



What diners expect in 2021

From the things they've missed most to the trends they want to see stay around



It's been a year. A year of closures and reopenings and more closures. A year of innovation and creativity and hustling like never before.

In March 2021, OpenTable asked over 17,000 diners across the UK about their thoughts on dining now and looking ahead.

We hope these insights give you the information you need to help your business rebuild and thrive in 2021 and beyond.

Diners are ready to return to your tables



They're looking forward to outdoor dining—and they're bringing friends

39%

of diners want to book a table for outdoor dining as soon as they can.

Over 1 in 3

plan on making their first reservation to get together with family or friends.

Plenty of them will need your help to celebrate

71%

have missed dining out on their birthday.

64%

say they are going to make up for lost celebrations at restaurants.

And some of them want to go big

21%

say they will splash out once restaurants reopen.



Prep for increased demand

- ✓ Offer various table types or run different floor plans with OpenTable table management tools, based on current regulations for indoor and outdoor dining.
- ✓ Keep your capacity up-to-date with current regulations. Get your shifts full and flowing with availability controls.
- ✓ Go the extra mile on your OpenTable profile—select applicable cuisine types, update menus, and upload photos of your food and space.
- ✓ Help your staff game plan for each service with the pre-shift digest.
- ✓ Manage an online waitlist to fill empty seats.
- ✓ Highlight unique experiences for special days such as birthdays.

Safety remains top of mind



Diners care about your safety efforts

More than 30%

say they want to make a reservation when indoor dining is back—but only if sufficient safety measures are in place.

and 88%

of them say they consciously pay attention to hygiene measures when dining out.

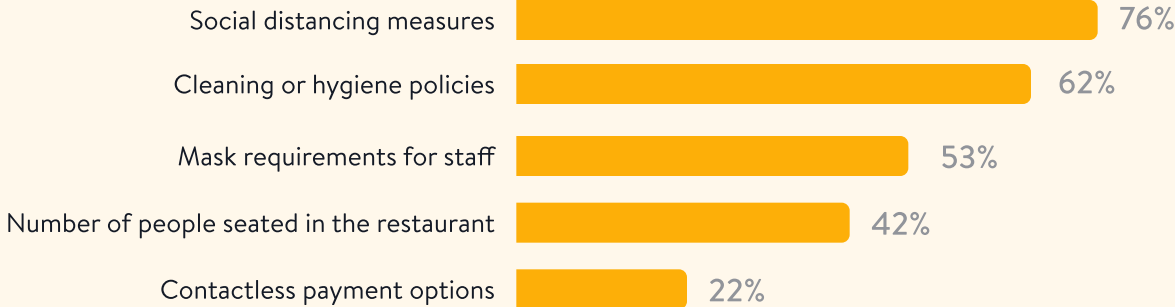
Think about how they'll interact with your staff

54%

of diners think it's important to limit contact with staff when dining out.



Diners say they want to know about these safety precautions before making a reservation at a restaurant:



Help diners feel safe

- ✓ Post safety measures on your website and add a pop-up message.
- ✓ Use QR codes to connect guests with your menu and limit their interaction with staff
- ✓ Highlight safety precautions on your OpenTable profile and in booking policies to put guests at ease with dining out again.
- ✓ Arm your staff with answers to frequently asked questions about safety protocols.

Engage with your local community



Supporting local restaurants is important to diners

85%

of diners want to help their local restaurants survive the impact of the pandemic.

Even more importantly, your regulars can't wait to see you again

60%

Say they most miss their favourite local place.

VS

17%

Say they most miss trying a new restaurant.

And don't forget the takeaway customers you met along the way

72%

say that they would be likely to dine in the restaurant once lockdown lifts.



Reach out to regulars

- ✓ Re-engage your guests with tailored communications—let them know your plans for reopening and that you're looking forward to welcoming them back.
- ✓ **1 in 7** people say they're looking for a discounted offer or promotion from restaurants once they reopen.

Stay up-to-date with tech



Online is the place to be to get seen by diners

36%

plan on booking their next reservation through a mobile app, closely followed by a restaurant's website (35%).

Make sure they can talk to you

87%

think it's important to be able to directly communicate with the restaurant.



Get seen by diners online

- ✓ Update your online profiles across Google, Facebook and OpenTable, so people can easily discover everything you have to offer. You can also connect your content management tools like Yext with OpenTable to centrally manage all your business profile updates and maintain consistency.
- ✓ Strengthen your website to make it easier for people to find you online and reserve a table or book an experience.
- ✓ Build brand awareness and strong relationships with diners on social media, where they have an appetite to discover new restaurants and feel more connected to the ones they love. Get more tips in OpenTable's social media guide.
- ✓ Get in front of more guests who are searching on OpenTable and drive up bookings by launching an OpenTable boost campaign.
- ✓ Automatically send an email to guests before or after their reservation to collect visit details or share important information like safety precautions (Available with Pro plan).
- ✓ Know where your diners come from online. Track reservations and revenue from your digital and social channels—including Google Ads, Facebook and Instagram Ads, email, landing pages, and your website—using OpenTable marketing tracking.

To get additional tools and tips to get back in action and meet diner expectations, visit restaurant.opentable.co.uk/dining-is-back

Discover the latest restaurant news, trends and updated OpenTable features helping restaurants succeed in managing their business at restaurant.opentable.co.uk/news

About the survey

OpenTable surveyed over 17,000 diners in the United Kingdom on the OpenTable network between 16 March, 2021 and 23 March, 2021.

