

Inflight Catering - Market Share Analysis, Industry Trends & Statistics, Growth Forecasts (2025 - 2030)

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Report description:

The Inflight Catering Market size is estimated at USD 18.62 billion in 2025, and is expected to reach USD 28.09 billion by 2030, at a CAGR of 8.57% during the forecast period (2025-2030).

The growth of the inflight catering market is expected to be driven by an increasing number of airline passengers. Another factor that is expected to boost the growth of the market is improving the quality of food and services offered by aircraft service providers. The food & beverage industry is witnessing increasing technological advancements in the form of tablet and mobile device-based ordering and payment for specific orders, which is an ongoing trend in the target market.

The in-flight catering service market is facing a significant challenge due to the rise in the cost of in-flight food. This increase in cost is impeding the market's efficient functioning and hindering its growth potential. With the competition among the airlines growing, they are opting for certain strategies to enhance the inflight dining experience. These strategies range from the process of ordering to food serving. Such developments may have a long-term effect on the prospects of the market in focus during the forecast period.

Inflight Catering Market Trends

The Meals Category is Expected to Dominate the Food Type Segment

The advent of ready-to-eat meals for travelers and rising demand for catering services on long-distance, nonstop flights are key factors fuelling growth. The major companies that provide in-flight catering are taking initiatives to provide meals to culturally diverse passengers. The rising demand for healthy and nutritious meals among passengers and customer willingness to pay a

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higher price for such meals are expected to facilitate growth.

The inflight dinners for most Asian airlines include meat (most commonly chicken or beef), a salad or vegetable, a small roll, and a dessert. Cooked breakfast or lighter continental-style meals may be served during morning flights. Globally, the size of the vegan and vegetarian population is increasing rapidly due to factors such as religion, altruism, environmental concerns, etc. Growing vegetarianism has increased the demand for vegan or vegetarian meals onboard aircraft. Since September 2023, Malaysia Airlines has introduced vegetarian dishes and diabetic-friendly and gluten-free meals.

American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Emirates, Singapore Airlines, Swiss Air Lines, and Qantas are major airlines that provide vegan meal options in their menus. Also, the growth of health-conscious people has resulted in the growing popularity of gluten-free meals and low-salt meals, as they are becoming the major food offerings under the special meals for airlines. To make the process of ordering food easier for passengers, airlines are providing options like meal pre-selection, meal pre-order, and mixed buy-on-board/complimentary catering to passengers. The provision of pre-ordering meals has also helped enhance the confidence of consumers in favor of inflight food services. Pre-orders are significantly on the rise, with the provision of 'free' pre-order programs for the business and premium economy classes.

North America is Anticipated to Witness the Highest Growth During the Forecast Period

The North American diet varies considerably with each state. The eating habits of the two major North American countries, the US and Canada, differ considerably from each other. In Canada, food intake in the Quebec region differs from the rest of the provinces. Smaller countries in the continent vary even more. So carriers have to arrange and stock up food accordingly, sufficing their routes and the region they are operating in.

The trend is, however, more toward eating healthy food, which is observed throughout the continent, particularly in the US. More than 1/4th of US citizens still consume fast food every day, but the percentage is dropping gradually. Healthy food has achieved significant traction. Foods like yogurt, poultry, sandwiches, and fresh fruits have witnessed a spike in demand in the field of inflight catering. Besides, the country is also a large market for chocolates, bakeries, and other confectioneries. The demand for low-calorie meals has resulted in a significant change in food offerings during flights.

For instance, in January 2023, Porter Airlines partnered with Canadian brands for inflight catering as it expanded across North America. The new catering menu is sustainable and includes vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free options. Such developments are expected to drive the growth of the North American region during the forecast period.

Inflight Catering Industry Overview

The inflight catering market is semi-consolidated in nature wherein gategroup, LSG Airline Catering & Retail GmbH, Cathay Pacific Catering Services (H.K.) Ltd., The Emirates Group, and SATS Ltd. are some of the leading companies in the inflight catering market. However, when it comes to supplying small and medium-sized airports, the market is witnessing an increased presence of regional players.

