



# Restaurant Owner Demographics

Data Brief – April 2026

## 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.

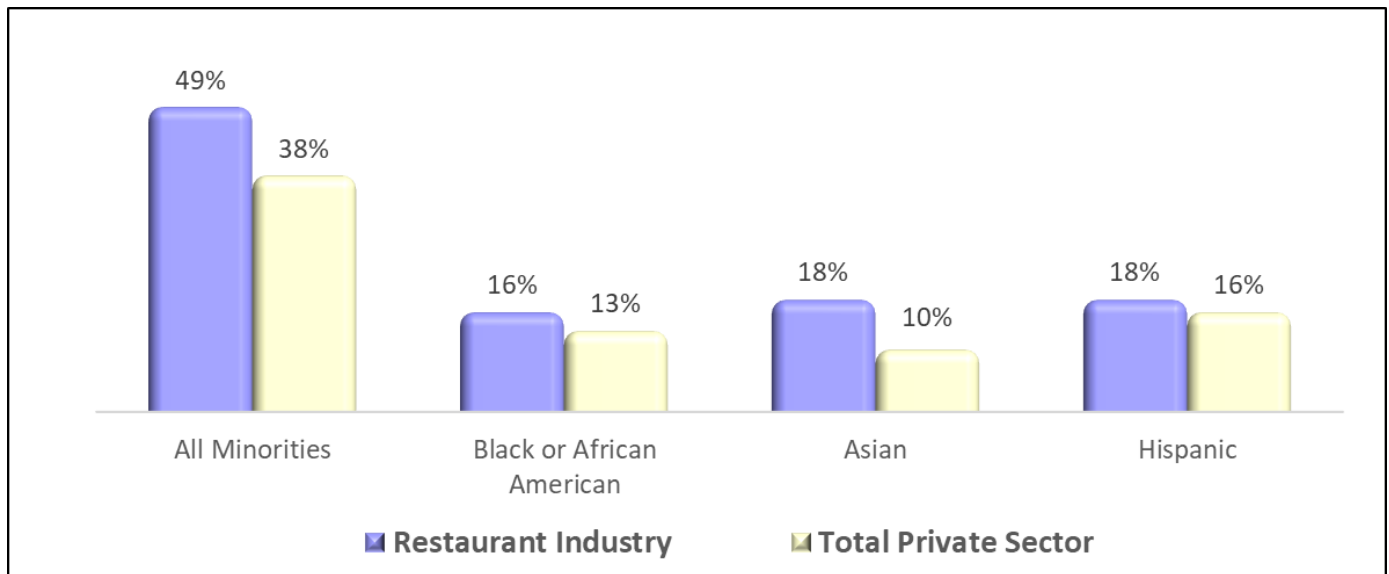
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## Nearly Half of Restaurant Businesses are Owned by Minorities

