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Economy and Tourism



DUBAI GASTRONOMY INDUSTRY REPORT 2024



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OPENING REMARKS

Dubai is one of the world's most exciting gastronomic destinations, with a fusion of homegrown concepts, hidden gems and award-winning restaurants offering a mosaic of flavours and tastes that reflect the emirate's rich multicultural identity. This annual Dubai Gastronomy Industry Report, published by the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (DET), provides a comprehensive and insightful exploration of Dubai's vibrant and rapidly evolving food and beverage (F&B) landscape in 2024. An integral part of the emirate's tourism strategy and broader vision, the ongoing growth of Dubai's gastronomy industry is a testament to our visionary leadership and the ambitious goals of the Dubai Economic Agenda, D33, to further consolidate Dubai's position as a leading global city for business and leisure, and to make Dubai the best city to visit, live, work and invest in.

The past year has brought remarkable achievements that validate our strategic direction. At the heart of Dubai's culinary success lies an unwavering commitment to excellence in the hospitality sector, offering a diverse range of dining experiences that cater to every palate and preference. Dubai's gastronomy sector continues to garner international acclaim, with the 2024 MICHELIN Guide Dubai featuring 19 MICHELIN-starred venues. Trèsind Studio ranked No.13 globally on the World's 50 Best Restaurants list, the highest in the Middle East, while Dubai hosted the Best Chef Awards – the first city in the region to do so. Meanwhile, the Gault&Millau Guide UAE 2024 recognised 48 Dubai restaurants with prestigious 'Toques', reaffirming the city's status as a global culinary powerhouse.

By fostering innovation and creativity in the culinary arts, Dubai has further reinforced its reputation as a global gastronomy hub, and this is reflected in the Dubai International Brand Tracker report. The city ranked first for the availability of preferred cuisines it offers and second only to Paris as the world's leading gastronomy capital. The latest findings from DET's Gastronomy Always On (GAON) Wave 6 report, based on feedback from UAE residents, also indicates overwhelming satisfaction with the city's culinary offerings. Evolving consumer preferences highlighted a growing appetite for casual and family dining, and the rising popularity of Emirati and Arabic cuisines. This trend shows an increasing demand for relaxed dining experiences that offer good value for

money without compromising on quality.

The F&B sector's economic impact extends far beyond dining tables. It serves as a crucial economic multiplier, generating tourism revenue, creating employment opportunities, and strengthening local supply chains. Our industry's embrace of sustainability initiatives, from reducing food waste to promoting farm-to-table concepts, demonstrates our commitment to responsible growth and innovation.

Looking ahead, Dubai's gastronomy industry is positioned for sustained growth, driven by our focus on sustainability, the continued expansion of hospitality infrastructure, and the increasing popularity of diverse cuisines and new culinary concepts, all contributing to a vibrant and inclusive dining scene. As Dubai positions itself as a global liveability hub, its culinary landscape will play a crucial role in making the city a welcoming and dynamic place to live and thrive.

The Dubai Gastronomy Industry Report 2024 provides an in-depth overview of the city's F&B offering and sets the stage for a future where Dubai remains a global leader in culinary excellence. We hope that this document will inspire you to continue to be a part of Dubai's extraordinary gastronomic landscape.

Bon appétit! / Bel Afya!

Ahmed Al Khaja

CEO of Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment (DFRE), part of the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (DET)





↑
Almost 1,200 new restaurant licences were issued to operators in Dubai in 2024, highlighting the rapid growth of the city's gastronomy sector

Welcome to Dubai

One of the world's fastest-growing foodie destinations

Dubai consolidated its status as a global gastronomy hub in 2024, with the city's dining scene receiving fresh acclaim both locally and internationally.

Home to everything from local hidden gems to world-renowned, MICHELIN-starred restaurants – Dubai's F&B offerings showcase the city's rich multicultural identity. This diversity places Dubai firmly on the map as one of the world's most exciting dining destinations.

Highlighting the remarkable growth of the city's F&B sector, almost 1,200 new restaurant licences were issued to operators in 2024, a figure that firmly establishes Dubai as the region's largest and most influential gastronomy hub.

This reputation continues to attract international acclaim. In July 2024, the third edition of the MICHELIN Guide Dubai was unveiled, with the publication featuring 106 restaurants, up from 90 in 2023. Nineteen restaurants earned MICHELIN Stars, while a further three were honoured with the MICHELIN Green Star for sustainability.

Meanwhile, the 2024 edition of the UAE Gault&Millau Guide awarded 48 Dubai restaurants 'Toques', recognising their culinary excellence based on a 20-point rating system.

Dubai's culinary scene received further

international recognition at the 2024 World's 50 Best Restaurants Awards.

Trèsind Studio, a trailblazer in modern Indian cuisine, climbed to No.13, making it the highest-ranked restaurant in the Middle East, while Orfali Bros Bistro secured No.64.

In the 2025 MENA edition of this prestigious awards programme, 19 Dubai restaurants were included in the top 50, with six of them featuring among the top 10.

Meanwhile, the prestigious Best Chef Awards made its Middle Eastern debut in Dubai, underscoring the city's status as a global culinary powerhouse. Hosted at Atlantis, The Palm, and supported by the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (DET), the event celebrated 550 chefs from 61 countries, marking its largest and most diverse instalment to date.

Several Dubai-based chefs received top honours in the coveted Knife categories, further cementing the city's reputation as a world-class gastronomy hub. Grégoire Berger (Ossiano) and Himanshu Saini (Trèsind Studio) earned Three Knives, while Mohamad Orfali (Orfali Bros) and Daniel Birk (Row on 45) were awarded Two Knives.

Additionally, Rahul Rana (avatāra), Solemann Haddad (Moonrise), and Tom Allen (Dinner by Heston Blumenthal) were recognised with One ►

DUBAI 2024 GASTRONOMY HIGHLIGHTS



#9

Dubai ranked ninth in Time Out's 2024 list of The World's 20 Best Cities for Food Right Now



106

Dubai restaurants featured in the 2024 edition of MICHELIN Guide Dubai



48

Restaurants were recognised with 'Toques' in the 2024 edition of the Gault&Millau UAE Guide



18

Dubai restaurants featured in the 2024 MENA edition of the World's 50 Best Restaurants



7

Dubai-based chefs received prestigious Best Chef Awards in 2024

Knife. These accolades reflect Dubai's growing influence on the global culinary stage and its dedication to fostering exceptional talent.

