



Breakfast Brief

Senior Living

Senior living facilities — which include assisted living, skilled nursing, long-term care and short-term care — comprise a sizeable portion of the healthcare industry. Although traditionally associated more with medical services, many of these establishments are modernizing their foodservice programs to feature new restaurant-inspired formats. Changes include a greater emphasis on the foodservice setting, which is reflected in new onsite bistros and cafes at these venues, as well as more on-trend, higher-quality foods and beverages.

Breakfast Preferences

A majority of consumers aged 55 and over (81%) said the quality of prepared foods and beverages will influence which senior living facility they choose. This emphasis is partly due to respondents thinking ahead to dining occasions being a daily focus at senior living facilities as well as important social outlets.

When these same Baby Boomer and Mature respondents were asked what they would prefer in a breakfast program at a senior living facility, more than seven out of 10 expressed that variety (74%) and familiarity (73%) are important. Variety keeps foodservice occasions interesting and caters to diverse dietary preferences and needs, while familiarity imparts a sense of comfort and nostalgia for senior diners.



Balancing menus with a mix of traditional, emerging and ethnic dishes and flavors will have the broadest appeal with senior living residents.



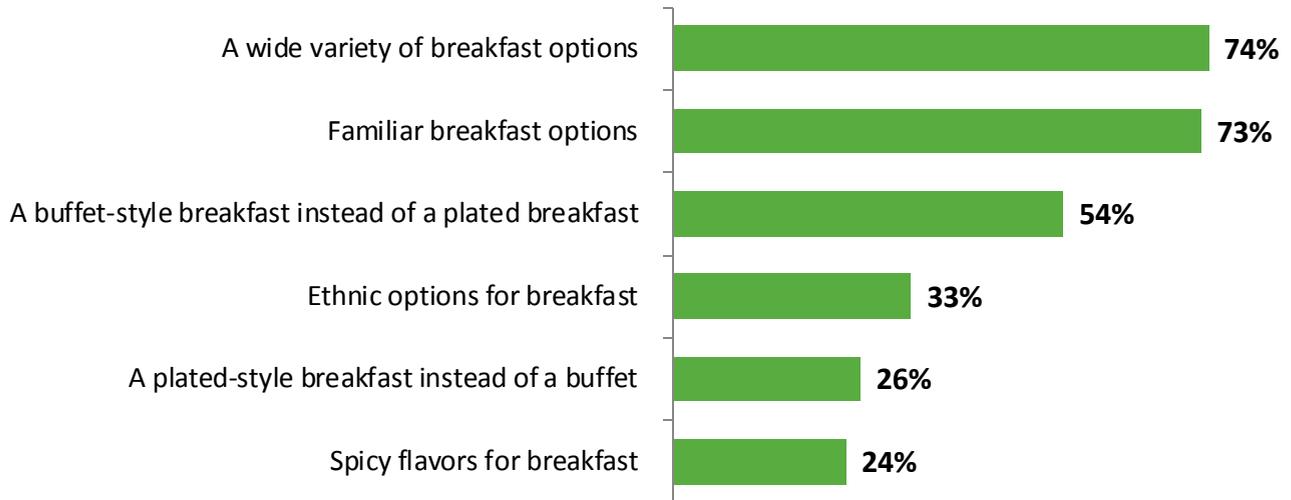
It is noteworthy that despite a desire for well-known breakfast foods and beverages, a third of consumers also agreed they would be interested in ethnic options (33%) and nearly a quarter would like to see spicy flavors on morning menus (24%). One easy and cost-effective way to offer ethnic and spicy options is through breakfast condiments, sauces and toppings that are presented at the table as an add-on to any dish. Global condiments currently trending at breakfast are:

- ***Cholula***
- ***Salsa***
- ***Sriracha***
- ***Ghost Pepper Sauce***



Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following regarding prepared food/beverage in a senior living facility (Top two box = agree and agree completely)

I would prefer/be interested in...

