



Restaurant Owner Demographics

Data Brief – April 2025

Introduction

The U.S. restaurant industry has a higher proportion of minority- and women-owned businesses than the overall private sector. In addition, restaurant owners are nearly twice as likely as their private sector counterparts to have been born outside of the U.S.

Restaurant ownership is also accessible to younger individuals and those without advanced degrees, which further illustrates the entrepreneurial opportunities in the industry.

Based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Annual Business Survey and Nonemployer Statistics by Demographics programs, this National Restaurant Association Data Brief contains an overview of restaurant owner demographics. Where available, figures are also presented on the state level.

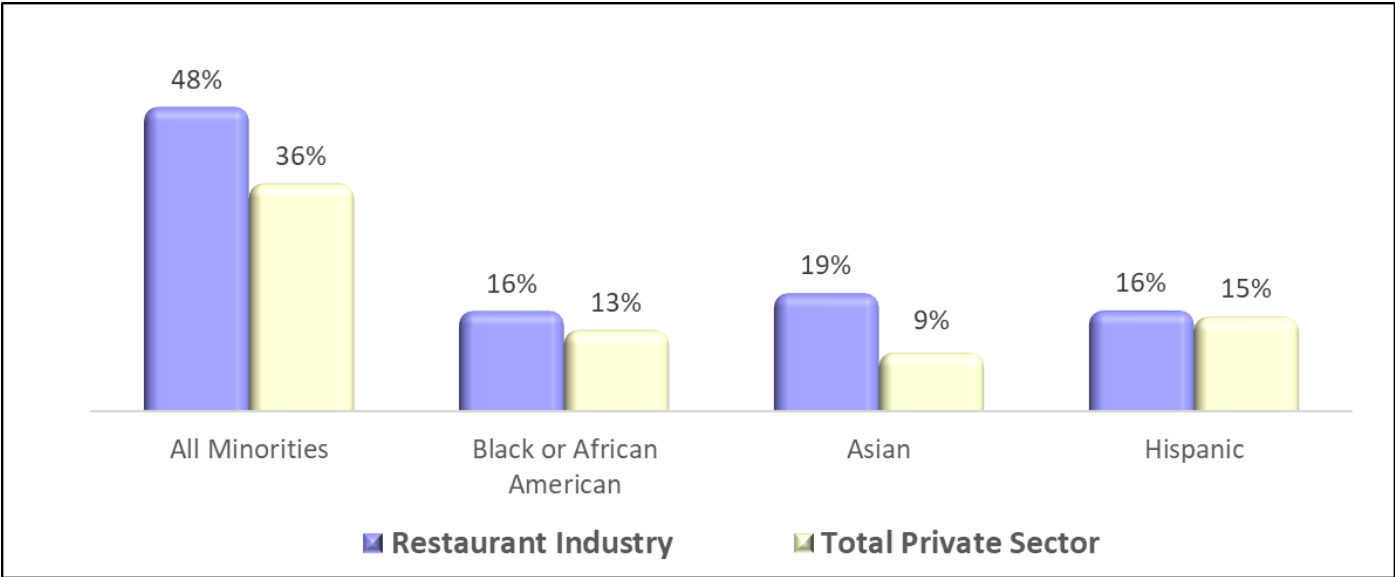
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Nearly Half of Restaurant Businesses are Owned by Minorities

- 48% of restaurant firms are owned by minorities – compared to 36% of businesses in the overall private sector.
- 19% of restaurant firms are Asian-owned, 16% are Hispanic-owned, and 16% are Black- or African American-owned. Each of these groups have a higher ownership representation in the restaurant industry than they do in the overall private sector.
- In every state for which data is available, the restaurant industry has a higher rate of minority business ownership than the overall private sector.
- Hawaii (69%), Texas (68%), Georgia (66%), California (65%) and Florida (60%) have the highest proportion of restaurants that are owned by minorities.

