Restaurant & takeaway industry SEO report

2022

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Restaurant & takeaway market statistics

£91.9bn

The UK eating out market is expected to reach £91.9bn in value by the end of 2022 - up from its £91.3bn pre-pandemic valuation.

£11.4bn

The UK's restaurant and takeaway delivery market was worth £11.4bn in 2020 and is forecast to reach £12.6bn by 2025.

+26%

The UK restaurant market grew by 26% in 2021 to a total value of £11.2bn (+£2.3bn).

+69%

Restaurant penetration was 69% higher in December 2021 than the previous year as confidence in eating out increased.

Top UK queries (non brand)

Local search & ‘near me’ queries are vital

As we’ll see throughout this guide, local search and ‘near me’ queries are crucial for restaurants and takeaway businesses, especially after Covid-19.

High purchase intent

The purchase intent for local restaurants and takeaways is particularly strong with searchers looking to buy or book immediately or in the very near future.

People are looking for inspiration

Purchase intent may be strong but the highest-volume searches for restaurants and takeaways show the majority of searchers haven’t yet made a decision, which means they’re more receptive to the right offer.

	Query	Volume
1	Restaurants near me	823,000
2	Pubs near me	368,000
3	Food	368,000
4	Pizza	368,000
5	Food near me	301,000
6	Restaurants	246,000
7	Chinese near me	201,500
8	Breakfast near me	201,000
9	Café near me	201,000
10	Takeaway near me	201,000

Top brands by traffic

Big brands dominate the market

Unsurprisingly, the big brands dominate the UK restaurant & takeaway market to such an extent that more overseas chains are eyeing up the country's growing appetite for convenience food.[1]

Just Eat has risen to the top of the UK's fast-food

Just Eat's marketing drive over the past decade has placed it at the top of the UK's takeaway market with 13.83% traffic share - far more than any other brand name.

Delivery apps are the top three brands in takeaways

The rise of delivery apps was only boosted by the Covid-19 pandemic and the three biggest names - Just Eat, Deliveroo and Uber Eats - make up almost 25% of total traffic share, despite the fact that 62% of consumers would rather buy directly from restaurant websites.[2]

	Brand	Traffic share
1	Just-eat.co.uk	13.83%
2	deliveroo.co.uk	5.79%
3	ubereats.com	4.72%
4	dominos.co.uk	4.70%
5	mcdonalds.com	3.38%
6	opentable.co.uk	2.96%
7	pizzahut.co.uk	2.13%
8	kfc.co.uk	1.72%
9	nandos.co.uk	1.72%
10	papajohns.co.uk	1.64%

1. Source: ft.com
2. Source: Square

Top broad match queries for ‘restaurant’

‘Restaurants near me’ is the top keyword opportunity

With 823K monthly searches and a keyword difficulty of 77%, ‘restaurants near me’ is the top broad match keyword opportunity.

The top 3 queries are open to inspiration

None of the top three queries specify a type of cuisine or food, meaning searchers are looking for inspiration and open to influence.

Demand is high for Indian & Italian restaurants

When searchers specify cuisines, Indian and Italian restaurants top the list of searches.

	Keyword	Volume	KD %
1	Restaurants near me	823,000	77%
2	Restaurants	246,000	93%
3	Restaurant	165,000	94%
4	Indian restaurant near me	165,000	48%
5	Indian restaurant	110,000	53%
6	Italian restaurants near me	110,000	63%
7	Best restaurants	90,500	82%
8	Indian restaurants	90,500	59%
9	Italian restaurant	90,500	67%
10	Japanese restaurant	74,000	58%

KD = Keyword difficulty

Top broad match queries for ‘takeaway’

‘Near me’ searches are crucial for takeaways

Searchers looking specifically for takeaway are most likely to include the phrase ‘near me’ in their queries and prioritise local results.

Yet ‘takeaway near me’ has 100% keyword difficulty

While ‘near me’ searches are especially important for local takeaways, the query ‘takeaway near me’ is rated as 100% keyword difficulty.

Chinese takeaway the top choice for eating in

Search data suggests Chinese is the UK’s top choice for takeaway and this is backed up by independent surveys featured later in this guide.