Additionally, Dubai ranked ninth in Time Out's 2024 list of The World's 20 Best Cities for Food Right Now, with the popular city guide publication lauding the emirate's culinary landscape as "more diverse and creative than it's ever been".

The city's status as a top foodie destination was also spotlighted in its own episode of Netflix's *Somebody Feed Phil*, the popular food travel series hosted by Phil Rosenthal, which explores the world's leading culinary capitals.

Dubai's gastronomic success is mirrored by record-breaking achievements in its tourism industry, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between the two sectors. In 2024, Dubai welcomed 18.72 million international overnight visitors, and hotel occupancies reached 43.03 million room nights, setting new industry benchmarks. Dubai's reputation as one of the world's top foodie destinations continues to be a factor in attracting visitors to the city.

In terms of accolades, Dubai was named the No.1 global destination for an unprecedented third consecutive year in the 2024 Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Awards. Dubai was also named the Middle



Dubai ranked ninth in Time Out's 2024 list of The World's 20 Best Cities for Food Right Now



East's leading destination by the World Travel Awards, while Dubai International Airport and Mina Rashid were named the Middle East's leading airport and cruise port for 2024, respectively.

The powerful synergy between Dubai's tourism and gastronomy sectors underscores the success of the Dubai Economic Agenda, D33, a visionary blueprint aimed at doubling the size of the city's economy and establishing it as the best city to visit, live and work in. Central to this ambitious vision is the continued growth of the gastronomy sector, a cornerstone in establishing Dubai as a premier destination for both business and leisure travellers.

Ultimately, Dubai's gastronomy sector will continue to play a pivotal role in achieving the city's bold ambitions, reinforcing its status as a global destination where diverse flavours and unique dining experiences come together to create something truly exceptional for residents and visitors alike.



Diversity key to Dubai's gastronomy success

Dubai's transformation into a global gastronomy powerhouse can be attributed in large part to the increasingly diverse nature of its F&B offerings.

According to findings from the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism's Gastronomy Always On (GAON) Wave 6 report, which is based on feedback from UAE residents surveyed in September-October 2024, the city's gastronomic landscape is evolving at an unprecedented pace.

Dubai is home to a diverse range of F&B outlets that reflect its cosmopolitan identity. From fast food trucks to exclusive fine dining restaurants, the city caters to every budget, taste, and occasion. This variety is not just a testament to Dubai's multicultural fabric but also a key driver behind its

growing global reputation as a gastronomy hub.

The latest GAON report highlights how this diversity is driving the industry's growth. Dining out remains a hugely popular pastime, with residents visiting restaurants 2.5 times per week on average. While fine dining remained relatively consistent with the previous survey (Wave 5, May-June 2024), casual and family dining restaurants have surged in popularity, with 84 per cent of respondents confirming they have visited an establishment in this category, up from 78 per cent in the previous report.

This reflects a growing appetite for relaxed dining experiences that offer good value for money without compromising on quality.

The latest GAON report further underscores the rise of affordable and accessible dining options such as food courts, street food, and food trucks, which cater to the city's growing population of budget-conscious diners seeking convenience, value and quality from their dining experiences.

Fast food restaurants and food courts are also thriving, visited by 78 per cent of respondents in Wave 6 compared to 71 per cent in Wave 5.

The increase, which is indicative of a broader trend toward convenience and variety, also reflects ►



↑ Restaurants specialising in Emirati cuisine have seen a consistent rise in popularity



the high-quality options available to diners in Dubai, regardless of price points and category. Food trucks, which have seen a notable rise in popularity from 15 per cent to 19 per cent, further illustrate Dubai's ability to innovate and adapt to changing consumer preferences.

While Dubai embraces a modern and global dining ethos, its gastronomy sector remains deeply rooted in tradition. Restaurants specialising in Emirati and Arabic cuisines have seen a consistent rise in popularity, catering to both tourists seeking an authentic experience and residents looking to reconnect with regional flavours. At the same time, the city's love for experimentation continues to shine, with a growing number of establishments offering fusion menus that blend international flavours in unique and creative ways.

Interestingly, the importance of cuisine

diversity has become a top priority for diners. The latest GAON survey shows that 49 per cent of respondents consider the type of cuisine the most important factor when selecting a restaurant, up from 34 per cent earlier in the year.

This aligns with Dubai's ongoing efforts to position itself as an eclectic gastronomy destination where diners can find everything from street-side shawarma to Nikkei cuisine.

As the latest findings highlight, Dubai's inclusive approach to dining is a key driver behind its success, ensuring that there is something to appeal to everyone.

Whether it's the rising popularity of casual dining or the growing interest in authentic and experimental cuisines, Dubai is well established as one of the world's most exciting and forward-thinking culinary destinations.



GASTRONOMY ALWAYS ON (WAVE 6) HIGHLIGHTS

2.5

The number of times per week
GAON respondents dine out in
Dubai each week

49%

of respondents prioritise the
type of cuisine when selecting
where to dine
(+15% compared to Wave 5)

84%

of respondents had visited
casual and family dining
restaurants
(+6% compared to Wave 5)



Dubai's street food
scene is booming

Dubai excels in global F&B benchmarking study

DUBAI OUTSHINES THE WORLD'S TOP GASTRONOMY HUBS IN LATEST BRAND TRACKER SURVEY

As part of the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism's market outreach initiatives, the organisation regularly surveys respondents in key visitor source markets about their attitudes and perceptions of Dubai's gastronomy scene.

In the 2024 Dubai International Brand Tracker report, whose findings are based on consumer perceptions in key source markets, Dubai outperformed many of the world's leading culinary destinations across key metrics. The benchmarking results, highlight the emirate's impressive standing against other renowned dining destinations, including Paris, London, Rome, New York and Tokyo.

Showcasing the city's reputation as one of the world's great multicultural cities, Dubai claimed top spot for 'preferred food availability', ahead of Rome and Istanbul. The city's vibrant culinary scene, showcasing cuisines from around the world, resonates strongly with global leisure travellers, the report found.

Dubai ranks second only to Paris as the world's leading gastronomy

capital, surpassing established destinations like London, New York and Tokyo. This accolade reflects the city's ever-growing global appeal, bolstered by its diverse culinary landscape and world-class dining experiences.