Proportion of Businesses that are Owned by Minorities
Restaurant industry versus total U.S. private sector



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2021 data
Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with and without payroll employees

Proportion of Businesses that are Owned by Minorities

State	----- Restaurant Industry -----				----- Total Private Sector -----			
	All Minorities	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic	All Minorities	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic
Alabama	52%	*	16%	5%	30%	23%	4%	4%
Alaska	32%	*	*	*	25%	3%	*	5%
Arizona	51%	8%	18%	*	34%	6%	6%	21%
Arkansas	*	21%	*	*	22%	12%	3%	6%
California	65%	7%	35%	26%	52%	7%	22%	25%
Colorado	31%	4%	13%	15%	23%	5%	5%	13%
Connecticut	37%	7%	21%	9%	26%	10%	6%	11%
Delaware	39%	16%	16%	*	32%	19%	7%	7%
District of Columbia	57%	*	19%	12%	51%	37%	8%	9%
Florida	60%	22%	14%	29%	53%	17%	5%	35%
Georgia	66%	43%	16%	9%	50%	35%	8%	10%
Hawaii	69%	3%	58%	4%	64%	2%	51%	7%
Idaho	20%	*	*	12%	10%	1%	*	6%
Illinois	51%	25%	14%	13%	33%	14%	9%	11%
Indiana	30%	14%	10%	7%	20%	10%	5%	5%
Iowa	21%	6%	9%	7%	10%	4%	3%	4%
Kansas	34%	5%	19%	*	17%	5%	4%	7%
Kentucky	29%	10%	12%	7%	14%	7%	3%	*
Louisiana	52%	*	10%	5%	38%	29%	4%	5%
Maine	15%	*	10%	*	6%	2%	2%	1%
Maryland	55%	28%	20%	11%	48%	30%	11%	10%
Massachusetts	31%	5%	18%	8%	23%	8%	8%	9%
Michigan	34%	*	*	5%	22%	14%	5%	3%
Minnesota	27%	8%	14%	*	17%	9%	4%	3%
Mississippi	56%	42%	8%	*	38%	33%	3%	3%
Missouri	28%	12%	10%	5%	17%	9%	4%	3%
Montana	12%	*	*	*	7%	1%	1%	2%
Nebraska	30%	*	15%	12%	14%	*	3%	7%
Nevada	56%	13%	22%	*	45%	12%	14%	21%
New Hampshire	15%	1%	*	*	8%	2%	3%	3%
New Jersey	43%	*	21%	15%	39%	12%	13%	17%
New Mexico	56%	*	*	39%	46%	3%	4%	35%
New York	48%	10%	29%	12%	39%	12%	17%	13%
North Carolina	43%	20%	15%	9%	30%	17%	5%	8%
North Dakota	*	*	*	*	10%	3%	2%	2%
Ohio	30%	15%	11%	5%	20%	13%	4%	3%
Oklahoma	37%	*	11%	*	27%	7%	*	8%
Oregon	34%	*	20%	11%	18%	3%	6%	8%
Pennsylvania	31%	*	18%	6%	20%	9%	6%	6%
Rhode Island	25%	5%	11%	*	23%	7%	4%	14%
South Carolina	43%	*	12%	7%	29%	20%	4%	6%
South Dakota	14%	*	6%	4%	8%	2%	1%	2%
Tennessee	47%	28%	14%	6%	25%	16%	4%	5%
Texas	68%	20%	17%	33%	54%	15%	9%	32%
Utah	32%	*	18%	*	15%	2%	4%	9%
Vermont	14%	*	10%	*	5%	1%	2%	*
Virginia	51%	17%	25%	12%	38%	17%	12%	10%
Washington	41%	4%	27%	10%	26%	6%	12%	7%
West Virginia	18%	6%	8%	*	7%	3%	2%	2%
Wisconsin	19%	*	7%	5%	13%	5%	3%	4%
Wyoming	*	*	*	*	10%	1%	3%	5%
United States	48%	16%	19%	16%	36%	13%	9%	15%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2021 data

