



Euromonitor
International

In Real Life: The Unique Lure of Physical Experience

March 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Why read this report?

Key findings

INTRODUCTION

Even with an optimistic forecast, caution necessary as consumers seek more for less

Away-from-home dining still finding its post-pandemic footing

Younger generations control the fates of dine out and delivery

EXPERIENCE AS A PATH TO PREMIUMISATION

The K-shaped recovery is playing out in consumer foodservice

The other trade down: Retail's threat to stand-alone limited-service

The other trade down: Limited-service cannot compete on affordability alone

Working for the weekend: Consolidating occasions for greater impact

Key pillars of foodservice's value proposition are vulnerable

A NEED STATES FRAMEWORK FOR PHYSICAL SPACES

CPG brands are targeting "need states" to capture premium audiences

Ingredient-aligned need states have been the dominant approach

Separating the consumable from the experiential is the next phase

Experiential case studies for need states

CEREMONY AND THEATRE

Building new rituals is more atomic than heroic

Dinner and a show: Activity as a differentiator

Dinner and a show: Build programming-focused service and highlight in marketing

Keep the glass: Driving traffic and loyalty through memorabilia

Keep the glass: Make merchandising your full-time brand advocate

LIMINALITY AND STABILITY

Removing ambiguity fosters relaxation and focus

Seamless hospitality: Subtlety can speak volumes

Seamless hospitality: Be intentional with touchpoints in customer journey

Disrupting drudgery: Can a coffee shop sell "flow state"?

Disrupting drudgery: Effect comfort through layout and non-edible amenities

CONCLUSION

Recommendations/opportunities for growth

Key theme examples by outlet type

Evolution of third spaces

Questions we are asking

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For more information on this report, further enquiries can be directed via this link www.euromonitor.com/in-real-life-the-unique-lure-of-physical-experience/report.