Dubai's fine-dining scene also continues to shine, with the city securing first place globally, beating Paris to the top ranking. It outpaced other leading cities such as New York, London and Singapore, underscoring the emirate's ability to attract and retain top culinary talent alongside its growing number of award-winning establishments.

Dubai also excels as a hub for authentic culinary experiences, ranking third globally and trailing only Tokyo and Istanbul in this category. This result highlights the city's commitment to preserving and showcasing its rich heritage alongside its many modern gastronomic innovations.

Dubai's strong showing in the 2024 Brand Tracker report reinforces its status as a top foodie destination while highlighting further opportunities for growth. This sets a promising foundation for its continued success as a global culinary hub.

Tourism and gastronomy combine to create a global culinary capital

Dubai's burgeoning reputation as a global gastronomy hub is closely tied to the exceptional growth of its tourism sector.

After welcoming a record 17.15 million international visitors in 2023, Dubai's tourism industry set yet another benchmark in 2024, with 18.72 million overnight arrivals recorded – up nine per cent year on year.

Undoubtedly, Dubai's reputation for delivering exceptional and memorable dining experiences has become a significant lure in attracting visitors to the city.

Visitors from the GCC and MENA regions accounted for 26 per cent of all arrivals to Dubai during the year.

The inherent cultural ties and geographical proximity of these important source markets have made Dubai a popular destination for regional business travellers and holidaymakers, with many visitors seeking out the city's authentic Arabic and Emirati culinary experiences during their stay in the city.

Western Europe proved the second most important visitor source market in 2024, accounting for 20 per cent of the total.

The region has long been a key source market for Dubai, with visitors consistently drawn to the city's diverse destination offerings, including its renowned gastronomic experiences.

South Asia accounted for 17 per cent of arrivals, while CIS and Eastern Europe contributed 14 per cent toward the city's international visitation, highlighting Dubai's appeal across emerging and established markets.

Visitors from South Asia, in particular, bring a strong demand for subcontinental cuisines – an area where Dubai's gastronomy sector excels, offering a diverse range of authentic and modern South Asian dining experiences.

Boosted by an increase in Chinese travellers, visitors from North East and South East Asia accounted for 10 per cent of all arrivals. This resurgence has fuelled demand for pan-Asian dining experiences and elevated Dubai's profile as



a diverse culinary hub.

Meanwhile, the Americas contributed 7 per cent, while Africa and Australasia accounted for 5 per cent and 2 per cent respectively, reflecting Dubai's growing global appeal.

Together, tourism and gastronomy are tied in a dynamic, symbiotic relationship that will continue to drive Dubai's global reputation as a premier destination for food and travel.

Dubai's hotel sector is also critical to its tourism success and, by extension, its growing reputation as a leading gastronomy hub.

Gastronomy has become a key motivator for international travel, and Dubai is capitalising on this trend by positioning itself as a top destination for foodie tourists. Looking ahead, Dubai's ambitious plan to expand its hospitality infrastructure with projects like Palm Jebel Ali, Dubai Islands and Dubai Creek Harbour will create even more opportunities for the city's gastronomy sector to flourish.



Western Europeans continue to flock to Dubai to experience its world-class gastronomic offerings

Rapid increase in online searches showcase rising interest in Dubai's culinary scene

Dubai's status as one of the world's fastest-growing culinary destinations is backed up by Google data that shows the number of unique online searches relating to Dubai's diverse F&B offerings reached 741,500 in the first seven months of 2024, rising 23.5 per cent from the 600,500 searches logged during the same period a year earlier.

Furthermore, Google's 'Interest in Dining Index' – a metric that measures online consumer engagement with dining-related topics, ranging from restaurant reservations and social media mentions to other indicators of people's desire to eat out – reveals a consistent rise in demand for Dubai's F&B offerings in 2024.

After fluctuating throughout 2023, the index surged significantly in the first half of 2024, peaking at 100 in June – marking a major milestone indicating maximum interest during the month.

A deep dive into Google's data shows the index rose a remarkable 33 per cent between July 2023 (59) and July 2024 (89). Interestingly, the period spanning May to August 2024 was also marked by consistently high interest, with scores of 89 to 100, suggesting increased engagement during the summer months.

This increase aligns with Dubai's broader tourism growth throughout the summer months, with international visitors increasingly viewing the city as a year-round destination.



An analysis of Google search volumes for specific cuisine types in Dubai also provides valuable insights into consumer preferences

Indian Cuisine

The most searched by a wide margin, Indian cuisine accounted for 34 per cent of all dining-related searches in the first seven months of 2024, up from 28 per cent during the same period in 2023. This growth can mostly be attributed to Dubai's large South Asian population and the city's reputation for authentic and innovative Indian dining options.



Chinese Cuisine

Online searches for Chinese cuisine in Dubai spiked by a remarkable 79 per cent YoY, from 19,000 searches in 2023 to 34,000 in 2024. This increase is in line with the rise in inbound visitors from the North East and South East Asian markets in 2024.



Lebanese Cuisine

Lebanese cuisine saw significant growth, with searches increasing by 32 per cent YoY, from 31,000 in 2023 to 41,000 in 2024, highlighting the enduring popularity of this Middle Eastern staple.



Arabic Cuisine

While still important, pan-Arab cuisine saw a slight decline in its share of total searches, falling five per cent YoY to 22 per cent in 2024. This is indicative of a maturing market, with diners taking advantage of the broader variety of culinary experiences on offer in Dubai.



Italian Cuisine

Searches for Italian dining options increased by 28 per cent YoY, rising from 70,000 in 2023 to 90,000 in 2024, maintaining its 12 per cent share of total searches. Italian cuisine remains a perennial favourite of residents and tourists alike, with the number of Italian restaurants suited to all tastes and budgets proliferating in Dubai in recent years.



Persian Cuisine

Searches for Persian dining options more than doubled, rising from 7,000 in 2023 to 17,000 in 2024, reflecting a growing appetite for this niche cuisine.



French Cuisine

Interest in French cuisine in Dubai is also on the rise, with related searches increasing from 14,000 to 19,000 in 2024.



Thai Cuisine

While still relatively niche, searches relating to Thai cuisine in Dubai rose from 14,000 to 17,000 (+21 per cent YoY), highlighting a growing demand for this traditional South-East Asian favourite.



Ultimately, the annual increase in Google search queries, particularly for diverse and premium cuisines, highlights the increasingly eclectic tastes of diners in Dubai. With its ongoing commitment to culinary innovation and diversity, Dubai's F&B sector is well-placed for continued growth, ensuring that the city remains a top destination for food enthusiasts worldwide.