- 49% of restaurant firms are owned by minorities, compared to 38% of businesses in the overall private sector.
- 18% of restaurant firms are Asian-owned, 18% 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 (73%), Texas (67%), California (66%), Georgia (66%) and Maryland (64%) 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; 2023 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	50%	*	12%	6%	31%	*	4%	4%
Alaska	*	*	*	*	24%	3%	6%	5%
Arizona	51%	7%	13%	30%	35%	6%	7%	22%
Arkansas	43%	*	10%	13%	23%	13%	3%	7%
California	66%	7%	35%	28%	52%	6%	24%	25%
Colorado	37%	*	13%	19%	24%	5%	5%	14%
Connecticut	35%	9%	15%	*	28%	11%	6%	13%
Delaware	*	*	*	*	34%	19%	8%	8%
District of Columbia	63%	*	20%	*	51%	37%	8%	9%
Florida	62%	23%	12%	34%	55%	17%	5%	38%
Georgia	66%	43%	17%	10%	51%	34%	9%	11%
Hawaii	73%	2%	57%	*	65%	2%	49%	6%
Idaho	19%	*	*	*	12%	1%	2%	7%
Illinois	47%	*	17%	14%	34%	14%	10%	12%
Indiana	32%	12%	11%	10%	21%	10%	5%	6%
Iowa	*	*	*	*	11%	4%	3%	4%
Kansas	35%	5%	13%	17%	18%	5%	4%	8%
Kentucky	30%	10%	10%	10%	16%	7%	4%	6%
Louisiana	52%	38%	*	7%	38%	29%	4%	6%
Maine	15%	*	11%	*	7%	3%	2%	1%
Maryland	64%	33%	23%	13%	50%	31%	11%	11%
Massachusetts	36%	8%	19%	11%	26%	9%	9%	10%
Michigan	34%	20%	9%	5%	22%	13%	5%	4%
Minnesota	29%	7%	15%	*	19%	10%	5%	4%
Mississippi	56%	*	7%	5%	39%	33%	3%	3%
Missouri	30%	*	11%	7%	18%	10%	4%	4%
Montana	15%	*	*	*	7%	*	1%	2%
Nebraska	22%	*	*	*	16%	4%	4%	7%
Nevada	53%	11%	22%	21%	46%	12%	15%	22%
New Hampshire	19%	2%	12%	*	9%	2%	3%	3%
New Jersey	46%	11%	21%	18%	41%	12%	14%	19%
New Mexico	61%	2%	*	42%	46%	3%	4%	36%
New York	47%	11%	25%	16%	40%	12%	17%	15%
North Carolina	44%	22%	13%	10%	32%	18%	6%	9%
North Dakota	20%	*	*	*	10%	4%	2%	2%
Ohio	30%	*	10%	5%	20%	13%	4%	*
Oklahoma	40%	8%	11%	15%	28%	7%	5%	8%
Oregon	34%	*	19%	13%	19%	3%	7%	8%
Pennsylvania	33%	*	17%	8%	22%	9%	7%	7%
Rhode Island	30%	*	13%	*	26%	7%	5%	17%
South Carolina	44%	*	11%	8%	31%	21%	4%	7%
South Dakota	20%	2%	*	8%	9%	2%	2%	2%
Tennessee	47%	28%	12%	9%	26%	16%	4%	6%
Texas	67%	21%	16%	34%	55%	15%	11%	33%
Utah	35%	1%	16%	17%	17%	2%	*	11%
Vermont	19%	2%	12%	*	6%	1%	2%	2%
Virginia	53%	18%	23%	14%	39%	17%	13%	11%
Washington	46%	*	27%	14%	28%	6%	13%	8%
West Virginia	18%	3%	10%	*	8%	3%	2%	2%
Wisconsin	21%	*	9%	7%	14%	5%	4%	4%
Wyoming	*	1%	*	*	11%	1%	3%	6%
<b>United States</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>16%</b>

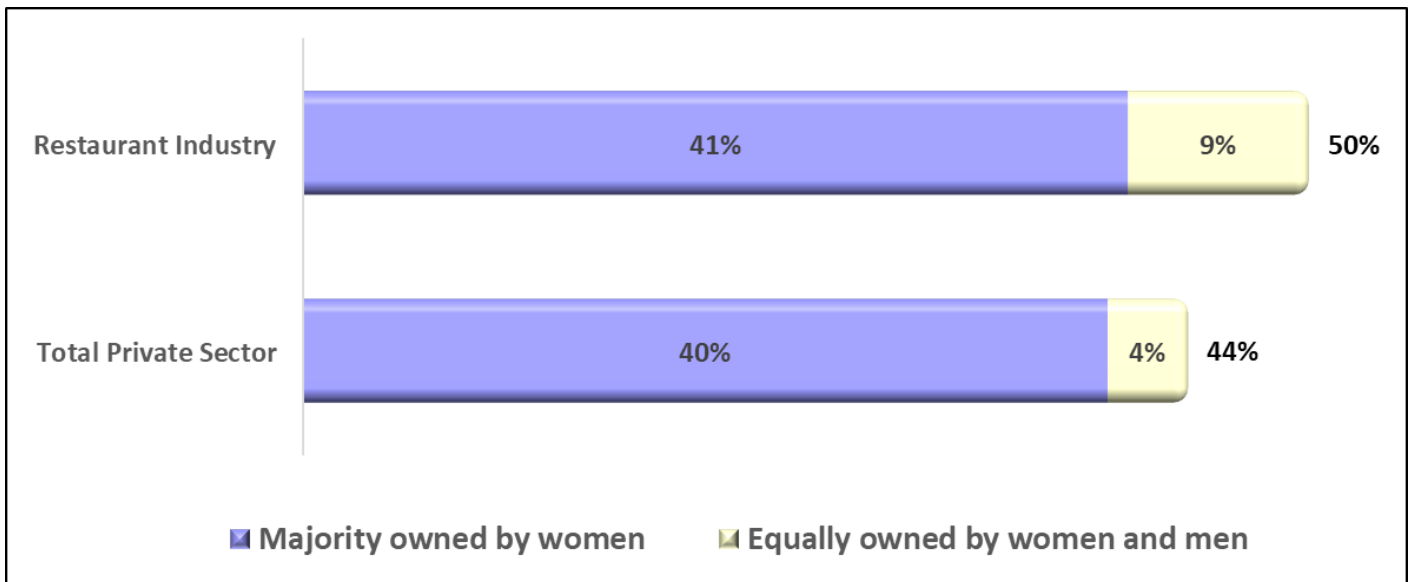
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2023 data

Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with and without payroll employees \*Data not available

## One-Half of Restaurant Businesses are Owned by Women

- Fully one-half of restaurant firms are at least 50% owned by women, compared to 44% of businesses in the overall private sector.
  - 41% of restaurant firms are majority-owned by women, while 9% are equally owned by women and men.
- In 45 states and the District of Columbia, the restaurant industry has a higher rate of female business ownership than the overall private sector (based on at least 50% ownership by women).
- Alaska (67%), Mississippi (62%), Montana (59%), Wyoming (59%), Georgia (58%), Louisiana (57%) and Alabama (57%) 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; 2023 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	50%	57%	42%	46%
Alaska	59%	67%	40%	45%
Arizona	42%	52%	41%	46%
Arkansas	44%	52%	40%	46%
California	37%	47%	39%	44%
Colorado	37%	49%	41%	46%
Connecticut	33%	44%	39%	43%
Delaware	33%	42%	38%	43%
District of Columbia	38%	44%	47%	50%
Florida	44%	51%	42%	46%
Georgia	53%	58%	46%	48%
Hawaii	37%	50%	43%	48%
Idaho	38%	56%	37%	45%
Illinois	39%	47%	40%	43%
Indiana	42%	51%	39%	44%
Iowa	40%	52%	37%	43%
Kansas	38%	50%	38%	44%
Kentucky	40%	47%	38%	42%
Louisiana	51%	57%	44%	48%
Maine	34%	50%	37%	42%
Maryland	45%	50%	43%	46%
Massachusetts	35%	44%	38%	41%
Michigan	42%	50%	41%	44%
Minnesota	37%	48%	37%	42%
Mississippi	*	62%	44%	47%
Missouri	40%	55%	39%	44%
Montana	41%	59%	37%	46%
Nebraska	38%	54%	37%	44%
Nevada	39%	47%	42%	46%
New Hampshire	28%	44%	36%	41%
New Jersey	32%	40%	36%	41%
New Mexico	40%	53%	43%	48%
New York	34%	40%	37%	41%
North Carolina	41%	51%	42%	47%
North Dakota	33%	50%	35%	41%
Ohio	41%	48%	40%	43%
Oklahoma	44%	52%	39%	44%
Oregon	38%	51%	42%	48%
Pennsylvania	35%	44%	37%	41%
Rhode Island	31%	37%	39%	43%
South Carolina	46%	53%	43%	46%
South Dakota	41%	56%	34%	42%
Tennessee	49%	56%	42%	45%
Texas	48%	54%	42%	45%
Utah	36%	50%	35%	44%
Vermont	*	53%	39%	44%
Virginia	41%	49%	41%	45%
Washington	37%	53%	40%	46%
West Virginia	36%	49%	39%	44%
Wisconsin	35%	49%	37%	42%
Wyoming	39%	59%	36%	48%
<b>United States</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>44%</b>