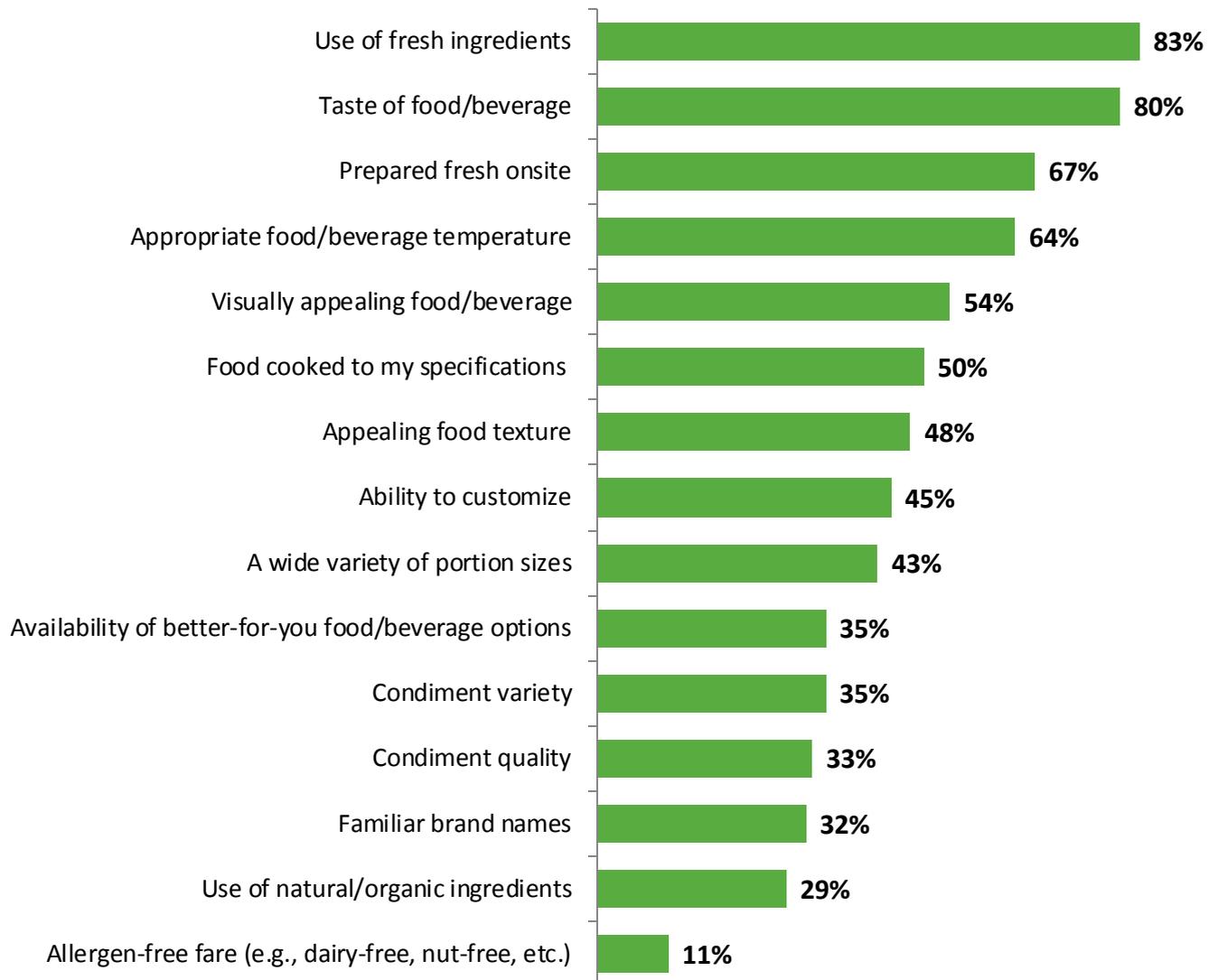


Base: 432 consumers aged 55+ who were asked to think about what they would want from a senior living facility's breakfast program
 Consumers indicated their opinion on a scale of 1 to 5 where 5 = agree completely and 1 = disagree completely

Consumers aged 55 and over were also asked to think more specifically about menu attributes that would be most important for breakfast occasions at a senior living facility. More than eight out of 10 respondents placed a heavy emphasis on fresh ingredients (83%), and nearly as many said the same for the taste of foods and beverages (80%). These responses align with broader industry trends as consumers from all generations increasingly seek menu descriptors that indicate quality and taste during foodservice visits.



Which of the following menu attributes would be most important to your breakfast occasion at a senior living facility?



Base: 432 consumers aged 55+ who were asked to think about what they would want from a senior living facility's breakfast program

About a third of consumers place high value on condiments, including the variety, quality and use of brand names. And nearly half of consumers (45%) want the ability to customize, which condiments enable. To meet these needs, operators should consider:

- Presenting condiments at the table or a shared station to encourage customization
- Offering variations within a condiment, including different flavor and nutritional options
- Displaying trusted household condiment brand names to promote quality



Other important takeaways:

- Beyond taste, other senses matter to seniors during breakfast occasions. Over half of respondents indicated that the look and temperature of food are important, and just under half said the same regarding texture. Varying food textures at breakfast could be as simple as offering seedless and seeded fruit spreads, and chunky and creamy peanut butters.
- Having senior living facilities prepare breakfast to their specifications is important to Baby Boomers and Matures. These generations know what they want out of a dining experience, as well as what they don't want.
- Natural and organic breakfast ingredients are valued by nearly a third of respondents. Promoting brands that source these types of fare will enhance the quality perception and alleviate food-safety concerns.
- Allergen-free fare is only important to a small proportion of respondents aged 55 and over and shouldn't be a primary factor when menu planning. However, senior living residents will still appreciate some allergen-free fare presented at breakfast as these types of foods are often perceived as better for you.



Onsite gardens can also get the community involved in growing fresh herbs and vegetables that can be featured at breakfast. Chefs embrace this hyperlocal trend at Martins Run Senior Living Community in Media, Pa.