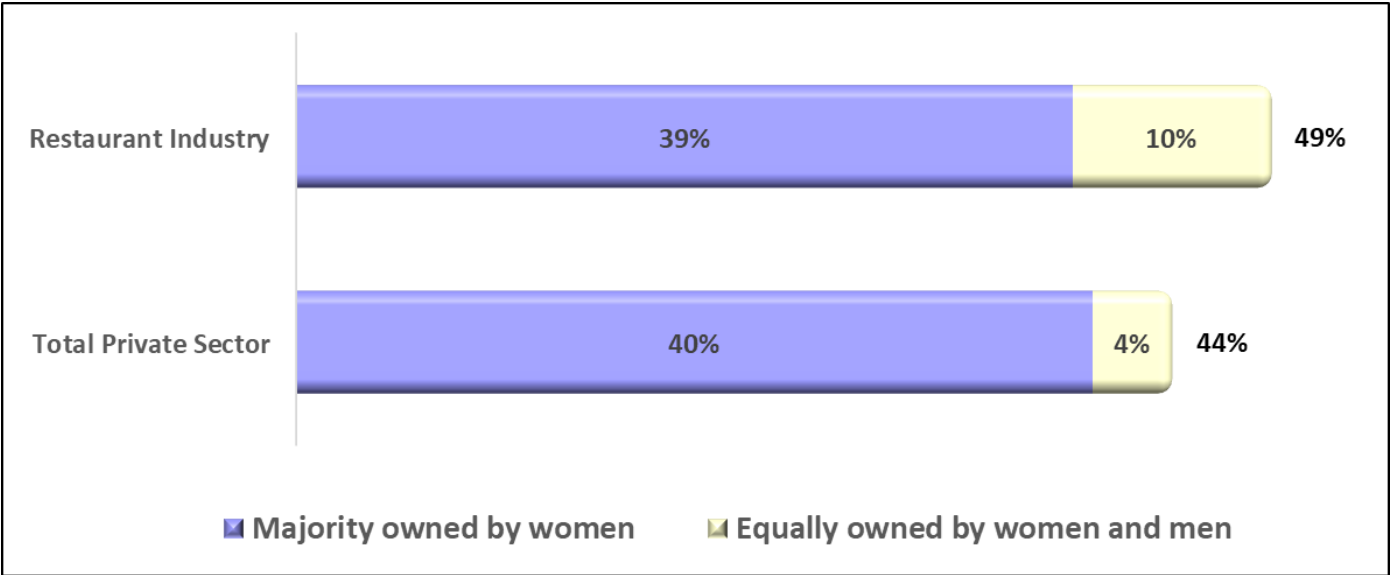
Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with and without payroll employees

*Data not available

One-Half of Restaurant Businesses are Owned by Women

- 49% of restaurant firms are at least 50% owned by women – compared to 44% of businesses in the overall private sector.
 - 39% of restaurant firms are majority-owned by women, while 10% are equally owned by women and men.
- In 35 states, the restaurant industry has a higher rate of female business ownership than the overall private sector.
- Montana (57%), Georgia (57%), Louisiana (57%), Rhode Island (56%), Mississippi (56%) and Tennessee (55%) have the highest proportion of restaurants that are at least 50% owned by women.

Proportion of Businesses that are Owned by Women
Restaurant industry versus total U.S. private sector



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2021 data
Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with and without payroll employees

Proportion of Businesses that are Owned by Women

State	----- Restaurant Industry -----		----- Total Private Sector -----	
	Majority-Owned by Women	At least 50% Owned by Women	Majority-Owned by Women	At least 50% Owned by Women
Alabama	46%	52%	42%	45%
Alaska	41%	50%	39%	44%
Arizona	37%	49%	40%	46%
Arkansas	39%	*	39%	44%
California	36%	49%	39%	44%
Colorado	32%	44%	40%	45%
Connecticut	30%	40%	38%	42%
Delaware	33%	53%	38%	44%
District of Columbia	30%	*	46%	49%
Florida	44%	53%	42%	46%
Georgia	50%	57%	45%	48%
Hawaii	36%	*	43%	47%
Idaho	33%	53%	38%	46%
Illinois	37%	44%	40%	43%
Indiana	40%	52%	39%	44%
Iowa	37%	47%	37%	43%
Kansas	34%	48%	38%	44%
Kentucky	36%	46%	38%	42%
Louisiana	50%	57%	42%	47%
Maine	35%	53%	37%	42%
Maryland	39%	45%	42%	46%
Massachusetts	31%	38%	37%	41%
Michigan	42%	51%	40%	44%
Minnesota	31%	50%	37%	42%
Mississippi	51%	56%	42%	45%
Missouri	38%	50%	38%	44%
Montana	35%	57%	37%	46%
Nebraska	36%	49%	36%	44%
Nevada	37%	49%	41%	46%
New Hampshire	33%	50%	36%	41%
New Jersey	32%	41%	36%	41%
New Mexico	37%	51%	43%	48%
New York	31%	37%	37%	40%
North Carolina	41%	48%	42%	46%
North Dakota	*	*	36%	42%
Ohio	40%	48%	39%	43%
Oklahoma	44%	52%	38%	44%
Oregon	35%	50%	42%	49%
Pennsylvania	33%	45%	36%	40%
Rhode Island	28%	56%	37%	43%
South Carolina	40%	48%	42%	46%
South Dakota	33%	*	34%	43%
Tennessee	47%	55%	41%	44%
Texas	46%	53%	41%	44%
Utah	33%	44%	36%	44%
Vermont	*	*	37%	43%
Virginia	34%	45%	41%	45%
Washington	31%	50%	40%	47%
West Virginia	32%	*	39%	43%
Wisconsin	31%	47%	37%	42%
Wyoming	*	*	35%	47%
United States	39%	49%	40%	44%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2021 data