Dubai diners express overwhelming satisfaction with city's F&B offerings

Diners in Dubai remain overwhelmingly satisfied with the city's gastronomy offerings, with the latest edition of the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism's Gastronomy Always On (GAON) Wave 6 report revealing a net satisfaction score (NSS)* of 62 per cent. This score is largely consistent with the findings of the previous Wave 5 survey conducted earlier in 2024.

The GAON Wave 6 report, based on a wide-ranging survey involving Dubai residents conducted in September and October 2024, highlights shifting dining preferences alongside detailed demographic insights.

The research surveyed more than 1,100 respondents representing a variety of demographics, providing a balanced representation of Dubai's diverse population.

The survey sample included a 55 per cent male to 45 per cent female split, with 55 per cent of respondents aged 35 and under, 30 per cent aged 35-44, and 15 per cent over 45.

Additionally, the findings of the Wave 6 report underscore the city's multicultural fabric.

UAE nationals represented 18 per cent of respondents, followed by MENA nationals (25 per cent), South Asians (20 per cent), North East and South East Asians (10 per cent), GCC nationals (12 per cent), and Western Europeans and other nationalities (15 per cent). This diversity mirrors the rich and varied culinary landscape that continues to make Dubai a global gastronomy hub.

GAON Wave 6 also tabulated the net satisfaction scores (NSS) across the city's key gastronomic pillars:

 NSS VALUE

 CHANGE FROM WAVE 5

RANGE OF CUISINES

70% NSS

+3%

Dubai's vast array of restaurants offering diverse global cuisines remains one of its strongest attributes. The rise in satisfaction compared to the Wave 5 survey reinforces Dubai's reputation as a global culinary hub.

FUSION AND INNOVATION

61% NSS

+2%

Interest in fusion menus featuring new and innovative flavours continues to rise. Dubai's diners are increasingly drawn to creative culinary concepts that merge traditional techniques with modern influences, reflecting the city's vibrant, multicultural identity.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

58% NSS

+1%

Dubai's reputation for delivering the finest Arabic and Emirati cuisine remains unmatched. For restaurants that champion local traditions, this trend underscores an opportunity to further capitalise on this demand.

WORLD-CLASS CHEFS

64% NSS

+2%

This highlights the popularity of chef-led dining concepts and signature menus that elevate Dubai's gastronomy scene to an international standard. MICHELIN-starred venues and the inclusion of global culinary talent play a significant role in this perception.

**NSS is a metric used to measure the overall satisfaction of a group of respondents. It is calculated by taking the percentage of respondents who report being satisfied (or very satisfied) and subtracting the percentage who report being dissatisfied (or very dissatisfied).*



Cleanliness and variety

The key ingredients shaping dining choices in Dubai

Dubai residents value hygiene, cuisine variety, ambiance, and service quality when choosing where to dine at in the city, according to the findings of the GAON Wave 6 study, which took into account both everyday dining and special occasions.

At the forefront is hygiene, cited by 50 per cent of all respondents as the most important deciding factor. This aligns with the city's emphasis on safety and cleanliness, ensuring diners feel secure in their chosen venues.

Following closely is the type of cuisine offered, which saw a significant rise from 34 per cent to 49 per cent (Wave 5 v 6) for everyday dining and 32 per cent to 45 per cent in the case of special

occasions, showcasing Dubai's diverse culinary tastes and the importance of menus tailored to a variety of preferences.

Ambiance was another influential factor when it came to special occasion dining, rising from 33 per cent to 43 per cent. Interestingly, while service quality remains important in this category, it saw a slight dip in importance from 46 per cent to 42 per cent, indicating that diners may now be weighing other elements, such as cuisine and setting, more heavily.

Value for money is becoming more important, with 38 per cent of everyday diners citing this as a factor, up from 31 per cent in Wave 5.

Online reviews were also becoming more influential in both everyday dining (27 per cent; +2 per cent) and special occasion (34 per cent; +4 per cent) decision-making. Notably, the consideration of eco-friendly and sustainable practices declined from 11 per cent to 7 per cent, indicating that while sustainability is a priority in some aspects, it may not be a decisive factor for dining out on special occasions.

Overall, the findings highlight how Dubai's dining scene continues to evolve. For restaurateurs, understanding these priorities offers a clear roadmap to meeting customer expectations and standing out in a highly competitive market.



50%

Of Dubai residents cite cleanliness as the most important factor when selecting where to dine

Dubai Eats

A recipe for social media success

The Dubai Eats social media campaign is a strategic initiative from the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism aimed at showcasing the emirate's burgeoning food scene.

By harnessing the reach and engagement of popular social media platforms, Dubai Eats has become a pivotal tool in promoting the city's diverse dining offerings to both local audiences and international visitors.

Dubai Eats has proven a hit with the UAE's 10.73 million active social media users, with the account showcasing short-form videos, captivating images, and user-generated content to increase market penetration and drive user engagement. Hashtags like #MyDubai and #DubaiEats have amplified the campaign's reach, increasing engagement on popular platforms such as Instagram.

Interactive content like food challenges, chef stories, and behind-the-scenes kitchen tours has kept audiences hooked. Notably, videos showcasing sustainability efforts and innovative dishes resonate strongly with users, driving double the engagement rates of standard posts, according to DET data.

Dubai's dining scene is fertile ground for social media campaigns like Dubai Eats. According to DET data, 70 per cent of UAE diners consult social media before choosing a restaurant, making an engaging online presence essential. Posts and stories featuring chef narratives or eco-friendly practices routinely double standard engagement rates, demonstrating the campaign's alignment with audience interests.

Furthermore, 52 per cent of UAE residents dine out three times a week, while 72 per cent of international visitors report high satisfaction with Dubai's culinary offerings. By engaging with these users, Dubai Eats can directly influence their dining decisions.

Looking ahead, the campaign plans to expand its



10.73m

Active social media users in the UAE

(source: DataReportal)



70%

Of all UAE diners consult social media before choosing a restaurant



52%

Of UAE residents dine out three times a week

focus on emerging dining trends, ranging from AI-powered, personalised dining experiences to zero-waste cooking and farm-to-table experiences, to boost its market penetration and capture new users.