	Keyword	Volume	KD %
1	Takeaway near me	201,000	100%
2	Chinese takeaway near me	110,000	62%
3	Takeaway	90,500	100%
4	Takeaways near me	90,500	78%
5	Chinese takeaway	74,000	53%
6	Indian takeaway near me	74,000	57%
7	Fish and chips takeaway	22,200	38%
8	Indian takeaway	22,200	38%
9	Takeaways open near me	22,200	99%
10	Nandos takeaway	18,100	44%

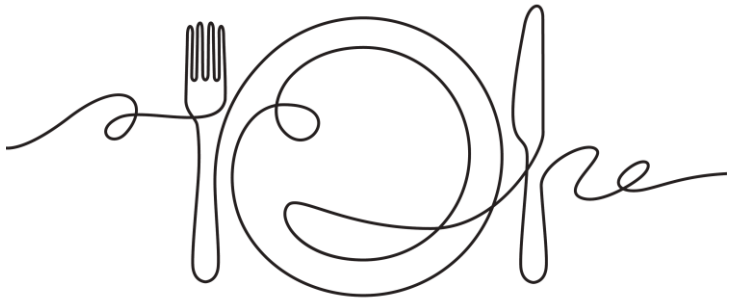
KD = Keyword difficulty

Transactional keywords for ‘restaurant’

The top 21 keywords with transactional intent are ‘near me’ local searches.

‘Restaurants near me’ is the top keyword opportunity in this category with 823,000 avg. monthly searches.

‘Takeaway near me’ is the top keyword opportunity for takeaway searches with 201,000 avg. monthly searches.



Keyword	Intent	Volume	Trend	KD %	CPC (GBP)
restaurants near me	T	823,000		77	0.61
indian restaurant near me	T	165,000		48	0.70
italian restaurants near me	T	110,000		63	0.43
best restaurants near me	T	49,500		72	0.43
chinese restaurant near me	T	49,500		70	0.73
restaurant near me	T	49,500		69	0.61
turkish restaurant near me	T	49,500		41	0.54
thai restaurant near me	T	40,500		53	0.56
italian restaurant near me	T	33,100		63	0.43
chineses restaurants near me	T	22,200		42	0.73

The restaurant & takeaway purchase journey

Stage 1

Local search

Locals search for food options in their area - in many cases, hungry and ready to buy from whoever tempts them.

Build a local search presence on Google Business Profile and Google Maps.

Stage 2

Comparison

Users compare options through platforms like Google Maps or delivery apps like Just Eat and Deliveroo.

Provide all the info users need - menus, prices, opening hours, delivery options, images, etc.

Stage 3

Decision

Once food buyers make their choice, service becomes their priority and getting their food/booking asap.

Cater for every purchase /booking option possible - website, app, phone, etc.

Stage 4

Experience

Whether customers eat in or order delivery, providing a positive experience is especially important with local clientele.

Provide the same level of service for takeaways and deliveries as customers eating in.

Stage 5

Feedback

Happy customers are more likely to leave positive reviews but unhappy ones are even more likely to leave negative feedback..

Build a profile of positive reviews to boost your local rankings and win more customers.

What Google wants

Search performance is multifaceted

No single metric guarantees high search rankings. Google looks at hundreds of ranking factors for every query, some of which have more weight than others.

Backlinks are a top-ranking factor

Backlinks are one of the top-three ranking factors but, as you can see from the table opposite, you can't rely on these alone.

Brand searches

Brand searches can generate large volumes of traffic and supplement link profiles, highlighting the importance of branding through other channels like social media and content marketing.