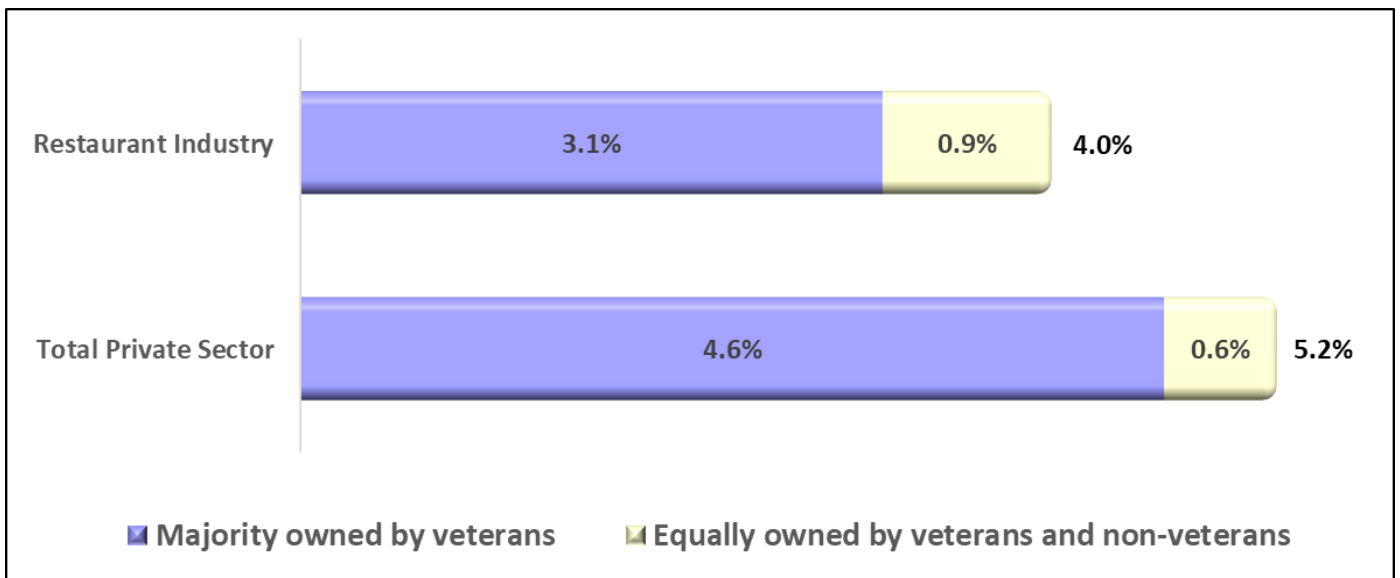
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2023 data

Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with and without payroll employees \*Data not available

## Four Percent of Restaurant Businesses are Owned by Veterans

- 4.0% of restaurant firms are at least 50% owned by veterans, compared to 5.2% of businesses in the overall private sector.
  - 3.1% of restaurant firms are majority-owned by veterans, while 0.9% 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 Kansas (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; 2023 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	4.0%	6.9%
Alaska	*	9.5%
Arizona	3.1%	5.6%
Arkansas	*	6.6%
California	1.6%	3.0%
Colorado	3.8%	5.4%
Connecticut	*	3.3%
Delaware	*	5.2%
District of Columbia	*	3.1%
Florida	2.6%	4.2%
Georgia	4.1%	5.8%
Hawaii	*	6.5%
Idaho	*	6.2%
Illinois	2.3%	3.2%
Indiana	*	4.9%
Iowa	*	5.3%
Kansas	5.3%	5.3%
Kentucky	*	5.5%
Louisiana	3.2%	5.5%
Maine	*	6.4%
Maryland	2.8%	5.2%
Massachusetts	1.9%	3.3%
Michigan	2.4%	3.9%
Minnesota	*	4.5%
Mississippi	*	6.3%
Missouri	4.2%	5.8%
Montana	*	6.6%
Nebraska	*	5.8%
Nevada	3.1%	5.1%
New Hampshire	1.4%	6.2%
New Jersey	*	2.4%
New Mexico	4.0%	6.2%
New York	1.6%	2.2%
North Carolina	4.2%	6.3%
North Dakota	*	6.6%
Ohio	4.1%	5.1%
Oklahoma	3.6%	6.3%
Oregon	*	4.7%
Pennsylvania	3.1%	4.1%
Rhode Island	1.3%	3.9%
South Carolina	*	7.4%
South Dakota	*	7.7%
Tennessee	*	5.9%
Texas	3.7%	5.0%
Utah	*	3.5%
Vermont	1.3%	5.0%
Virginia	5.9%	7.5%
Washington	*	5.1%
West Virginia	*	6.9%
Wisconsin	4.0%	4.9%
Wyoming	*	6.6%
<b>United States</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>

