

ZAGAT®

Fast-Food Chains **2007**

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The reviews published in this guide are based on public opinion surveys, with numerical ratings reflecting the average scores given by all survey participants who voted on each establishment and text based on direct quotes from, or fair paraphrasings of, participants' comments. Phone numbers, addresses and other factual information were correct to the best of our knowledge when published in this guide; any subsequent changes may not be reflected.

Ratings & Symbols

Area, Address & Contact	Zagat Top Spot	Name	Zagat Ratings			
			FOOD	FACIL.	SERVICE	OVERALL
Review, surveyor comments in quotes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tim & Nina's	23	9	13	10
	800-977-6000 www.zagat.com					
<p>"Riding the wave of the diet chili-cheese dog craze", this "el cheapo" chain will keep a family of four full for a fortnight with its trademark "Ooey, Gooey Links 'n' Suds", which have "zero fat grams and no calories"; families unfazed by service and facilities that "have gone to the dogs" say just "order the T&N Special" (four franks "piled high" with chili, cheese, mayo and "those deep-fried pickles") and "don't forget the antioxidant-rich chocolate shake" to wash it down; P.S. service may be "slow" but "security is excellent" as they only hire retired cops as staff.</p>						

Ratings **Food, Facilities, Service** and **Overall** ratings are on a scale of 0 to 30.

- poor to fair
- fair to good
- good to very good
- very good to excellent
- extraordinary to perfection

The **Overall** ratings are the average of each chain's ratings for Food, Facilities and Service.

Symbols Zagat Top Spot (based on highest ratings, popularity and importance)

About This Survey



Here are the results of our most recent **Fast-Food Chains Survey**, covering 24 of the country's largest fast-food franchises (a separate **Full-Service Chains Survey** covers the 21 major sit-down, aka "family," chains). Like all of our surveys, it's based on the collective opinions of thousands of savvy consumers.

FINDINGS: Our surveyors have rated each chain on its Food, Facilities and Service. We also asked them to rate Healthy Options. The eight-point disparity between the average score for Food (18 on the Zagat 30-point scale) and for Healthy Options (10) reflects a high level of dissatisfaction with the low-fat and low-calorie choices that surveyors feel they are being given at most fast-food outlets. Highlighting the fast-food industry's challenge, 93% of respondents indicate that they are concerned about the health consequences of eating fast food. Roughly half of the fast-food chains scored below 10, i.e. only fair to poor, for their Healthy Options. However, certain chains - Subway, Panera Bread and Chipotle, for example - rated particularly well. The average Facility and Service ratings also lagged behind Food, but with a more respect-worthy 14 and 15, respectively.



WHO PARTICIPATED: Input from over 5,500 avid diners forms the basis for the ratings and reviews in this Survey (their comments are shown in quotation marks within the reviews). Of these surveyors, 61% are women, 39% men; the average age is 43.

TOP LISTS: To see which chains scored the highest ratings, see Popularity Rankings and Top Ratings (pages 5-6).



ABOUT ZAGAT: This marks our 28th year reporting on the shared experiences of consumers like you. What started in 1979 as a hobby involving 200 of our friends has come a long way. Today we have over 300,000 surveyors and now cover dining, entertaining, golf, hotels, movies, music, nightlife, resorts, shopping, spas, theater and tourist attractions worldwide.

MAKE YOUR OPINION COUNT: We invite you to join any of our upcoming surveys - just register at zagat.com, where you can rate and review establishments year-round. Each participant will receive a free copy of the resulting guide when published.

AVAILABILITY: Zagat guides are available in all major bookstores, by subscription at zagat.com, and for use on BlackBerry, Palm, Windows Mobile devices and mobile phones via **Zagat To Go**.

FEEDBACK: There is always room for improvement, thus we invite your comments and suggestions about any aspect of our performance. Just contact us at fastfood@zagat.com.

New York, NY
May 11, 2007

Nina and Tim Zagat

Top Ratings

Ratings are shown to the left of each chain's name.