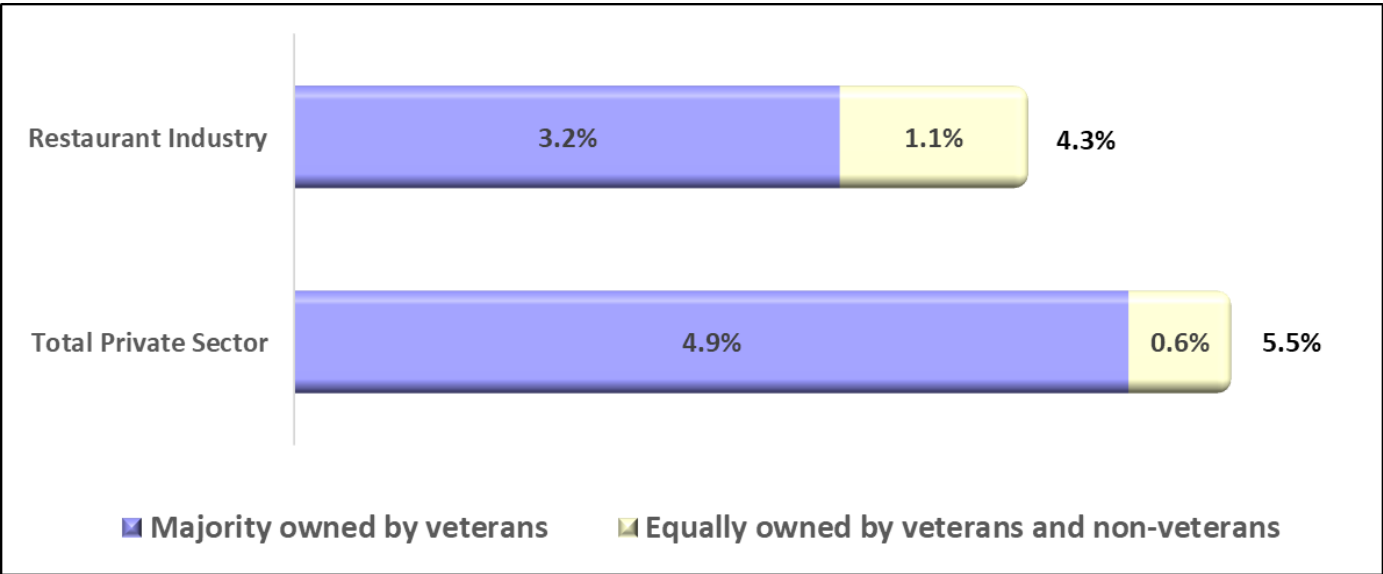
Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with and without payroll employees

*Data not available

Four Percent of Restaurant Businesses are Owned by Veterans

- 4.3% of restaurant firms are at least 50% owned by veterans – compared to 5.5% of businesses in the overall private sector.
 - 3.2% of restaurant firms are majority-owned by veterans, while 1.1% are equally owned by veterans and non-veterans.
- Data availability of veteran-owned restaurants is limited on the state level.
- In the states for which data is available, Virginia (5.9%) and Wisconsin (5.3%) have the highest proportion of restaurants that are majority-owned by veterans.