Ultimately, Dubai Eats exemplifies how social media can bridge local traditions with global trends. By fostering an authentic connection between restaurants and diners, the campaign is more than just a showcase – it's a celebration of what makes Dubai one of the world's most unique culinary destinations.

Food festivals reinforce Dubai's status as a global gastronomy hub



DFF 2024's e& Beach Canteen featured 48 local vendors

In 2024, Dubai boosted its reputation as a leading gastronomy destination with an impressive lineup of world-renowned food festivals and events that attracted food lovers and industry experts from around the world.

The internationally acclaimed Dubai Food Festival (DFF) celebrated its 11th edition in 2024 with a 23-day showcase that featured an impressive array of events, citywide promotions, and activations.

Staged from 19 April to 12 May and featuring a record 769 participating restaurants, DFF 2024 reinforced Dubai's status as one of the world's top foodie destinations.

Aligning with the primary goal of Dubai Economic Agenda, D33, to double the size of the city's economy by 2033, the festival highlighted the emirate's commitment to expanding its gastronomy offerings, while promoting diversity and innovation.



769

F&B outlets participated in DFF 2024, setting a new record for the event

DFF 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

10 Dirham Dish

The 10 Dirham Dish initiative returned to Dubai Food Festival for its second edition, with 525 participating F&B venues from across the city offering their finest signature dishes at the cut-rate price of just AED10.

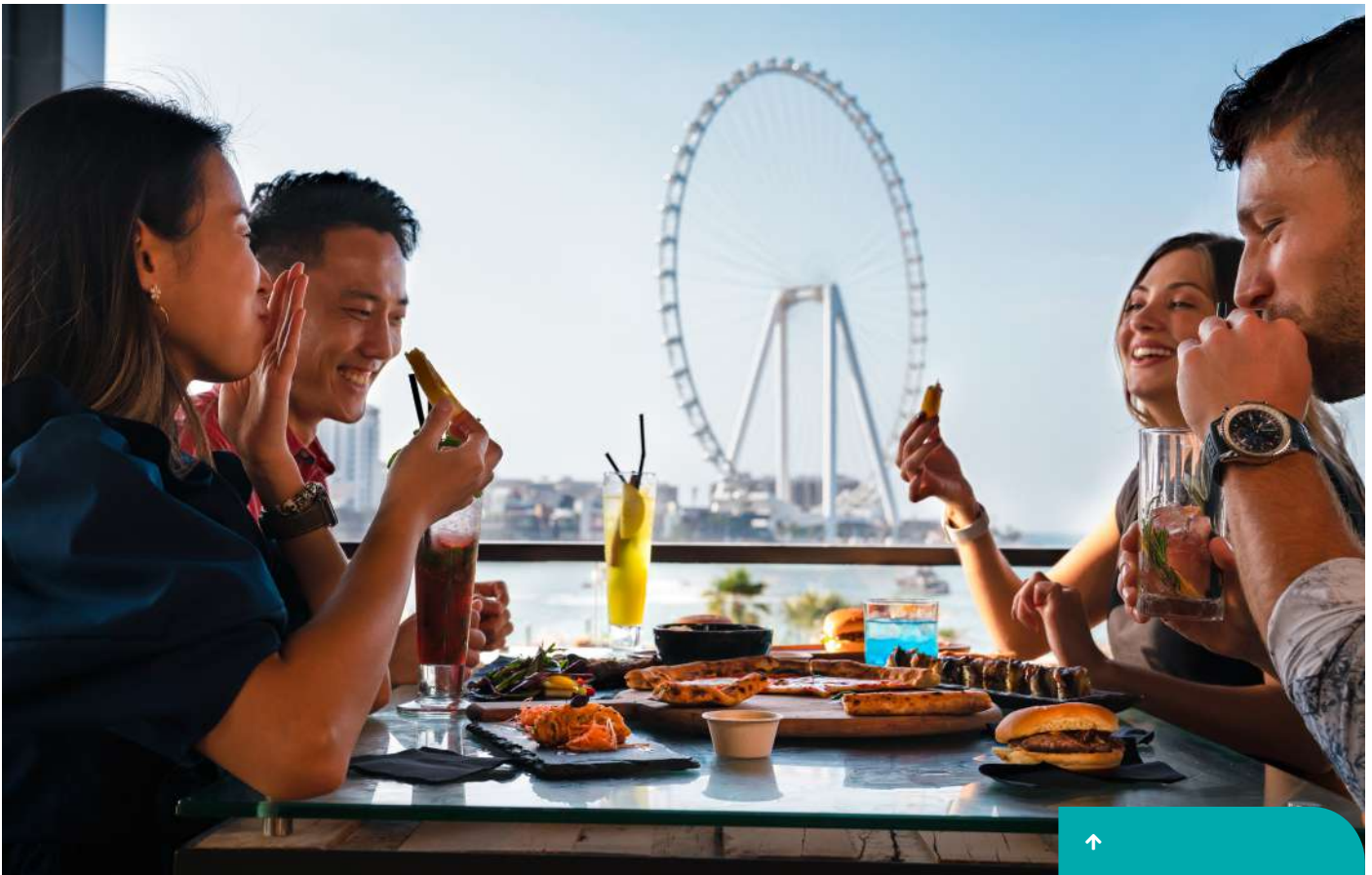
The popular initiative celebrated Dubai's culinary diversity with cuisines ranging from Korean and Greek to Persian and Mexican.

e& Beach Canteen

The e& Beach Canteen once again attracted crowds from across Dubai drawn to its 18-day fusion of food, music, fashion, and interactive experiences. Featuring 50 food vendors – 48 of which were homegrown – the event exemplified Dubai's focus on fostering local culinary talent.

Highlights included a culinary theatre, cooking workshops, and group fitness sessions including Yogafit and other family friendly activities.

The e& Beach Canteen also hosted the Food Focus Dubai photography competition, which showcased 1,100 photo entries capturing the essence of Dubai's bustling street food scene. ▶



Chef's Menu

Making its debut in 2024, DFF's Chef's Menu promotion took Dubai's fast-growing fine dining scene to new heights, with 26 top-tier restaurants offering specially curated multi-course menus.

The initiative provided diners the chance to enjoy exclusive culinary experiences, allowing them to engage directly with renowned chefs and gain insights into their inspirations and techniques. Participating chefs included Chef Himanshu Saini of Trèsind Studio, who presented a menu themed Rising India, Chef Kelvin Cheung of Jun's, whose menu fused modern American and Asian flavours with Middle Eastern influences, and Chef Andy Toh of Hakkasan Dubai.