FOOD

ALL CHAINS

- 24** Panera Bread Co.
- 23** Chick-fil-A
- Chipotle
- 20** Quizno's Sub
- Wendy's

MEGA-CHAINS*

- 20** Wendy's
- 18** Subway
- 17** Pizza Hut
- Dairy Queen
- 16** KFC

FACILITIES

ALL CHAINS

- 23** Panera Bread Co.
- 20** Chipotle
- Chick-fil-A
- 17** Sonic Drive-In
- 16** Quizno's Sub

MEGA-CHAINS

- 15** Wendy's
- 14** McDonald's
- Subway
- 13** Pizza Hut
- 12** Dairy Queen

SERVICE

ALL CHAINS

- 20** Chick-fil-A
- 19** Panera Bread Co.
- Chipotle
- Sonic Drive-In
- 16** Quizno's Sub

MEGA-CHAINS

- 16** Subway
- 15** Wendy's
- 14** Domino's Pizza
- Pizza Hut
- Dairy Queen

OVERALL

ALL CHAINS

- 22** Panera Bread Co.
- 21** Chick-fil-A
- Chipotle
- 18** Sonic Drive-In
- Quizno's Sub

MEGA-CHAINS

- 17** Wendy's
- 16** Subway
- 15** Pizza Hut
- 14** Dairy Queen
- McDonald's

POPULARITY RANKINGS

ALL CHAINS

- 1** Panera Bread Co.
- 2** Wendy's
- 3** Subway
- 4** Chick-fil-A
- 5** Chipotle

MEGA-CHAINS

- 1** Wendy's
- 2** Subway
- 3** McDonald's
- 4** Taco Bell
- 5** Burger King

* Mega-chains have at least 5,000 outlets.

CATEGORY FAVORITES

BEST BURGER

1. Wendy's
2. Burger King
3. McDonald's
4. Carl's Jr.
5. Hardee's*

BEST CHICKEN

1. Chick-fil-A
2. KFC
3. Popeye's
4. Wendy's
5. Chipotle

BEST FRENCH FRIES

1. McDonald's
2. Burger King

3. Wendy's*

4. Arby's

5. Chick-fil-A*

BEST SHAKES

1. Dairy Queen
2. McDonald's
3. Sonic Drive-In
4. Wendy's
5. Arby's

CHILD-FRIENDLY

1. McDonald's
2. Chick-fil-A
3. Burger King
4. Wendy's
5. Pizza Hut

* Indicates a tie with chain above



**FAST-FOOD
CHAINS
ALPHABETICAL
DIRECTORY**

FAST-FOOD CHAINS

	FOOD	FACIL.	SERVICE	OVERALL
Arby's www.arbys.com Maybe the "classic" order at this "old stalwart" - "roast beef and cheese with horsey sauce and curly fries" - is "close to nirvana", but the rest of its "varied" offerings are deemed strictly middling, "viable" "healthier options" like the Market Fresh salads and sandwiches notwithstanding; skeptics who find its "older" facilities "tired" and its service "poor" suggest it's time to "update and educate."	18	14	14	16
Burger King 800-522-1278 www.bk.com "Charbroiled" burgers among the "tastiest in the business" are the standout at this mega-chain whose otherwise just-"ok" fare includes "few healthy options" (though "let's face it - you want a Whopper when you go here, not a salad"); "less-than-royal" facilities and service may be the reason some say it's "falling behind the competition" - and that "creepy King character" in their TV commercials "isn't helping."	14	11	11	12
Carl's Jr. 877-799-7827 www.carlsjr.com A "notch above the mainstream chains", this West Coast franchise is known for its "thick, juicy burgers" - including a "mega"-size version that's among the heftiest in the business - as well as its "tasty accompaniments" and "thick, wonderfully nostalgic shakes"; as for its notorious TV commercials, what's "tacky" to some suits others fine ("loved that Paris Hilton ad!").	18	14	14	16
Chick-fil-A 866-232-2040 www.chickfila.com The "best chicken in fast food" comes from this Georgia-based "soccer mom's dream" chain, which is nearly as popular for its "exceptional" service, "clean" facilities and "family values" ("educational kids' meal toys!") as for its signature "love-'em" bird sandwiches and "to-die-for" waffle fries; better still, most agree the goods seem "healthier" and "less-processed" than the rest of the flock.	23	20	20	21
Chipotle www.chipotle.com Touted as "the new generation of fast food", this Tex-Mex chain, until recently owned by McDonald's, makes its "addictive", "customized" south-of-the-border specialties with "quality" ingredients and serves them in "clean", "edgy-looking" quarters; most agree it offers real "on-the-go value" (hence the "long but fast-moving lines"), though health-conscious diners warn that those "huge, delicious burritos" are "chock-full of calories."	23	20	19	21
Dairy Queen www.dairyqueen.com "Does it get any better than a Blizzard on a hot summer's day?" muse mavens of this old standby that's voted No. 1 for milkshakes, though beyond its "can't-be-beat" soft-serve ice cream products, most say the food's best "only if you're really hungry"; its "1960s-throwback outdoor locations" have nostalgic appeal, but otherwise the facilities are "often questionable."	17	12	14	14