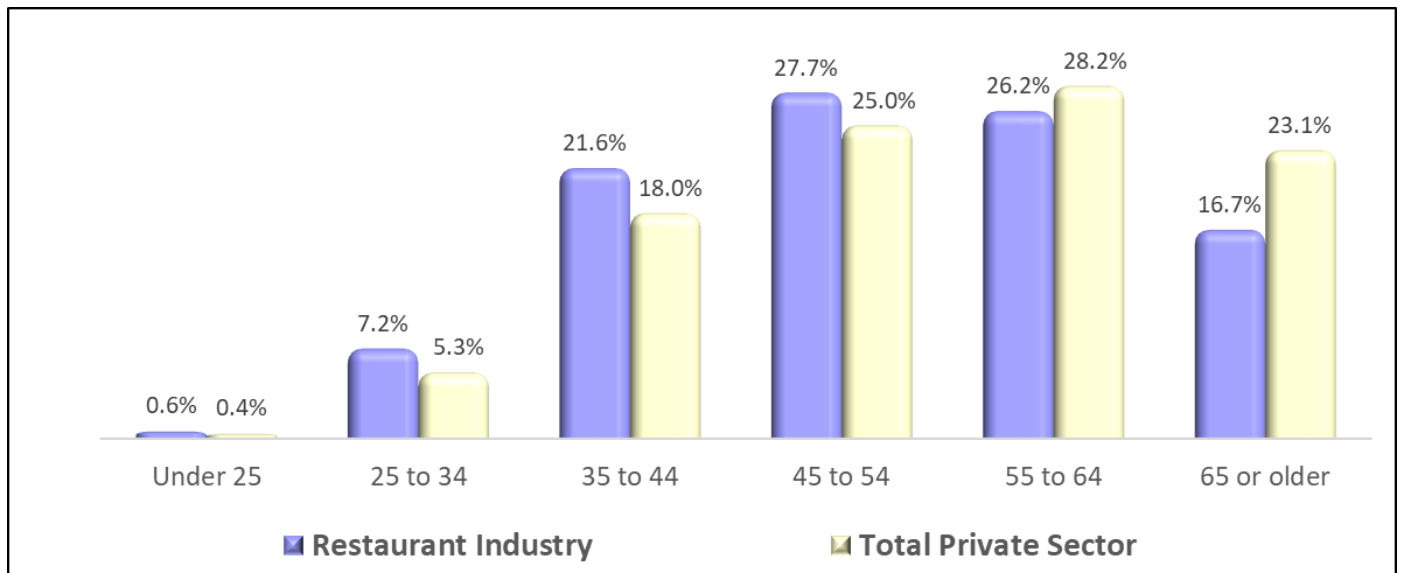
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2023 data

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 overall private sector.
- Nearly 8% of restaurant owners are under the age of 35, while 29% 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 24% are under the age of 45.
- Minority-owned restaurants are the most likely to be led by young business owners. 39% of Asian-owned restaurants, 33% of Hispanic-owned restaurants and 30% of Black- or African American-owned restaurants have owners under the age of 45. That compares with 26% of white-owned restaurants.
- 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