Foodie Experiences

The Foodie Experiences initiative involved 52 unique activations, including chef collaborations, masterclasses, and exclusive tastings. Highlights included a four-hands dinner by chefs Mohamad Orfali and Shane Delia at Orfali Bros, and family-friendly activities like pastry workshops for children.

26



Restaurants participated in the debut Chef's Menu, offering multi-course fine dining experiences

Citywide Promotions

DFF significantly broadened its scope in 2024, integrating retail, leisure and hospitality promotions to enhance the overall festival experience.

A notable highlight was the participation of 171 retail brands, both online and in-store across citywide malls, which featured retail promotions, flash sales, and activations, adding an exciting shopping dimension to the culinary festivities.

DFF also featured five external events, including the Satwa Street Food Festival and Breakfast at The Beach JBR, which added a shopping and leisure dimension to the festival.

The 2024 event included activations across hotels and destinations, offering additional avenues for food enthusiasts to immerse themselves in Dubai's dynamic culinary landscape.

Dubai's annual gastronomic showcase is set to evolve further in 2025, with key campaigns being staged throughout the course of the year.

This unique ability to blend culinary excellence with innovation and accessibility demonstrates why Dubai remains a trailblazer in global dining.

By fostering local talent, promoting sustainable practices, and delivering diverse dining experiences, DFF continues to position Dubai as a must-visit destination for food enthusiasts worldwide.



DFF 2024 featured an exciting range of culinary experiences to tempt residents and visitors alike

Dubai Restaurant Week attracts record interest

A key highlight of the 2024 Dubai Food Festival, the much-anticipated Dubai Restaurant Week attracted the involvement of 68 leading restaurants from across the city, resulting in a remarkable 26 per cent year-on-year increase in bookings.

Diners could select between specially curated two-course lunch menus (priced at AED125) and three-course dinners (AED250).

Participating restaurants included a diverse array of acclaimed dining institutions, showcasing the best of Dubai's culinary scene. Among them were ROKA, known for its contemporary Japanese robata-yaki cuisine, and 21Grams, a homegrown urban Balkan



bistro celebrated for its soulful dishes. Reif Kushiya, helmed by award-winning Chef Reif Othman, brought its innovative Japanese street food-inspired concept, while Carnival by Trèsiend captivated diners with its avant-garde take on Indian cuisine.

Emirati cuisine was also well represented by establishments including Al Nafoorah, famed for its authentic flavours and warm hospitality, and Arabian Tea House, a cultural gem known for its signature dishes and commitment to heritage.

Sustainability also took centre stage, with MICHELIN Green Star-awarded restaurants Lowe and BOCA offering eco-friendly dining experiences.

Gulfood marks largest instalment yet in 2024

Gulfood

The 2024 instalment of Gulfood was the largest in the event's near-30-year history. Staged at the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) from 19 to 23 February, the event cemented its reputation as the world's premier F&B sourcing platform, attracting more than 5,500 exhibitors and visitors from 190 countries. With its theme, 'Real Food, Real Business', the show not only celebrated global culinary excellence but also set the stage for transformative discussions about the future of the industry.

From addressing global food challenges to showcasing groundbreaking innovations, the event also underscored its critical role in shaping the future of the F&B ecosystem.

Keynote speakers and panellists at the Gulfood Inspire Conference explored a spectrum of pressing topics, including digitalisation, sustainable food systems, and investment strategies.

Innovative solutions in agricultural technology, alternative proteins, and sustainability were front and centre, with exhibitors demonstrating how technology is revolutionising every aspect of food production,

from farm to fork. Featuring more than 100 chefs, including global icons Alain Passard, Enrico Cerea and Joan Roca, the 2024 Top Table initiative showcased culinary talent on an unprecedented scale. For the first time, the platform hosted chefs with a combined 21 MICHELIN stars across various live culinary demonstrations, masterclasses, and discussions.

The event also shone a light on homegrown talent, including renowned Dubai-based chefs Mohamad Orfali and Solemann Haddad.

Meanwhile, the third edition of the YouthX Chef Challenge provided a platform for emerging talent from around the world.

Teams from the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kenya, and the United States competed in a high-stakes grand finale, with the winners earning an internship at a three-MICHELIN-starred restaurant.

This initiative underscored Gulfood's commitment to fostering the next generation of culinary leaders and empowering them to spearhead innovation.

Ultimately, Gulfood's success in 2024 not only highlights Dubai's pivotal role in the F&B sector but also sets a high benchmark for future editions.

World's 50 Best Restaurants

– MENA edition

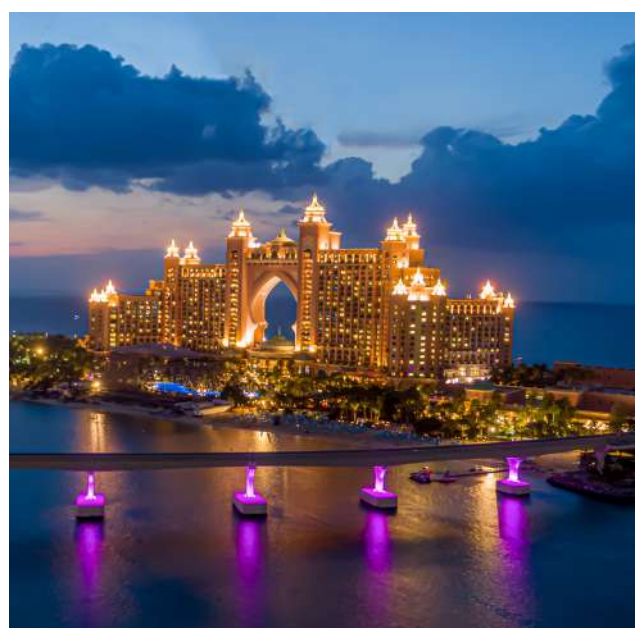
Dubai's finest dining institutions dominated the Middle East and North Africa's 50 Best Restaurants 2024 list, with 19 establishments included among the top 50 and the following five featuring in the top 10:

POSITION

- #1 Orfali Bros Bistro**
Named the region's top restaurant for the second year running, this homegrown favourite is known for its creative dishes, outstanding flavours, and exceptional dining experiences.
- #2 Trèsind Studio**
Retaining its second-place position from 2023, this modern Indian fine dining institution, led by Chef Himanshu Saini, offers intricately plated and expertly spiced degustation menus in an intimate setting. The restaurant also came in at #13 in the World's 50 Best Restaurants list for 2024.
- #3 Ossiano**
Atlantis, The Palm's signature restaurant, Ossiano provides an immersive dining experience complete with underwater views and innovative seafood dishes.
- #4 Moonrise**
Ranking fourth in the 2024 MENA 50 Best Restaurants list, Moonrise is recognised for its innovative, multi-course degustation menu blending regional flavours with international influences, conceived by award-winning head chef Solemann Haddad.
- #6 3Fils**
Rounding out the top six for 2024, 3Fils is celebrated for its modern Asian dishes with Japanese influences, offering a casual yet refined dining experience.