Top-ranking websites for takeaway

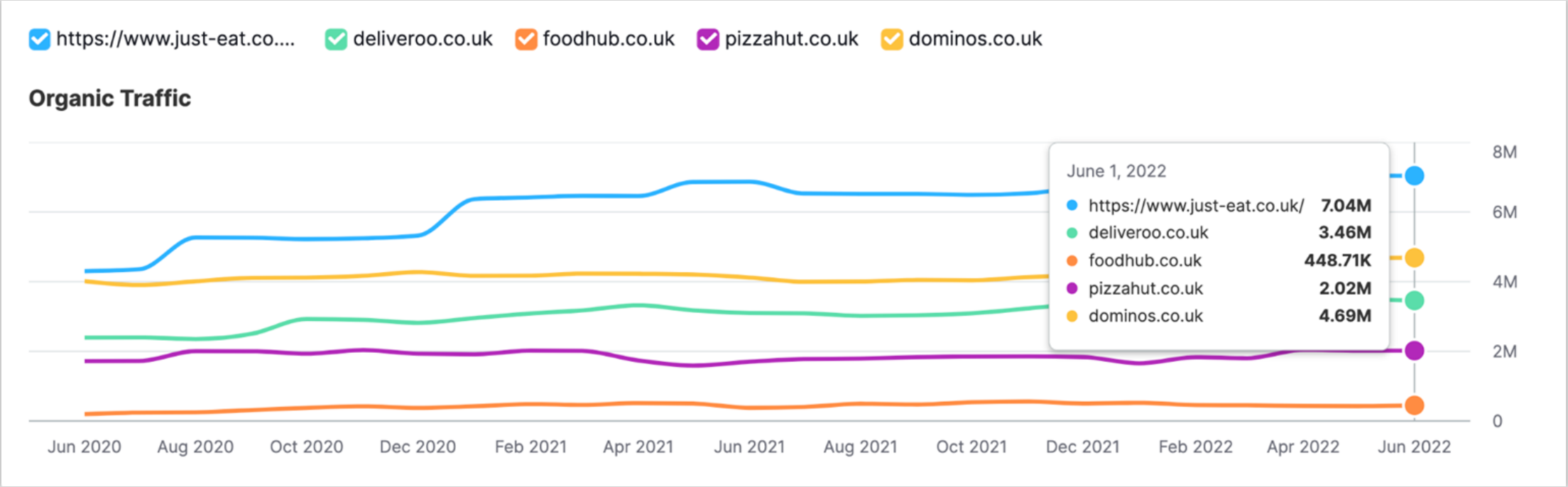
	AS	Backlinks	Keywords	Organic traffic	Branded traffic
just-eat.co.uk	78	812.2k	8.8k	7m	6.6m
deliveroo.co.uk	76	563.7k	27.7k	1.7m	1.3m
foodhub.co.uk	70	3.2k	8.7k	203.6k	272
justeattakeaway.com	81	359.6k	2.5k	217k	326k
zizzi.co.uk/takeaway	61	825	862	6.7k	2.5k
pizzahut.co.uk	64	21.2k	31.2k	1.3m	1m
dominos.co.uk	80	172.3k	11.9k	3.3m	3.1m
bigfoodie.co.uk	10	581	725	16.2k	13.6k
askitalian.co.uk/menus/takeaway	7	2	72	639	364
stonehouserestaurants.co.uk/takeaway	18	3	95	361	184

AS = Authority Score

Organic traffic trends

While all of the major brands have seen increased organic traffic over the past two years, none have overtaken any competitors, showing how difficult it is to climb the search engine results pages in this business category. Just Eat and Deliveroo have seen the biggest increases in organic traffic, highlighting the importance of being present on these platforms.

All the top websites generate the vast majority of their search traffic from organic sessions, mostly from branded searches. Just Eat has the lowest share of organic vs paid search traffic with 95% coming from organic sessions.



Analysis | Just Eat

Just Eat thrived during the Covid-19 pandemic with organic traffic increasing from 4.25M in Dec 2019 to 7M in June 2022. 94% of Just Eat's search traffic comes from organic branded queries, showing the importance of brand awareness across channels. With strong SEO performance, Just Eat generates only 5% of its search traffic from paid ads.

A combined 38.5% transactional and 21% commercial keyword intent means the majority of organic searches demonstrate a high purchase intent.

Keywords by Intent

Intent		Keywords	Traffic
Informational	21.1%	2.2K	62.1K
Navigational	19.4%	2K	6.5M
Commercial	21%	2.2K	5.4M
Transactional	38.5%	4K	365.4K

Analysis | Deliveroo

Deliveroo also experienced major growth during Covid-19 pandemic, with organic traffic increasing from 936K in Dec 2019 to 1.7M in June 2022. This is similar growth to Just Eat but with a significantly smaller share of search.

Deliveroo also generates most of its search traffic from organic queries with 75% through branded queries and 25% from non-branded queries (vs 94% branded and 6% non-branded for Just Eat).

Two-thirds of all organic searches show a high purchase intent with 34.1% transactional and 32.5% commercial.