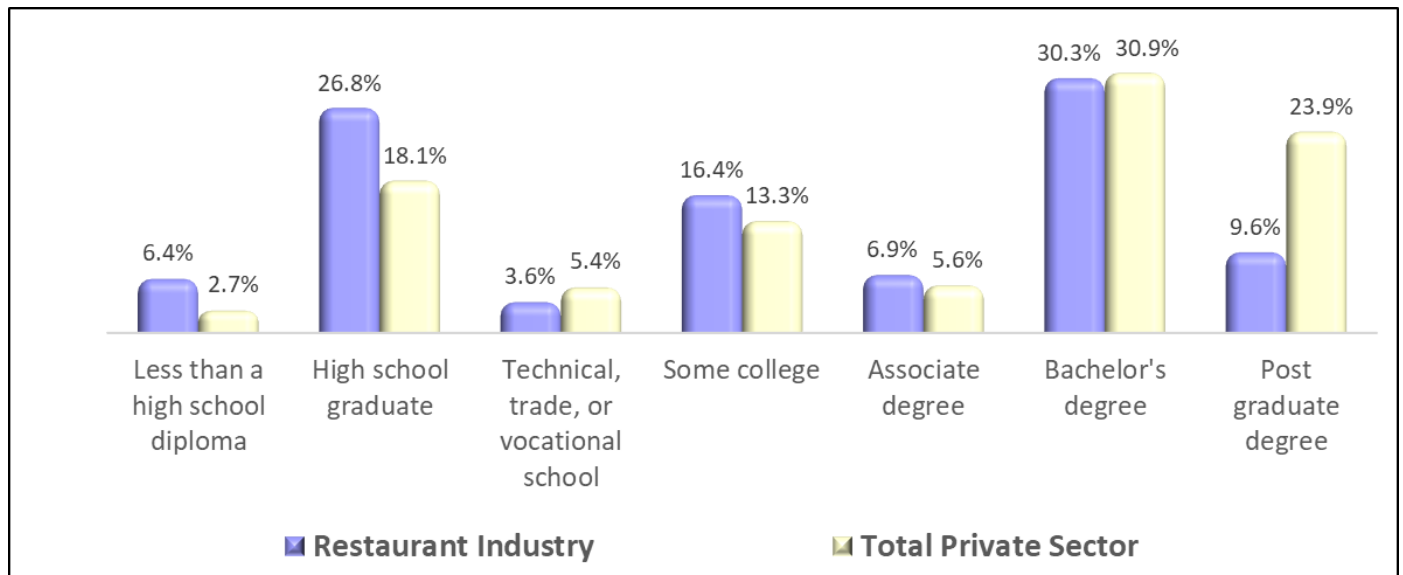


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2023 data  
Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with payroll employees

## 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.
- 6% of restaurant owners have less than a high school diploma, compared to 3% of private sector business owners.
- A high school diploma is the highest educational attainment for 27% 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 10% of restaurant owners.
- Among restaurant owners that hold bachelor’s or post graduate degrees, common fields of study include management and administration (42%), arts and humanities (10%), engineering (7%), health (6%), education (5%), sales and marketing (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

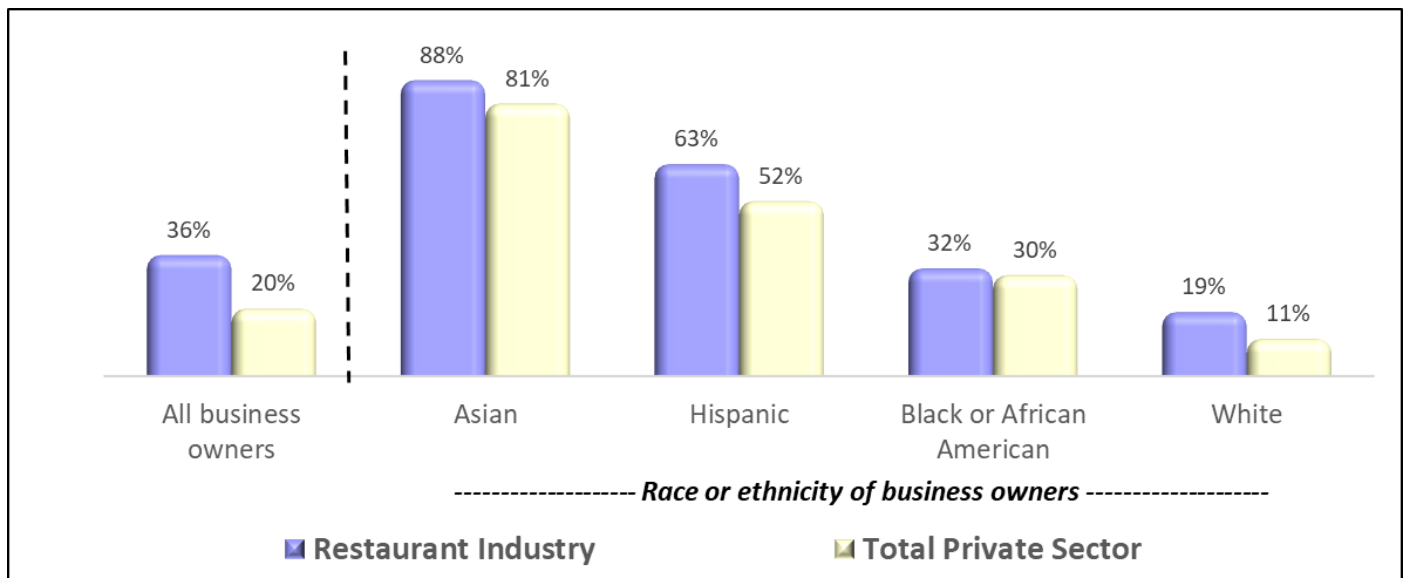


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Restaurant Association; 2023 data  
Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with payroll employees

### 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 20% of business owners in the overall private sector.
- Asian business owners are the most likely to have been born outside of the United States. 88% of Asian restaurant owners were born outside of the U.S., compared to 81% of their counterparts in the private sector overall.
- 63% of Hispanic restaurant owners are foreign-born, compared to 52% of Hispanic business owners in the overall private sector.
- 32% of Black or African American restaurant owners were born outside of the U.S. In the overall private sector, 30% 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; 2023 data  
Note: Figures represent firms (or business entities) with payroll employees