Proportion of Businesses that are Owned by Veterans
Restaurant industry versus total U.S. private sector



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2021 data
Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with and without payroll employees

Proportion of Businesses that are Majority-Owned by Veterans

State	Restaurant Industry	Total Private Sector
Alabama	*	7.3%
Alaska	*	*
Arizona	3.5%	6.0%
Arkansas	*	6.9%
California	2.0%	3.3%
Colorado	*	5.6%
Connecticut	1.2%	*
Delaware	*	5.5%
District of Columbia	*	2.8%
Florida	*	4.5%
Georgia	4.3%	6.1%
Hawaii	*	6.2%
Idaho	3.9%	6.2%
Illinois	3.0%	3.5%
Indiana	*	5.3%
Iowa	4.4%	5.6%
Kansas	*	5.6%
Kentucky	*	5.8%
Louisiana	3.6%	5.7%
Maine	2.2%	*
Maryland	*	5.3%
Massachusetts	2.6%	3.7%
Michigan	2.0%	4.2%
Minnesota	*	4.9%
Mississippi	2.7%	6.3%
Missouri	*	6.1%
Montana	*	7.3%
Nebraska	*	6.0%
Nevada	*	5.5%
New Hampshire	*	6.7%
New Jersey	*	2.6%
New Mexico	2.2%	6.4%
New York	*	2.5%
North Carolina	4.4%	6.4%
North Dakota	*	6.2%
Ohio	*	5.5%
Oklahoma	3.1%	6.7%
Oregon	*	5.1%
Pennsylvania	2.8%	4.7%
Rhode Island	0.9%	4.3%
South Carolina	*	7.6%
South Dakota	2.5%	8.0%
Tennessee	*	6.1%
Texas	3.5%	5.2%
Utah	*	3.8%
Vermont	4.2%	*
Virginia	5.9%	7.5%
Washington	*	5.4%
West Virginia	*	8.1%
Wisconsin	5.3%	5.5%
Wyoming	*	6.3%
United States	3.2%	4.9%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2021 data

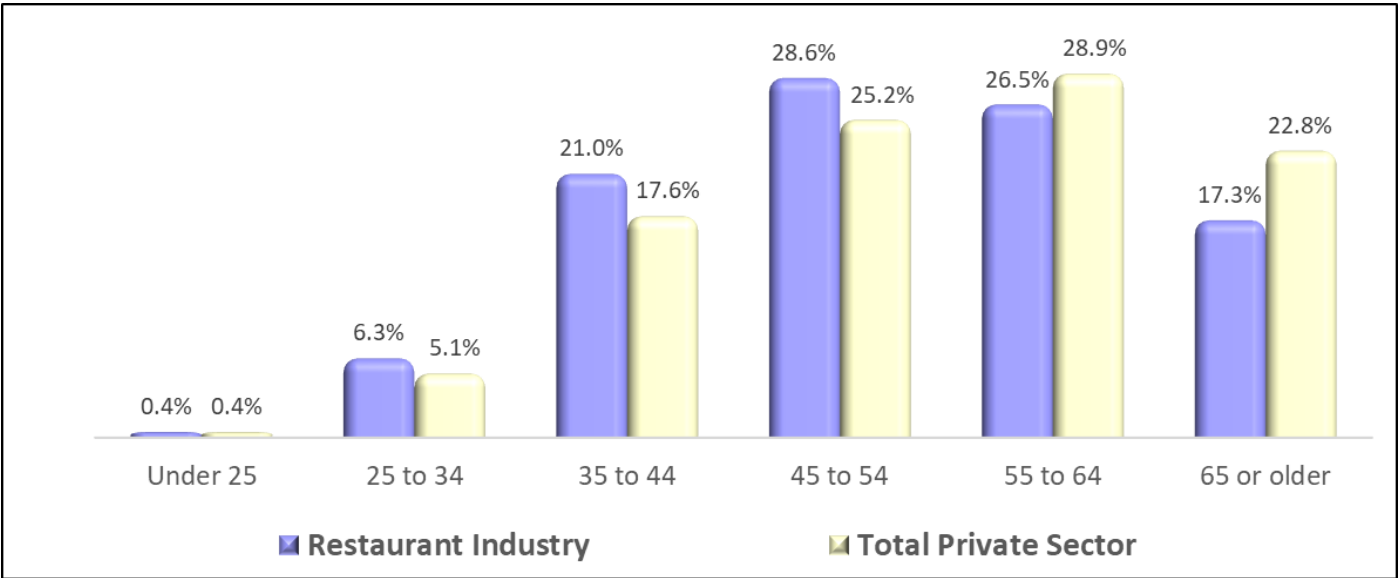
Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with and without payroll employees

