
Methods And Data Notes

National Brunch Price Index

2026-10-25-national-menu-study-v1

Compiled October 25, 2026. This version contains 553 individual-main prices and three separately labeled per-person packages. All amounts are published USD menu prices; calculations are modeled, pre-tax order subtotals.

What This Study Measures

Published dine-in breakfast and brunch menu examples at the exact restaurants listed in this edition. All 50 states and Washington, DC have approved prices. The dataset is a publisher-selected panel, not a registry of all U.S. restaurants or a probability sample of diners.

Selection And Collection Panel

The full existing inventory was audited for discovery. Collection then followed 1,665 U.S. branch candidates in the existing city shortlists plus 27 researched branches in the nine added state markets. Existing source-linked pilot observations were retained. Accessible, eligible prices were approved; blocked, unpriced and ambiguous sources remain in the collection ledger. The much larger inventory outside this collection panel remains a discovery frame, not measured price evidence.

Unit Of Observation

Each row is one named dish at one exact branch and its published price in USD. Recipes, portion counts, included sides and meal periods differ. A full griddle set may contain eggs and meat; a plain stack may not. Packages, children's items, sides, sharing plates, beverages and ordering-only prices are not pooled into individual-main statistics.

Price Verification

Manual source reviews retain official menu and identity URLs. Structured entries require a matched official street address and ZIP, an eligible meal section, and a named menu item with an adjacent visible price matching its menu data. Ambiguous, conflicting and multi-location cases are withheld. Editorial QA removed a side misclassified in menu data and corrected sandwich categories. Restaurant operators have not independently confirmed every price, and no independent methods review is claimed.

Category Summaries

Category summaries use the median of selected prices within each branch, then the median of those branch medians. Counts, ranges, place coverage and source groups accompany the summaries. These describe this panel. They are not national consumer-spend estimates or standardized baskets, and should not be used to declare a city cheapest.

Geographic Definitions

States are assigned to the four Census regions and nine divisions. Places follow restaurant postal addresses; municipal boundaries were not independently geocoded. A suburb keeps its own location rather than inheriting a parent guide's city. Overlapping guide associations never duplicate a branch nationally. International and unresolved territory guides stay outside the U.S. region totals.

Calculation Rules

The planner models one selected named item and, where requested, one verified regular-coffee order per person. Prices are converted to integer cents before multiplication. Tax, optional gratuities, other purchases, booking and seating availability are not inferred. A modeled order is not an observed bill.

Charge And Payment Conditions

Required, removable, group-threshold and payment-dependent charges remain separate. Unspecified payment with a relevant payment-dependent fee withholds the combined estimate. Multiple applicable charges with an unresolved stacking base withhold the total. An unverified policy does not become a zero-fee promise. Cash/debit scenarios do not establish all possible payment terms.

Regular Coffee

Only a priced regular-coffee order verified for the same branch is modeled. Cup sizes and refills are not standardized. No coffee amount is substituted from another restaurant or chain branch. Extra coffee is withheld for packages with unresolved beverage inclusions.

Source Dates

Individual rows preserve their actual source-check dates from October 22 to October 25, 2026. A retrieval date does not prove the menu was newly printed. Older or undated files currently linked by operators retain that limitation; users should confirm changes directly.

Missing Information

Source URLs attempted, successful responses, branch candidates, approved prices, policy-reviewed branches and coffee-priced branches are distinct denominators. HTTP success is not editorial approval. The downloadable panel ledger retains unapproved candidates and scope gaps; missing prices, fees, hours or ownership are not imputed.

Weighting And Sensitivity

Branches with many selected dishes do not receive extra weight within category medians. Regional and category mix can still affect pooled descriptions. Source-domain groups are reported only as clustering proxies, not verified ownership counts. No population weights, margins of error, inflation rate, or restaurant affordability ranking is produced.

Interpretation Limits

Accessible-menu and prior editorial selection create bias. Small state or local samples cannot represent all local restaurants. Mains with different portions and inclusions are not equivalent meals. The source-linked explorer supports specific choices and reported menu examples; it does not measure actual diner behavior, transactions, service quality, taste, or typical total spending.