Leading Better-for-You Claims on Senior Living Breakfast Menus

- 1 Diet
- 2 Healthy
- 3 Low Sodium
- 4 Non-Dairy
- 5 No Sugar

Base: Q1 2016 MenuMonitor, Technomic



Nutrition at Breakfast

Health is a top priority for senior living operators, with many employing onsite registered dietitians to ensure residents are served well-balanced, nutritious meals. This emphasis on wellness is also important to Baby Boomers and Matures, with more than a third of consumers aged 55 and over agreeing that better-for-you foods and beverages is important for breakfast occasions at these facilities.

The leading better-for-you claims on senior living breakfast menus are generic descriptors of “diet” and “healthy.” Beyond those mainstream buzzwords, we see more specific callouts that clearly show specific nutritional breakfast needs of seniors. Low sodium, non-dairy and no sugar round out the top five better-for-you claims, which isn’t a surprise considering these “low” and “no” types of ingredients are often recommended for seniors with conditions like diabetes and heart disease.



When offering nutrition-focused foods, operators still need to be mindful of flavor, as that is most important to seniors at breakfast.



Other Emerging Trends

▪ Chef-driven fare

Today’s senior living residents are more engaged with the culinary staff than ever before as highly skilled chefs seek to modernize foodservice programs. These chefs are encouraged to engage with residents for feedback when shaping the menu, which results in breakfasts that are well-received by diners.

Example: Chef Eric David Corradetti serves a meal at Bethlehem Woods senior living facility in La Grange Park, Ill.



- **Flexible mealtimes**

Some senior living facilities are extending their dining programs to include longer breakfast, lunch and dinner hours, as well as more snacking occasions. These anytime meals present chefs with opportunities to also blur dayparts on the menu. This could include offering morning items such as breakfast sandwiches for lunch, dinner and snacks, or breakfast-inspired pizzas early in the day.

Example: Orchard Park in Clovis, Calif., offers anytime dining, which allows residents the opportunity to eat at their convenience instead of only during fixed hours



- **Customization**

Customization is an important way of providing senior living residents with variety and choice. Menu customization can mean build-your-own meals and condiment selections, but the term also extends to offering a choice of venue, such as casual cafes and bistros, pastry and coffee kiosks, and traditional cafeterias.

Example: HarborChase retirement communities promote independence by providing residents with Dining Dollars to be used at any onsite venue of their choice



FEATURED RECIPE

Ingredients

2 cups White Lily® Enriched Self-Rising White Cornmeal Mix
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
2 ¼ cups buttermilk
2 tablespoons butter, melted
Smucker's® Sugar Free Breakfast Syrup

Directions

Step 1: Heat griddle to 400°F.

Step 2: Combine cornmeal mix, eggs, buttermilk and butter in medium bowl, stirring just until ingredients are moistened. (Batter will be slightly lumpy.)

Step 3: Pour ¼ cup batter onto hot griddle for each standard-size pancake. Cook until golden brown, turning once. Serve with butter and syrup.

Step 4: Increase the buttermilk for thinner pancakes or decrease for thicker.

Nutrition

Serving Size (1/8), Calories 220 (Calories from Fat 50), Total Fat 6g (Saturated Fat 0g, Trans Fat 0g), Cholesterol 60mg, Sodium 610mg, Total Carbohydrate 36g (Dietary Fiber 1g, Sugars 15g), Protein 6g; Percent Daily Value*: Vitamin A 2%, Vitamin C 0%, Calcium 0%, Iron 35%.

Country Cornmeal Pancakes



PREP TIME: 10 min

COOK TIME: 10 min

TOTAL TIME: 20 min

YIELD: 8 servings

**Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.*





Technomic Takeaway:

3 Areas of Opportunity for Senior Living Breakfast

#1

ELEVATE THE DINING EXPERIENCE

Baby Boomers and Matures have high expectations for senior living foodservice and these food and beverage programs will greatly influence the residence they choose. Operators must elevate the dining experience in all ways, from offering varied eating spaces, to featuring higher-quality ingredients and brand names, to spotlighting impactful industry trends such as customization and global inspirations.



#2

DIVERSIFY THE MENU

A challenge for senior living staff is catering to different tastes and dietary constraints. Because meals are important occasions for residents, try offering a breadth of breakfast items, including nutrient-packed, ethnic-inspired and even some indulgent options. Variety on the menu also means having a sensible number of familiar and nontraditional morning dishes, preparations and flavors. One easy way to add variety is to offer an array of condiments."

#3

EMPHASIZE FRESHNESS

Like all generations, Baby Boomers and Matures want to know that the foods and beverages they consume are made to order using high-quality ingredients. At senior living facilities, this could include action stations or assembly line-style service formats that showcase food preparation, or menu callouts that draw attention to the use of local produce and herbs from an onsite garden. There are multiple ways to convey freshness, but it is important to always highlight those methods on senior living menus.