Demand for food with high quality and safety was the main reason for airlines to prefer catering from major manufacturers to the regional players. Furthermore, these big players have increased their R&D spending exponentially to integrate innovation with culinary excellence. This has resulted in premium quality food for airline inflight catering.

With the competition among the airlines increasing, they are opting for certain strategies to enhance the inflight dining experience. These strategies range from the process of ordering to food serving. Additionally, airlines are using different service strategies for different classes on the same flight to comply with hybrid operational scenarios while providing service to the

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customers.

Additional Benefits:

- The market estimate (ME) sheet in Excel format
- 3 months of analyst support

Table of Contents:

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Study Deliverables
- 1.2 Study Assumptions
- 1.3 Scope of the Study

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4 MARKET DYNAMICS

- 4.1 Market Overview
- 4.2 Market Drivers
- 4.3 Market Restraints
- 4.4 Value Chain / Supply Chain Analysis
- 4.5 Porter's Five Forces Analysis
 - 4.5.1 Bargaining Power of Suppliers
 - 4.5.2 Bargaining Power of Buyers/Consumers
 - 4.5.3 Threat of New Entrants
 - 4.5.4 Threat of Substitute Products
 - 4.5.5 Intensity of Competitive Rivalry
- 4.6 PESTLE Analysis

5 MARKET SEGMENTATION

- 5.1 Meals
 - 5.1.1 Bakery and Confectionary
 - 5.1.2 Beverages
 - 5.1.3 Other Food Types
- 5.2 Flight Type
 - 5.2.1 Full-service Carriers
 - 5.2.2 Low-cost Carriers
 - 5.2.3 Other Flight Types
- 5.3 Aircraft Seating Class
 - 5.3.1 Economy Class
 - 5.3.2 Business Class
 - 5.3.3 First-class
- 5.4 Catering Type
 - 5.4.1 Retail on Board
 - 5.4.2 Classic Catering
- 5.5 Flight Duration

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- 5.5.1 Long Haul
- 5.5.2 Short Haul
- 5.6 Geography
 - 5.6.1 North America
 - 5.6.1.1 US
 - 5.6.1.2 Canada
 - 5.6.2 Europe
 - 5.6.2.1 United Kingdom
 - 5.6.2.2 Germany
 - 5.6.2.3 France
 - 5.6.2.4 Russia
 - 5.6.2.5 Italy
 - 5.6.2.6 Rest of Europe
 - 5.6.3 Asia-Pacific
 - 5.6.3.1 China
 - 5.6.3.2 India
 - 5.6.3.3 Japan
 - 5.6.3.4 Australia
 - 5.6.3.5 Rest of Asia-Pacific
 - 5.6.4 Latin America
 - 5.6.4.1 Mexico
 - 5.6.4.2 Brazil
 - 5.6.4.3 Rest of Latin America
 - 5.6.5 Middle East
 - 5.6.5.1 UAE
 - 5.6.5.2 Saudi Arabia
 - 5.6.5.3 Qatar
 - 5.6.5.4 Rest of Middle East and Africa

6 COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE

- 6.1 Vendor Market Share
- 6.2 Mergers & Acquisitions
- 6.3 Company Profiles
 - 6.3.1 Flying Food Group
 - 6.3.2 DO & CO Aktiengesellschaft
 - 6.3.3 gategroup
 - 6.3.4 LSG Airline Catering & Retail GmbH
 - 6.3.5 The Emirates Group
 - 6.3.6 Newrest Group Services SAS
 - 6.3.7 SATS Ltd.
 - 6.3.8 IGS Ground Services
 - 6.3.9 KLM Catering Services
 - 6.3.10 Cathay Pacific Catering Services Ltd.

7 MARKET OPPORTUNITIES AND FUTURE TRENDS

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