↑ Trèsind Studio was named among the World's 50 Best Restaurants for 2024



↑ Atlantis, The Palm signature restaurant Ossiano ranked 3rd in the MENA 50 Best Restaurants 2024

2024 MICHELIN Guide Dubai

The 2024 edition of the acclaimed MICHELIN Guide Dubai featured 106 restaurants, up from 90 in 2023, with four awarded two stars, 15 one star, three green stars, 18 Bib Gourmands, and 69 MICHELIN-selected restaurants



106
Restaurants



4
two stars



15
one star



3
green star



18
Bib Gourmands

69

MICHELIN-selected
restaurants



MICHELIN TWO STAR WINNERS

Il Ristorante Niko Romito

The five-star Bulgari Hotel & Resorts' signature restaurant is famous for reimagining Italian favourites, from Parmigiano Reggiano soup and roasted langoustines salad to spaghetti with sea urchins.

STAY by Yannick Alléno

This signature restaurant located in the luxurious One&Only The Palm takes a cutting-edge approach to classic French cuisine, showcasing innovative cooking and presentation techniques. The restaurant's remarkable Pastry Library, where desserts are tailor-crafted to perfection, is a perennial highlight.

Row on 45

Curated by renowned British chef Jason Atherton, this exclusive fine dining restaurant was Dubai's newest two-star establishment in 2024. Diners are treated to a meticulously crafted 17-course haute cuisine menu, divided into three acts. Each course reflects Atherton's culinary journey and passion for global ingredients.

Trèsind Studio

Chef Himanshu Saini's Trèsind Studio is widely celebrated as one of the region's finest restaurants. Known for its meticulously curated degustation menus, each dish is thoughtfully choreographed to follow a specific order, creating an unforgettable culinary journey that leaves a lasting impression on diners.



MICHELIN ONE STAR WINNERS

11 Woodfire Led by Chef Akmal Anuar, 11 Woodfire offers a chic, yet casual dining experience focused on wood-fired grilling.

Al Muntaha Perched on the top floor of the iconic Jumeirah Burj Al Arab, Al Muntaha delivers an exceptional fine dining experience.

Armani/Ristorante Housed within Burj Khalifa, Armani/Ristorante exudes class and style, offering a refined menu rooted in authentic Italian culinary traditions.

avatāra Offering diners an exclusive vegetarian degustation experience, avatāra showcases soulful Indian cuisine crafted from locally sourced, seasonal ingredients.

Dinner by Heston Blumenthal With an elegant ambiance that mirrors its original Knightsbridge, London location, this fine dining institution includes a private dining room for up to 12 guests.

Hakkasan Dubai This Atlantis, The Palm institution showcases innovative Cantonese cuisine, alongside outstanding vegan and vegetarian options.

Hōseki Located at Bvlgari Resort, Hōseki offers an authentic omakase experience curated by Japanese sushi master, Masahiro Sugiyama.

La Dame de Pic Celebrated chef Anne-Sophie Pic pairs innovative ingredients with refined French cooking techniques, continuing her family's legacy of culinary excellence.

Moonrise Moonrise is recognised for its innovative, multi-course degustation menu blending regional flavours with international influences.

Orfali Bros Headed by celebrity chef Mohamad Orfali and his brothers, Omar and Wassim, Orfali Bros is renowned for its innovative menu showcasing the finest local ingredients.

Ossiano This renowned fine dining institution serves up an immersive, multi-course degustation menu, with floor-to-ceiling views of Atlantis, The Palm's iconic aquarium.

Sagetsu by Tetsuya Chef Tetsuya Wakuda delivers a sensational seasonal menu that blends the finest Japanese ingredients with French-inspired cooking.

Smoked Room Nestled within Dani Garcia's Leña at St. Regis Gardens, Palm Jumeirah, Smoked Room offers an intimate omakase-style dining experience for just 14 guests.

Tasca by José Avillez Tasca by José Avillez, the celebrity chef's first restaurant outside Portugal, brings elevated Portuguese cuisine to the sixth floor of Mandarin Oriental Jumeira.

Torno Subito Chef Massimo Bottura's first venture outside Italy and featuring a menu of Italian classics, Torno Subito offers a casual beachside dining experience at W Dubai – The Palm.



MICHELIN GREEN STAR WINNERS

BOCA Renowned for its commitment to sustainability, this DIFC dining institution blends Mediterranean flavours with local ingredients to serve up a series of exciting tapas-style dishes.

LOWE Led by Chef Kate Christou, LOWE is celebrated for its creative fusion dishes and commitment to sustainability, earning it a spot on MENA's 50 Best Restaurants list and the 2024 MICHELIN Dubai Guide.

Teible Located at Jaddaf Waterfront, Teible offers a farm-to-table dining experience that promotes a minimal-waste philosophy. Diners are treated to innovative seasonal dishes ranging from camel ricotta caramel pasta to the restaurant's signature 'Sour Mountain' dessert made with locally foraged rosemary.

GAULT & MILLAU GUIDE 2024

The 2024 edition of the prestigious guide to the UAE's dining scene awarded a remarkable 48 Dubai restaurants 'Toques' – the French term for chef's hats – denoting their commitment to culinary excellence. The guide employs a 20-point rating system, with scores translating into 'Toques'.