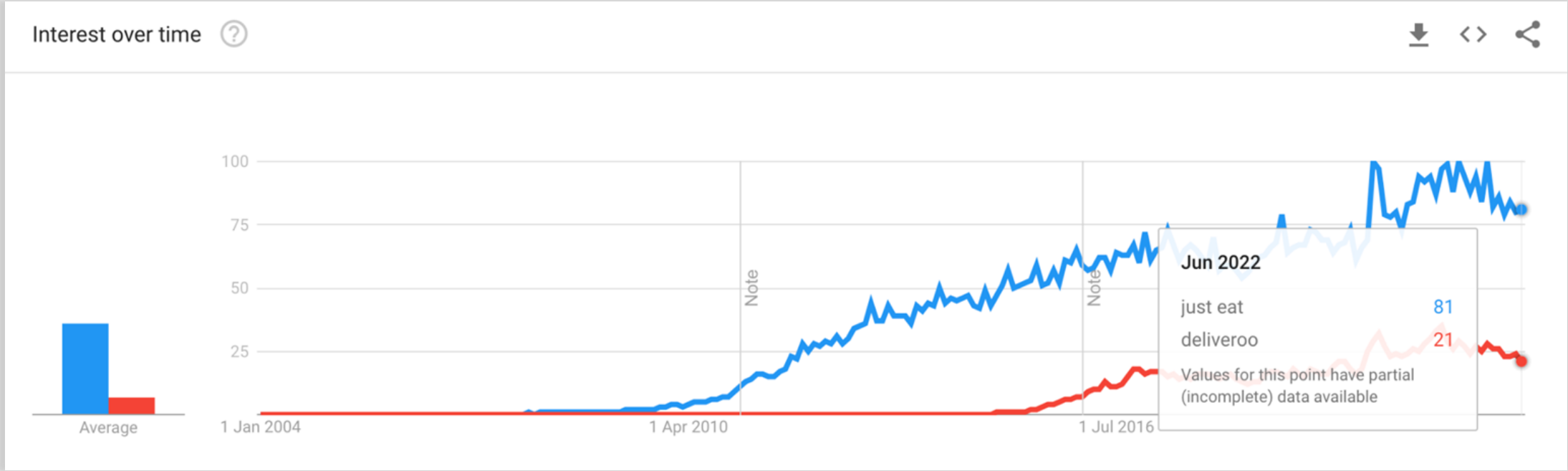
Keywords by Intent

Intent		Keywords	Traffic
Informational	21.7%	6.9K	20K
Navigational	11.7%	3.7K	1.3M
Commercial	32.5%	10.3K	66.4K
Transactional	34.1%	10.8K	265.7K

Brand searches | Just Eat vs Deliveroo

Just Eat was founded in 2001 but brand searches only started to pick up in 2008, shortly before it launched its first TV advertising campaign in 2009. Deliveroo was founded in 2013 and brand searches started to build in late 2014. Considering the company's later entry into the space, it has built a strong search presence in a relatively short space of time, and it will be interesting to see how the two brands compete over the next 5-10 years.

Brand queries are a strong signal, telling Google that people know, trust and seek out the brand in question. They indicate strong brand awareness and interest and often demonstrate higher purchase intent.

