



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 7, 2022

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National Restaurant Association Show® 2022 Reunites Foodservice Industry After 3 Years with Renewed Energy, Innovation and Collaboration

Four-day Show at McCormick Place welcomed 51,000+ registered foodservice professionals and sees strong international attendance

CHICAGO (June 7, 2022)—The foodservice industry was reunited for the first time since May of 2019 at the [National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show](#), the largest industry event focused on foodservice technology innovations, unique ingredients, and emerging restaurant trends, held at Chicago’s McCormick Place May 21-24. The Show welcomed over 51,000 registered restaurant owners and operators, retail foodservice professionals, food and ingredient suppliers, equipment manufacturers, and many more for four days filled with innovation, ingredients, insights and thought leadership. Attendees represented over 110 countries and all 50 states and more than 1,800 exhibitors—including over 1,200 returning and more than 500 new exhibitors—filled three exhibit halls and nearly 600,000 square feet of exhibit space.

“The 2022 Show was one of the most anticipated events of the year and after three long years, we couldn’t wait to bring the foodservice community back together to celebrate the advancements that drove the industry forward,” said Tom Cindric, President of Winsight Exhibitions. “From the vibrant tradeshow floor and latest innovations to new flavor trends and expert-led education sessions, there truly was something for everyone.”

The energy on the floor was unmatched, with all-around expressions of complete satisfaction at the innovation on display, the abundance of key decision-makers, and the quantity and diversity of exhibitors.

- “The National Restaurant Association Show is the Super Bowl of foodservice. This is where dreams come true for new brands trying to break into the industry and make a mark. We have had an amazing time at Show; the chains and restaurants I’ve spoken to are so high profile and we’re thrilled about what this means for our brand and for plant-based foods.” – *Armetha Pihlstrom, Senior Director of U.S. and Canada Foodservice Sales, Future Farm, a first-time exhibitor and manufacturer of plant-based meat alternatives*

- “I have 56 quick serve restaurants and I brought my franchisees and my corporate team because I wanted us to see what was new, and I wanted to see what purveyors would be available for my foodservice team – we saw our current supplier’s entire catalogs in person, we added more suppliers to our list, and we saw new technology. We’ve never seen robotics in the way we did this year and I expect we’ll be incorporating some into our operation after seeing them here.” – *Hugo Triviños, CEO of Mavesa Fenix, a large chain in Honduras*
- “We consider ourselves an innovative brand, so attending the Show is important for our business. Being here has allowed us to find new foods, technologies and products as well as build relationships.” – *Jerry Vachaparambil, Head of Partnerships at The Cumin Culinary Brands, a virtual restaurant group started at the height of the pandemic*
- “There’s no better collection of innovators and companies to be around to get inspired. It’s important for me to be here because I’m going to develop some new opportunities for our brands. It’s the best food show I’ve ever been to, and I’ve been to a lot of them.” – *Guy Pratt, Owner of Chef Inspired Group of Restaurants, an international restaurant owner and chef from Canada*

Despite international travel restrictions, the 2022 Show saw strong international participation with an equal percentage of registrations to 2019 and more than 110 countries from around the world represented—including Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, United Kingdom, Argentina and more.

Alexis Ohanian, Seven Seven Six Founder & Reddit Co-Founder, took center stage on Saturday, May 21, as the Show’s keynote speaker, presented by American Express. During the session with moderator Starr Marcello of the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, Ohanian offered his perspectives on how the latest technologies—including NFTs, Web3 and the metaverse—are impacting the foodservice industry today. He stated that even with these technologies, “we are still a species that needs offline interaction.” He emphasized that there is “tremendous competition for attention” so restaurants need to invest in being “thoughtful and intentional” to thrive, adding that creating a fear of missing out through rotating or limited-run menus may help drive consumer interest.

In addition to the keynote address, the Show featured nearly 100 sessions covering seven education tracks—Culinary Insights, Operations Solutions, Technology Strategies, The New Consumer, Trends in Adult Beverage, Wellness, and Workforce Recruitment and Development. Paid workshops were offered as well, with hands-on deep dives for over 600 operators into industry opportunities including ghost kitchens, virtual brands, and navigating the technology landscape. In the featured session, presented by Uber Eats, Technomic experts and restaurant operators answered questions about the most pressing issues facing the industry today, including inflation, supply chain management, labor challenges, ghost kitchens, shifting consumer demographics, social responsibility, sustainability and technology.

A highlight of this year’s Show was Monday’s sold-out Industry Night Out, where attendees celebrated their return to the Show after three years. Leading up to the Show, attendees participated in a month-long cocktail tournament to determine which concoctions should be featured at Industry Night Out. Attendees sampled the four cocktail finalists, alongside artfully selected food pairings, and voted to crown the Color Changing Galaxy Spiked Lemonade as the 2022 Project Beverage Champion. This concoction won over voters with its unique, bright and fresh flavor profile that is perfect for summer menu pairings.

The Show floor featured the largest [Kitchen Innovations Showroom](#) in the event's 100+ year history, with equipment focused on automation, efficiency, safety improvements, sustainability and waste solutions, developed to help address many of the challenges facing the industry today. This offering was welcomed by the equipment industry, with the Show seeing an increased number of dealers and distributor registrations in 2022 compared to the last event held in 2019.

"We are honored to be a KI Awardee," said Sally Ray, Marketing Director with Hoshizaki America. "The Kitchen Innovations Awards is the gold standard in the equipment world, and because of this program, Hoshizaki has been able to stand out as a leader and innovator in the design and manufacturing of foodservice equipment."

Three years' worth of [FABI](#) award-winning items—food and beverage products that are breaking new ground in taste, creativity, packaging and profit potential—could be found throughout the Show floor, complete with sampling opportunities. Zero-proof beverages, dairy-free and plant-based foods, and an increased emphasis on global flavors were just some of the product trends seen throughout the Show floor.

Another first at the Show this year was the kickoff of an initiative to support the ongoing efforts of World Central Kitchen by Chef José Andrés. On top of the amount raised at the Show, Winsight Exhibitions will contribute an additional \$10,000 to support World Central Kitchen's efforts in providing meals in response to humanitarian, climate and community crises in the U.S. and abroad. Donations will continue to be accepted throughout the summer: donate.wck.org/2022RestaurantShow.

"We thank all those who helped to make this year's Show so successful and look forward to uniting the industry again in 2023," shared Cindric on the last day of the Show.

The National Restaurant Association Show brings together more restaurant and hospitality buyers and equipment manufacturers than any other industry event. Planning for the 2023 Show, taking place May 20-23 at McCormick Place, is already well underway. For more information, visit nationalrestaurantshow.com and connect with the Show online on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

Photos from this year's Restaurant Show can be downloaded [here](#).

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The National Restaurant Association Show, Hotel-Motel Show is owned and operated by Winsight LLC in partnership with the National Restaurant Association.

About Winsight LLC

Winsight LLC is a business-to-business information, event and market intelligence company serving the restaurant and noncommercial foodservice, convenience and petroleum retailing and grocery industries. Winsight provides research and analytics, branding solutions, face-to-face opportunities, lead generation initiatives, and content marketing services through products including subscription data products, reports, research tools, research programs, fully custom studies, conferences, custom marketing services, meetings, print, digital trade media and tradeshows, including the National Restaurant Association Show.