FAST-FOOD CHAINS

	FOOD	FACIL.	SERVICE	OVERALL
Domino's Pizza	13	9	14	12
www.dominos.com				
Putting "the 'fast' in fast-food pizza", this chain is most appreciated for its "convenient delivery" ("a major plus late-night") and "tremendous map coverage"; as for the pies themselves, the general consensus is "greasy and bland", with "soft, cardboard-like" crusts and "skimpy toppings", but even critics concede they're "good in a pinch"; P.S. "ok, people, pizza isn't for the health nut."				
Hardee's	19	14	15	16
877-799-7827 www.hardees.com				
This chain is making its reputation as the "man's fast-food place" with its "no wimps" ad campaign and "big, fat, sloppy" Thickburgers that are "tasty", if "not particularly healthy"; it also has a longtime fan base for its "can't-beat-'em" breakfast biscuit sandwiches (prepare to "stand in line behind every contractor in town to order one"), but "so-so" facilities and service are par for the course.				
Jack in the Box	17	13	13	14
800-955-5225 www.jackinthebox.com				
"Witty ads" ("talk to Jack"), "sinful burgers" and some "inventive variations" on the fast-food standards ("love those tacos") put this California-based chain on the map despite its "basic" facilities and service; it lures lovers of the "highly caloric" with the likes of "amazing" shakes "so thick your straw and your head cave in", but as for "healthy options? - get real."				
KFC	16	11	11	13
(aka Kentucky Fried Chicken)				
800-225-5532 www.kfc.com				
"You can always count on the Colonel" for "crispy", "down-home Southern-style" fried chicken according to addicts who have made this chain "one of the giants in fast food"; however, the less-impressed say its bird is "way too greasy" with "too much batter", and also decry "poor facilities", "apathetic employees" and the sensation that "your arteries are hardening at the dining table."				
Little Caesar's Pizza	13	10	14	12
800-722-3727 www.littlecaesars.com				
"Pizza! Pizza!" - this "two-for-one wonder" is noted for its "oh-so-cheap" price levels, if not its "nothing-special" pies, "shabby" facilities and "basic service"; still, the "addictive Crazy Bread" is reputed to be a "staple" of many a "teenaged diet", and "you can't beat the hot-and-ready" deal: "walk right in and pick up a pizza for \$5" without having to call ahead.				
Long John Silver's	16	12	14	14
www.ljsilvers.com				
A change from the "usual burger-and-fries places", this "king of the fast-seafood niche" offers "authentic, greasy, London-style fish 'n' chips" - but "with a drive-thru"; critics carp about the "basic" setups and service, as well as offerings that seem to be "all batter" ("is there really fish in there?"), and wonder why you "can't really get anything that's not deep-fried."				

FAST-FOOD CHAINS

FOOD
FACIL.
SERVICE
OVERALL

McDonald's

15 14 13 14

800-244-6227 | www.mcdonalds.com

"Billions and billions can't be wrong" about this chain that was among "the first" and remains the world's biggest thanks to its "classic" offerings including "irresistible" fries voted No. 1 by a landslide ("I think there's heroin in them"); still, despite the popularity of the Big Mac, skeptics say "there's a reason a [Dollar Menu] burger only costs 99 cents", and as for the "healthier options", "going here for a salad is like going to a crack house for vitamins"; P.S. the "Happy Meal toys" and "play areas" make it the hands-down "kids' favorite."

☑ Panera Bread Co.

24 23 19 22

www.panera.com

Offering "fast food with class" this "winner" is voted "the best of the chains" for both Food and Facilities thanks to its "fantastic" "fresh-baked" breads and "top-notch" sandwiches and such served in "warm, hospitable", relatively "upscale" digs; such "tasty and pleasurable experiences" are deemed "worth" the sometimes "slow" service and tabs slightly "pricey" for the genre; P.S. remember all those "carbs" "can add up quick."

