

WHAT RESTAURATEURS CAN LEARN FROM HOTEL GUESTS

Changing tastes are driving change in hotel F&B programs.

When travelers book hotels these days, they're looking for more than a comfortable bed, complimentary Wi-Fi and an unlimited selection of premium TV channels. Increasingly, food and beverage options are becoming a deciding factor, and hotels are competing to deliver more exciting restaurant and bar experiences. Findings from two recent hospitality studies reveal trends that restaurateurs might profit from.

"The Modern Hospitality Study," conducted by **Culinary Visions**, surveyed 2,000 Americans ages 18-55 on their hotel preferences.

Local flavor: 75% of travelers want a hotel restaurant that serves dishes unique to the area, and 77% want local restaurants inside their hotel. Dishes prepared with local ingredients also rank high with 58% of respondents.

On-the-go eating: Portable foods have broad appeal, with 62% of travelers interested in purchasing grab-and-go meals from a hotel marketplace and 64% of consumers attracted to a hotel marketplace as a more convenient choice than a restaurant or cafe.

"Checking In for F&B: Report for the Hotel Industry 2019" from SevenRooms delves further into food and beverage tastes through a poll of 1,254 adults over the age of 18.

More choices and longer hours: Thirty-five percent of travelers are looking for multiple dining options when they choose a hotel, while 27% want restaurants and bars that are open late. Expanding room service hours to 24/7 is a priority for 31% of respondents.

Freebies: A complimentary breakfast would motivate 65% of Americans to choose one hotel over another, while 51% would be more apt to book a hotel that offers a complimentary drink or meal upon arrival.

Dietary preferences: Like restaurant customers, hotel guests come with a host of dietary and allergy demands. More than one-third (34%) want hotels to offer a variety of food options to meet all requirements, while 19% want the hotel to ask for dietary preferences or allergy restrictions prior to their stay.

A curated experience: Travelers are looking for food and beverage experiences that reflect a city's roots and culture; 26% think hotels should engage more with locals through their bars and restaurants, and 24% put a high value on unique and diverse food and beverage options and would consider repeat bookings with brands that do that.

Service counts: Seventeen percent of respondents expect hotel restaurants and bars to have a higher level of service than other eating and drinking establishments in the area.