 2025.
- Dia Creative. (2025, April 10). 11 Clever Marketing Case Studies to Learn From in 2025.
- Drinks-Intel. (2025, April 10). Alcohol's premiumisation trend makes way for 'shifting lifestyle choices' in the US - research.
- Federal Register. (2025, January 17). Alcohol facts statements in the labeling of wines, distilled spirits, and malt beverages.
- FingerLakes1.com. (2025, January 14). How E-Commerce alcohol platforms can ensure responsible age verification.
- Firebelly Marketing. (2025, April 10). Beverage industry trends 2025: Expert panel reveals market insights and growth strategies for CPG brands.
- Flaviar for Business. (2025, April 10). Shifting tides in alcohol e-commerce: How customer behavior and conversion are changing in 2025.



SOURCES

- Food Dive. (2025, April 10). Texture, innovation and mindful eating take center stage in 2025.
- Food Industry Executive. (2025, March 07). Traceability is integral to food and beverage sustainability.
- Food Institute. (2025, April 10). Navigating food supply chain challenges: Key strategies for 2025.
- Food Logistics. (2025, April 10). 3 food and beverage industry shifts to watch in 2025.
- FruitSmart. (2025, April 10). Exploring 2025 beverage trends: Innovation meets health and flavor.
- Futuramo. (2025, April 10). How does age verification improve your E-commerce business for customers?
- Glanbia. (2025, April 10). US functional beverage market insights 2025.
- GlobeNewswire. (2025, March 05). Plant-based meat market research 2025: A \$21.81 billion.
- GourmetPro. (2025, April 10). *A definitive guide to the US spirits market *.
- GourmetPro. (2025, April 10). *The most exciting global spirits markets *.
- Grand View Research. (2025, April 10). U.S. ready-to-drink cocktails market | industry report, 2030.
- Grubhub for Restaurants. (2025, April 10). The top e-commerce food trends for 2025.
- Heliconia.ca. (2023, June 19). Rethinking food tourism: A new approach with Chef Corso of Outdoor Eats.
- Hospitality Insights - EHL. (2025, April 10). Five food and beverage personalization trends to watch.
- IMARC Group. (2025, April 10). *Craft spirits market size, share | analysis report *.
- Incode. (2025, April 10). Age verification in the era of on-demand delivery.
- Influencer Marketing Hub. (2025, April 10). Top social media marketing campaigns for alcoholic beverages.
- InsightAce Analytic. (2025, April 10). B2B food and beverages E-commerce market share, size, growth and forecast to 2034.
- IPI. (2025, April 10). The flow of top trends influencing the liquid food and beverage market in 2025.
- IWSR. (2025, April 10). Five key trends defining opportunities in the global wine market in 2025.

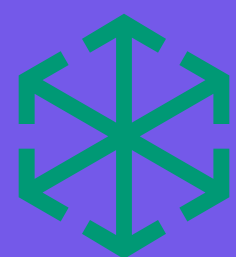


SOURCES

- IWSR. (2025, April 10). Five key trends shifting the beverage alcohol market in 2025.
- IWSR. (2025, April 10). Key statistics and trends for the US no-alcohol market.
- Jasoren. (2025, April 10). 10 use cases of using augmented reality for beverage tasting.
- Knowledge Sourcing. (2025, April 10). Premium alcohol market size & forecast 2025-2030 | free sample.
- LeverX. (2025, April 10). Top 2025 challenges in food & beverage industry.
- Maximize Market Research. (2025, April 10). Food E-commerce market- global market analysis and forecast (2024-2030).
- MoEngage. (2025, April 10). 21 real-life marketing personalization examples to learn from.
- Mordor Intelligence. (2025, April 10). AI in food & beverages market research | industry analysis, size & trends report.
- Mordor Intelligence. (2025, April 10). Craft spirits industry - market trends & share.
- NielsenIQ. (2025, April 10). The future of fresh food: Top trends shaping the market in 2025.
- Nutter McClennen & Fish LLP. (2025, January). Beverage breakdown (January 2025).
- OHBEV. (2025, April 10). Alcohol marketing 2025 trends and forecast.
- OHBEV. (2025, April 10). Alcohol marketing strategies 2025 - trade war era survival guide.
- OHBEV. (2025, April 10). RTD market 2025 forecast and trends - alcohol marketing agency.
- One potential avenue for further analysis, having identified the sources, is to group them by the topics they cover (e.g., Casual Dining, Spirits Market, E-commerce Trends, Advertising, etc.) to provide a thematic overview of the information available.
- OnID. (2024, August). The future of age verification system in e-commerce.
- openPR.com. (2025, April 10)

*All stock imagery from Unsplash





DESIGNSENSORY.COM

 DESIGNSENSORY

 @DESIGNSENSORY

 @DS_MOMENTS

Thank you.

Designsensory's story began in 2001 in Knoxville, Tennessee, when two friends saw a better way to connect branding and technology. Since then, we've brought fresh thinking and the kind of no-BS collaboration that makes a big impact. We bring a deep, multidisciplinary set of capabilities together to accelerate business growth — creative, digital, intelligence, marketing, social, originals and motion.