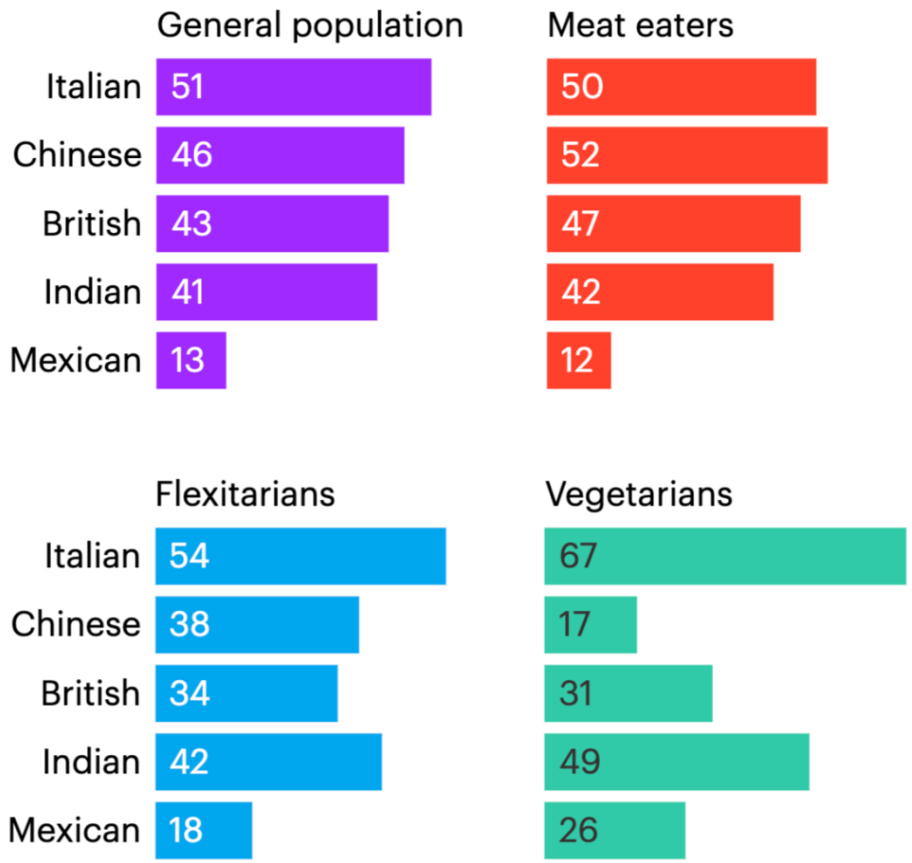


What do customers want?

Research carried out by YouGov finds that Italian is the UK's favourite cuisine while Chinese tops the list of favourite takeaways.[1, 2]

The organisation also confirms the UK's appetite for Deliveroo increased during the pandemic but separate research from Square suggests 62% of customers would rather order directly from a restaurant's website than third-party apps.[3,4]

This shows how important it is for food businesses to have an online presence and maximise their visibility in organic search - particularly local search.



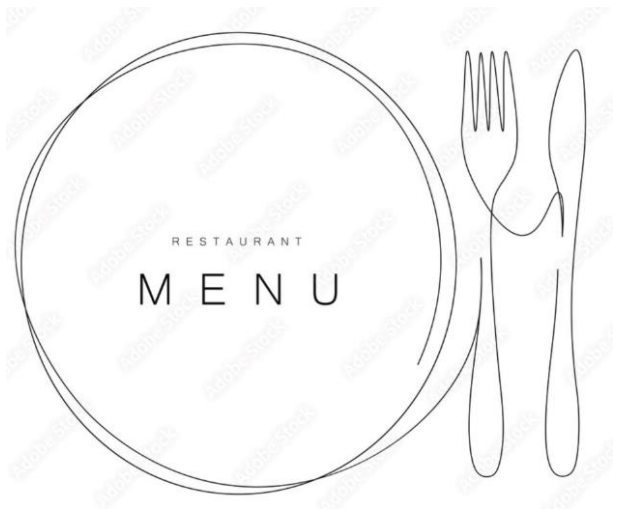
YouGov 1-11 November 2021

1. Source: YouGov
2. Source: YouGov
3. Source: YouGov
4. Source: Square

What do people search for?

“Near me” searches

- The top keyword related to restaurants and takeaways is “restaurants near me” with 823K monthly searches.
- 80% of the top 10 queries in this category include the phrase “near me”.
- Majority of searchers are looking for food businesses in their local area to buy from immediately or in the near future.



	Query	Volume
1	Restaurants near me	823,000
2	Pubs near me	368,000
3	Food near me	301,000
4	Places to eat near me	246,000
5	Restaurants	246,000
6	Takeaway near me	201,000
7	Pizza near me	165,000
8	Indian restaurant near me	165,000
9	Restaurant	165,000
10	Italian restaurant near me	110,000

What do people search for?

Help finding the ‘best’ food in the area

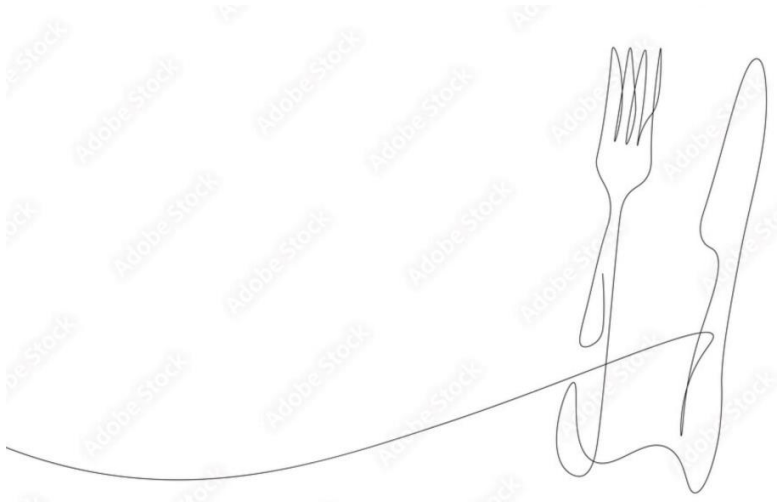
- Searchers are interested in finding the ‘best restaurants’, which opens local search and content opportunities.
- High presence of ‘near me’ and location-specific searches.
- Location searches don’t correlate with the UK’s most populous cities, showing the importance of ‘best’ restaurant searches for travel and short trips.
- The commercial intent of ‘best’ searches illustrates the benefit of content marketing alongside local SEO for more immediate results.