Papa John's Pizza

18 11 15 15

www.papajohns.com

"Pretty decent pizza" "for a delivery chain" is the word on this "crave-worthy" pie purveyor that gets extra points for its "great online ordering" option and "to-die-for garlic butter sauce" "included free" for "dipping the crusts"; still, there are many who find its "thick, breadlike" product "mediocre" and suggest that you "go with the neighborhood" joints instead.

Pizza Hut

17 13 14 15

800-948-8488 | www.pizzahut.com

This "longtime staple"-cum-"cultural icon" slings "tasty, greasy" pizzas with "tons of options" ("thin, crispy crust", "pan, stuffed", etc.) that add up to a "favorite" "guilty pleasure"; still, critics dub it "Pizza Not" and assail its service and facilities that "vary a lot"; P.S. though its "indulgent" pies are "not for the health-conscious", at least "some dine-in spots do have salad bars."

Popeye's

19 11 12 14

877-767-3937 | www.popeyes.com

"Cajun flavor" sets this Louisiana-based chicken chain apart from the "usual generic options" say supporters of its "spicy, juicy" fried bird and sides offering "more variety than the others" ("addictive" red beans and rice, "light, buttery" biscuits); "sorely lacking" service and "dumpy" facilities are part of the bargain.

Quizno's Sub

20 16 16 18

866-486-2783 | www.quiznos.com

Some of the "best subs around" come from this "step-up" sandwich chain whose "unique angle" includes "great ingredients and plenty of 'em", an option for "oven-toasting" and the "best condiment selection"; the main complaint is that it's a tad "overpriced" given the so-so service and "typical fast food-looking" facilities.

FAST-FOOD CHAINS	FOOD	FACIL.	SERVICE	OVERALL
<p>Sbarro's 800-456-4837 www.sbarro.com "Often the best choice in a food court or rest stop", this "savior in airports and malls" offers "basic pizza" and other "not bad" Italian staples that are just the thing when "you're in a hurry" or "your toddler's wailing"; it nearly goes without saying that the fare's "fattening" and "forgettable", while the service and facilities "leave a lot to be desired."</p>	15	12	12	13
<p>Sonic Drive-In 866-657-6642 www.sonicdrivein.com Re-creating the "good old-fashioned drive-in" experience of the 1950s, complete with service via "friendly" "car-hop", this "nostalgic" pick is "fun" "year-round" ("kids love it"), but it's especially apt "when you're too lazy to get out of your car in the summer heat"; most "love the tater tots and limeade", but otherwise the fare's deemed just "so-so", and "not the healthiest" either.</p>	19	17	19	18
<p>Subway 800-888-4848 www.subway.com Voted "the healthiest of the fast-food" pack, this "reliable" contender - "where Jared lost all the weight" - proffers "fresh, tasty, individualized" subs, so you can stack them with "lean meat and veggies" or go for "a fat bomb if you want one"; setups are "bare-bones" and service "varies by location", but most agree it "has a good system for making the sandwiches."</p>	18	14	16	16
<p>Taco Bell 800-822-6235 www.tacobell.com "Gets the job done" say supporters of this "burger alternative" chain, who find its burritos, tacos and such "not bad for generic Tex-Mex" (even if "low-fat options are tough to find"), and say its "value menu" "can't be beat for portion and price"; however, vocal critics who call it the "Chef Boyardee of Mexican-inspired fast food" cite "lousy facilities" and "poor" service and hope its recent health scares will be a "wakeup call."</p>	16	11	12	13
<p>Wendy's www.wendys.com The "best burgers of the fast-food circuit" and "amazingly thick Frosty" shakes come from this longtime "favorite" that also wins plaudits for its "plentiful healthy choices" ("especially for kids' meals") and relatively "reliable facilities and service" for a "big-three" chain; though a few contend it's "not the same since" owner Dave Thomas "passed away", most feel that his "legacy is in tact."</p>	20	15	15	17
<p>White Castle 800-843-2728 www.whitecastle.com A "sackful" of "tiny, pillow-soft, steaming bites of heaven" - "call them sliders or belly-bombers" - from this "old-time" burger franchise is a "favorite" "guilty pleasure" for many a "nostalgic" eater, and the "17-year-old set" too; "bad atmosphere", "sparse locations", "disinterested" staff and scant "nutritional value" come with the territory.</p>	16	10	11	13