*Data not available

Nearly 3 in 10 Restaurant Owners are Under Age 45

- The restaurant industry has a higher proportion of young business owners than the private sector overall.
- Nearly 7% of restaurant owners are under the age of 35, while 28% are under the age of 45.
 - In comparison, fewer than 6% of business owners in the overall private sector are under the age of 35, while 23% are under the age of 45.
- 23% of private sector business owners are 65 or older, compared to just 17% of restaurant owners.

Distribution of Business Owners by Age
Restaurant industry versus total U.S. private sector

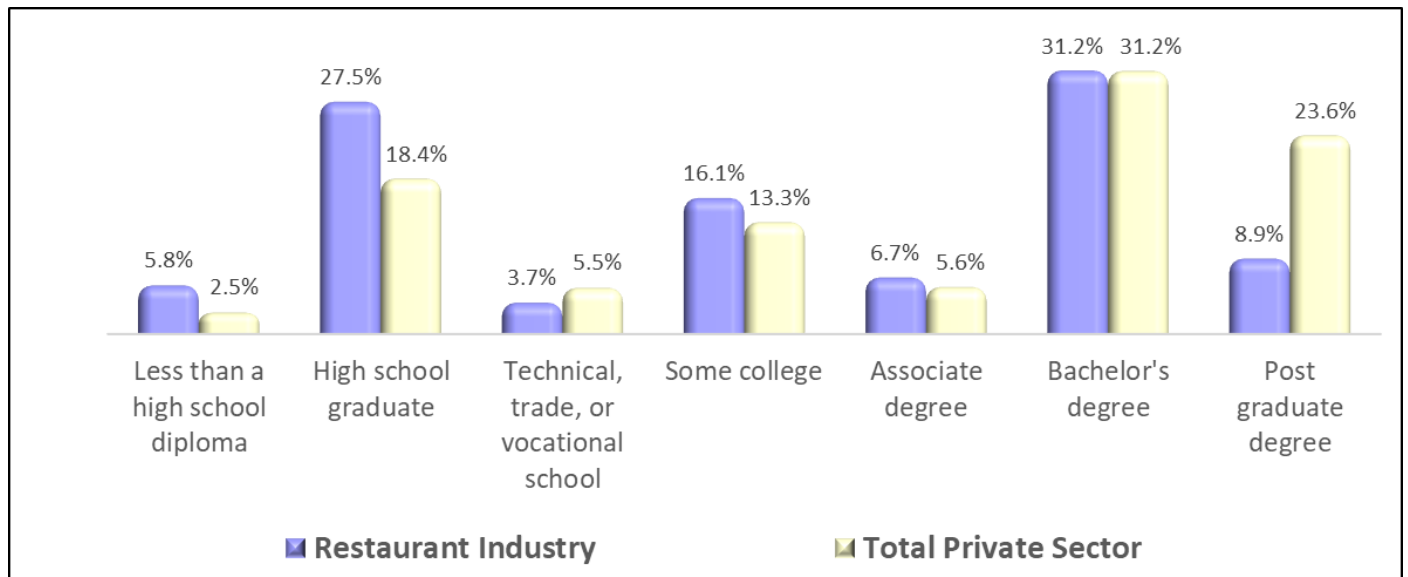


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2022 data
Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with payroll employees

1 in 3 Restaurant Owners Have a High School Diploma or Less

- In general, restaurant ownership is more accessible to individuals without advanced degrees, reducing educational barriers to entrepreneurship in the industry.
- Nearly 6% of restaurant owners have less than a high school diploma, compared to fewer than 3% of private sector business owners.
- A high school diploma is the highest educational attainment for 28% of restaurant owners. 18% of private sector business owners report similarly.
- 24% of private sector business owners have a post graduate degree, compared to just 9% of restaurant owners.
- Among restaurant owners that hold bachelor's or post graduate degrees, common fields of study include management and administration (44%), arts and humanities (10%), engineering (7%), education (6%), sales and marketing (5%), health (5%), computer and math (4%), psychology and social science (4%) and law (3%).