Keyword	Intent	Volume	Trend	KD %	CPC (USD)	Com.
best restaurants	C	90,500		82	0.57	0.03
best restaurants near me	T	49,500		72	0.54	0.06
best restaurants london	C	40,500		77	0.24	0.09
best restaurants in edinburgh	C	18,100		64	0.38	0.06
best indian restaurant near me	T	12,100		62	0.76	0.07
best restaurants in london	C	12,100		75	0.24	0.09
best restaurants manchester	C	12,100		62	0.34	0.04
best italian restaurants london	C	9,900		63	0.33	0.08
best restaurants brighton	C	9,900		59	0.47	0.11
best restaurants edinburgh	C	9,900		62	0.38	0.06

What do people search for?

Top UK cuisine searches

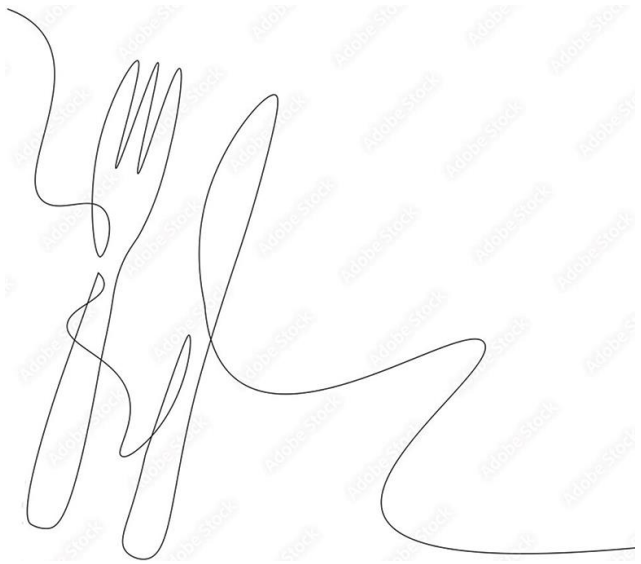
- Indian and Italian food are the top choices for eating out at a restaurant.
- Chinese is the most popular takeaway option for eating in - and the only takeaway query in the top 10.
- Japanese restaurants has overtaken Chinese restaurants - the third favourite for eating out.
- All of the top 10 cuisine show commercial intent, demonstrating a high purchase intent.



	Keyword	Volume
1	Indian restaurant	110,000
2	Italian restaurant	90,500
3	Chinese takeaway	74,000
4	Japanese takeaway	74,000
5	Chinese restaurant	60,500
6	Turkish restaurant	60,500
7	Korean restaurant	40,500
8	Vegan restaurant	33,100
9	French restaurant	27,100
10	Thai restaurant	27,100

What do people want to know?

- They need help choosing where to eat - and this means business opportunities for restaurants and takeaways.
- The top service demand from restaurants and takeaways is delivery.
- Potential customers want to know what's open outside of peak times - early morning, evenings, nights, holidays, etc.



Keyword	Intent	Seed K...	Volume	Trend	KD %
where to eat near me	T	takeaway	9.9K		71
which restaurant delivers near me	T	takeaway	5.4K		75
who deliver pizza near me	T	takeaway	3.6K		68
who delivers chinese near me	T	takeaway	3.6K		69
who delivers food near me	T	takeaway	3.6K		86
what's open near me	T	restaurant	1.6K		66

Next steps for restaurants & takeaways

Online presence

Build your online presence with a website, Google My Business Profile and important third-party apps.

Local search

Target the high intent local searches in your area(s). Location-specific searches present local SEO and content opportunities to target travelers and people planning trips.

Brand awareness

Build brand trust and brand searches to generate more traffic and show Google that your site should rank for primary keywords.

Inspire customers

Broad, transactional queries like “restaurant near me” and “pub near me” show customers are looking for inspiration. Excite them by showcasing your menu, food, restaurant, special offers, etc.

Optimise for bookings

Provide all the information customers need to make booking decisions and optimise the booking experience on your website, Google Maps, etc.

Search data

Use search data to understand what consumers really care about. You can also pick up on early trends to gain visibility before your competitors.

VERTICAL LEAP

If you need help increasing the visibility of your restaurants online, contact us today!

info@vertical-leap.uk www.vertical-leap.uk 02392 830 281