Versioning And Maintenance

This version is a source snapshot. Rechecks must preserve branch and item identities, portions, dates and charge terms. Expanding coverage is not inflation. Corrected or withdrawn observations require a new version and a change note; the original baseline and five-city pilot downloads remain unchanged.

Editorial Responsibility

Top Brunch Spots compiled the study. Official restaurant menus are cited for factual prices and policies. The charts and modeled calculations are original Top Brunch Spots work.

Questions And Corrections

Send source corrections and media questions through <https://topbrunchspots.com/contact/>. Include the version, named item, exact branch and source-check date.

Different Denominators

1,692 candidate branches

The declared collection panel: 1,665 U.S. branches from existing city shortlists, plus 27 researched branches in nine added state markets. This is smaller than the full discovery inventory.

3,770 attempted source URLs

The collection receipt ledger records URL outcomes. 3,517 responses returned HTTP 200. A successful response is not proof of a valid current menu or an approved price.

179 branches with approved prices

556 named examples were accepted: 553 individual mains and three packages. There are 179 distinct approved food-source URLs and 177 source-domain groups. Domain groups are not ownership counts.

18 branches with documented charges

These are reviewed charge terms, not a measured national fee prevalence. Other restaurants may charge fees that were not established by this study.

8 branches with regular coffee prices

The planner does not substitute a different venue or chain branch when coffee is unverified.

Reproducible Calculation Examples

Mulberry Street Tavern: $6 \times \$18 \text{ food} + 6 \times \$5 \text{ coffee} = \$138$. A single 20% group gratuity for six or more is \$27.60. Modeled subtotal: \$165.60 before tax.

Rosewild: $2 \times \$12 \text{ food} = \$24$. A single 3% credit-card fee is \$0.72. Modeled card subtotal: \$24.72 before tax. Payment unspecified: no combined estimate. Six-person card scenario: total withheld because applicable group/card charge stacking is unresolved.

GG's Waterfront: $2 \times \$20 \text{ food} + 2 \times \$4.25 \text{ coffee} = \$48.50$. A single 18% service fee is \$8.73. Modeled subtotal: \$57.23 before tax.

Beatrix, Fulton Market: $2 \times (\$14.95 \text{ food} + \$4.50 \text{ coffee}) = \$38.90$. A 3.5% removable surcharge rounds to \$1.36. Modeled subtotal: \$40.26, or \$38.90 if removal is requested in the scenario. A modeled removal request does not establish the restaurant removed the charge.

Field Definitions

observation: One selected named dish at an exact branch; price is USD before unmodeled tax and other purchases.

format: Individual Main or Per-Person Package; do not pool them.

checkedAt: Actual menu-source review or retrieval date, not proof of a newly printed menu.

selectionNotes: Known portion and inclusion context; unknown portions remain unstandardized.

sourceEvidenceHash: SHA-256 of captured source where available; original pilot provenance remains in its prior version.

sourceReview: Editorial source review or structured item/visible-price/address verification, not an independent operator confirmation.

cityName: Restaurant postal place label; municipal boundary not independently geocoded.

sourceGroup: Source-domain grouping is a proxy for clustering, not verified restaurant ownership.

charges: Only verified terms; empty list means unestablished, not a zero-fee guarantee.

coffee: One verified regular order with a separate source date; sizes and refills are not standardized.

paymentMethod: unspecified, cash_debit or credit_card. A relevant card-dependent fee with unknown payment withholds the combined estimate.

chargeBase: Modeled pre-tax selected-food-and-coffee subtotal. Multiple applicable charges with unresolved stacking produce no combined total.

amountRounding: Convert menu prices to integer cents. Multiply quantities, then round each single applicable percentage charge to the nearest cent.

localBriefs: One record per actual postal place in the approved panel, with named examples and official sources. Not a city ranking.

Earlier Versions

The original 52-row observation ledger retains 46 included mains and six exclusions. The five-city pilot retains 84 named examples. Their files and dates are preserved. A larger or differently selected panel cannot establish inflation.

[Full data, official sources, corrections and earlier versions](#)