Distribution of Business Owners by Educational Attainment
Restaurant industry versus total U.S. private sector

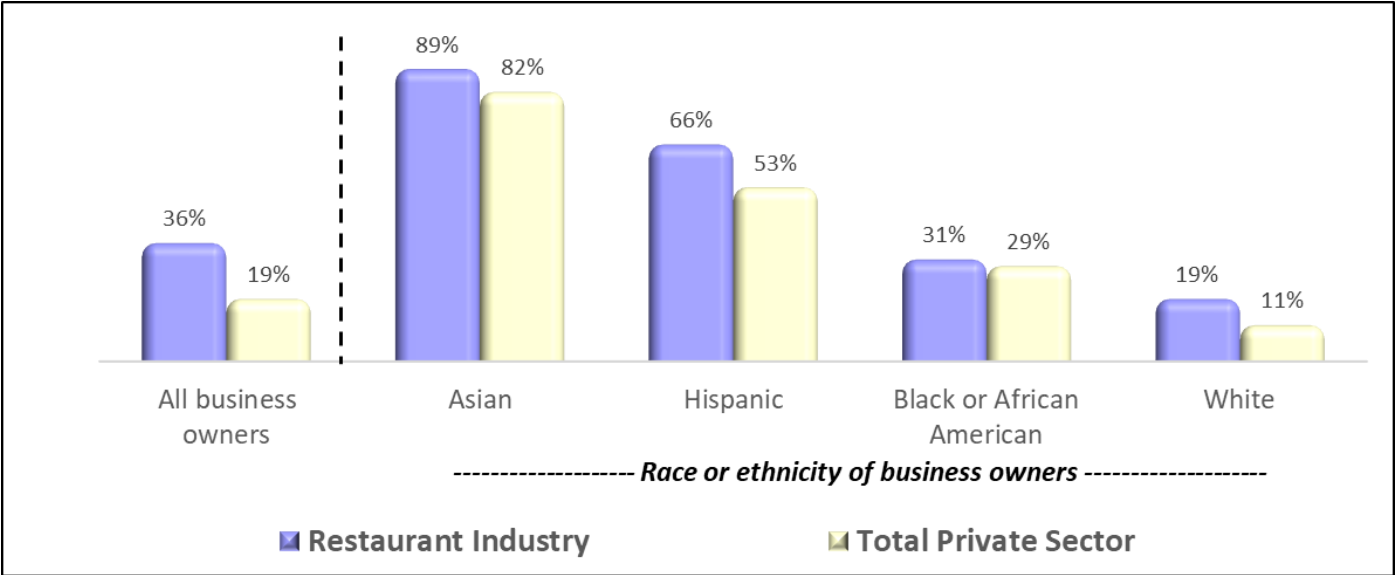


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2022 data
Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with payroll employees

36% of Restaurant Owners Were Born Outside of the United States

- 36% of restaurant owners were born outside of the United States, compared to just 19% of business owners in the overall private sector.
- Asian business owners are the most likely to have been born outside of the United States. 89% of Asian restaurant owners were born outside of the U.S., compared to 82% of their counterparts in the private sector overall.
- 66% of Hispanic restaurant owners are foreign-born, compared to 53% of Hispanic business owners in the overall private sector.
- 31% of Black or African American restaurant owners were born outside of the U.S. In the overall private sector, 29% of Black or African American business owners are foreign-born.
- 19% of white restaurant owners are foreign-born. That compares to 11% of white business owners in the overall private sector.

Percent of Business Owners that Were Born Outside of the United States
Restaurant industry versus total U.S. private sector



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2022 data
Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with payroll employees