32

DUBAI RESTAURANTS received one 'Toque' for their commitment to 'cuisine where essential techniques are mastered'

9

Received two 'Toques', denoting a 'new take on cuisine, prioritising quality products and... technical execution'

3

Received three 'Toques', highlighting their 'remarkable execution [and commitment to] using local and seasonal produce'

2

Received four 'Toques' for specialising in cuisine that 'provokes emotion, based on products of exceptional quality, marked by a personal signature style'



FOUR TOQUES RECIPIENTS

Al Muntaha

Located on the 27th floor of Jumeirah Burj Al Arab and providing remarkable, sweeping views over the Arabian Gulf, Al Muntaha fittingly translates to 'the ultimate' in English. Under the leadership of renowned Chef Saverio Sbaragli, this award-winning restaurant serves exquisite French and Italian dishes.

Trèsind Studio

Steered by acclaimed Chef Himanshu Saini and regarded as one of the region's finest restaurants, Trèsind Studio is known for its meticulously curated degustation menus, with each dish thoughtfully choreographed to follow a specific order, delivering an unforgettable culinary journey.

Gastronomy as a pillar of Dubai's long-term economic growth strategy



The Dubai Economic Agenda, D33, is an ambitious blueprint designed to double the size of the emirate's economy and consolidate Dubai's position as a leading global city for business and leisure. Central to this transformation is the ongoing expansion of the city's tourism and hospitality sectors, as well as its meetings, incentives, conferences and events (MICE) industry.

Dubai's rapid emergence as one of the world's top gastronomy hubs means the city's F&B industry has a vital role to play in driving economic growth alongside these vertical sectors.

Its rapid expansion aligns perfectly with D33's goals of boosting tourism and creating a dynamic, inclusive economy.

Dubai's thriving gastronomy scene also plays a pivotal role in the city's mission to become a global liveability hub.

With close to 200 nationalities today calling the emirate home, Dubai's culinary landscape mirrors its reputation as one of the world's great multicultural cities, offering a diverse array of cuisines that cater to all tastes, preferences

and budgets. This inherent sense of inclusivity, combined with the city's steadfast commitment to safety and security, has created a truly vibrant environment where residents and visitors alike can savour world-class dining experiences.

By embracing culinary diversity as a cornerstone of its identity, Dubai is strengthening its appeal as an exciting, welcoming, and dynamic place to live and thrive.

The expansion of Dubai's hotel and hospitality sectors under D33 - alongside the consistent growth of its tourism industry - spells good news for the city's F&B scene, with the majority of new hotel openings in the city positioning their gastronomy offerings as key revenue drivers.

This growth creates substantial opportunities for the city's F&B sector, which will directly benefit from the development of new on-site restaurants, cafés, and bars.

These future establishments will not only cater to the growing number of international visitors but also strengthen Dubai's reputation as a leading global destination for exceptional culinary experiences. ►



Dubai's gastronomy sector serves as a powerful economic driver in several ways:



Tourism revenue Dining is a major contributor to visitor spending. Tourists increasingly choose destinations based on the culinary experiences available, making Dubai's rich gastronomy offerings a key attraction.



Job creation The increasing number of restaurants, cafés, and food-related services supports thousands of jobs in sectors such as hospitality, agriculture, and logistics.



Local supply chains The sector stimulates demand for local and international food products, creating a ripple effect across Dubai's supply chain while boosting trade.



Under D33, the increasing focus on sustainability is set to further amplify the gastronomy sector's economic impact. Initiatives such as reducing food waste, promoting farm-to-table dining, and incorporating local produce into menus not only support environmental goals but also foster innovation and efficiency within the industry.

The promotion of farm-to-table dining is a particular highlight, encouraging chefs and restaurants to source ingredients directly from local farms. This reduces the carbon footprint associated with transportation, while also supporting regional agriculture and fostering a deeper connection between diners and the local environment.

Incorporating local produce into menus is not only environmentally beneficial but also drives culinary creativity. By leveraging the unique flavours and seasonal offerings available in the UAE, Dubai's gastronomy sector can deliver authentic, innovative dining experiences that resonate with both residents and tourists.

These sustainability initiatives reflect Dubai's broader commitment to environmental stewardship under D33, positioning the city as a leader in fostering a future-ready gastronomy industry that combines economic growth with responsible practices.

The growth of Dubai's MICE industry – another pillar of D33 – is closely linked to the city's gastronomy sector. High-profile international events and conferences bring thousands of attendees who contribute significantly to the hospitality and F&B sectors. From gala dinners at luxury hotels to tailored dining experiences for corporate events, Dubai's gastronomy scene plays a critical role in ensuring the success of these events.

Upcoming large-scale projects under D33 will also provide state-of-the-art venues that integrate dining experiences, further enhancing the city's appeal for business tourism. As Dubai positions itself as a hub for global events, its gastronomy sector will remain a vital component in consolidating its reputation for delivering world-class hospitality.

CLOSING STATEMENT

As we conclude the Dubai Gastronomy Industry Report 2024, it is evident that the city has firmly established itself as a global culinary capital, a shining symbol of innovation and excellence. Dubai's vibrant and diverse dining scene has not only captured the attention of food enthusiasts worldwide but has also played a pivotal role in driving the emirate's economic growth.

The past year has been particularly noteworthy, with the issuance of almost 1,200 new restaurant licences in 2024, reflecting not just growth, but the robust confidence investors and entrepreneurs place in our market, further elevating Dubai's reputation as a gastronomy hub.

Dubai's culinary achievements continue to earn international acclaim, reflecting the creativity, dedication, and talent of chefs, restaurateurs, and industry professionals who have transformed the city into a premier dining destination.

Together, they have curated a gastronomic landscape that seamlessly blends tradition with innovation, luxury with accessibility, and global influences with local flavours.

We extend our gratitude to all those who contribute to the industry's success on a daily basis. We also appreciate those who contributed to this report, from the individuals who shared their insights to our stakeholders and partners, as well as the organisations that have played a

pivotal role in Dubai's gastronomic journey. Your passion and dedication have been instrumental in the growth of Dubai's culinary scene.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to further strengthening Dubai's position as a leading world-class gastronomy hub.

Our focus will continue to be on fostering innovation, sustainability, and culinary diversity, ensuring that Dubai attracts industry talent and delights food lovers from around the world.

We invite investors, entrepreneurs and culinary professionals to join us in shaping the future of dining in Dubai. As we celebrate the successes of 2024, we look forward to building on this momentum, setting new benchmarks for excellence in 2025 and beyond.

Thank you once again to everyone who has been involved in this incredible journey to date – your contributions are helping shape the future of Dubai's dynamic culinary scene.

Ahmed Al Khaja

CEO of Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment (DFRE), part of the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (DET)

