

Arcos Dorados

Solid 4Q, despite higher expenses; digital, remodels & new MFA are themes

Maintain Rating: BUY | PO: 14.50 USD | Price: 11.02 USD

Revenue +15.4%, EBITDA +16.3%, EPS +2.4%

EPS increased 2.4% y/y to \$0.26, ahead of a \$0.25 consensus, as a lower tax rate offset non-cash Argentine FX losses and impairment charges. SSS rose 32.4% (29.2% ex Venezuela), or 1.1x blended inflation, and we perceive market share gains across major markets. EBITDA margin expanded 8bp, as favorable food & paper costs (Exhibit 9) and operating leverage mitigated higher payroll and other expenses in Brazil and NOLAD.

SLAD gains offset expense pressure in Brazil/NOLAD

Brazil SSS moderated to +6.2% (1.3x inflation), on a tough comp against prior-year World Cup promotions, but far outpaced rivals. EBITDA margin narrowed 58bp y/y on higher profit sharing and aggregator fees, as delivery continues to gain share. NOLAD's SSS also slowed to +5.4%, as Panamanian protests mitigated Mexican strength. EBITDA margin declined 32bp on wage pressures. SLAD SSS of +94.7% was in line with inflation, and operating leverage enabled EBITDA margin expansion of 155bp.

Digitalization: sales, efficiency and experience enabler

ARCO continues its digital QSR leadership and greater use of CRM tools. ARCO had 3mn loyalty program members at year-end, and over 5mn as of February, with identified sales reaching 21% of total (26% in Brazil) in 4Q. Digital channel sales represented 53% of systemwide sales (63% in Brazil). We look for efforts to enable client-specific insight into elasticity, improve activation and average ticket, generate savings on store crew costs, and strengthen service levels.

Further market share opportunity, MFA renewal

While ARCO faces difficult top-line comps and headwinds in Argentina (~16% of revenue) we look for digitalization, remodels and industry dislocation to create further market share opportunities. Expense pressure in Brazil also appears largely seasonal. Despite some market uncertainty related to the renewal of ARCO's Master Franchise Agreement (MFA) with McDonald's, we anticipate an MFA that preserves existing franchise fees, but accelerates growth (see report). We reaffirm our Buy rating.

Estimates (Dec) (US\$)	2021A	2022A	2023E	2024E	2025E
EPS	0.22	0.67	0.84	0.86	0.96
EPS Change (YoY)	NM	204.5%	25.4%	2.4%	11.6%
Underlying EPS	0.21	0.67	0.82	0.86	0.96
DPS	0	0.15	0.19	0.20	0.21
Valuation (Dec)					
P/E	50.1x	16.4x	13.1x	12.8x	11.5x
Underlying P/E	53.0x	16.3x	13.4x	12.8x	11.5x
Dividend Yield	0%	1.4%	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%
EV / EBITDA*	11.1x	7.8x	6.4x	5.8x	5.4x
Free Cash Flow Yield*	6.2%	5.5%	-0.1%	-0.5%	1.0%
* For full definitions of $\emph{\textbf{\textit{IQ}}}$ method $^{\text{SM}}$ measures, see page 11.					

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Refer to important disclosures on page 12 to 14. Analyst Certification on page 10. Price
Objective Basis/Risk on page 10.

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Stock Data

Price Objective

Net Dbt to Eqty (Dec-2022A)

FSGMeter™

Date Established 27-Nov-2023 Investment Opinion B-1-7 52-Week Range 7.02 USD - 13.20 USD Mrkt Val (mn) / Shares Out 2.321 USD / 210.7 (mn) Free Float 94.9% Average Daily Value (mn) 9.99 USD BofA Ticker / Exchange ARCO / NYS Bloomberg / Reuters ARCO US / ARCO.N ROE (2023E) 43.6%

11.02 USD

14.50 USD

142.7%

Medium

ESGMeter is not indicative of a company's future stock price performance and is not an investment recommendation or rating. ESGMeter is independent of BofA Global Research's equity investment rating, volatility risk rating, income rating, and price objective for that company. For full details, refer to "BofA ESGMeter Methodology".

ARCO: Arcos Dorados
NOLAD: North Latin American Division
SLAD: South Latin American Division
EOTF Experience of the Future
ex FX: excluding FX impacts (local currency)
y/y: year-over-year
q/q: quarter-over-quarter
SSS: same store (restaurant) sales
CRM: customer relationship management
QSR: quick service restaurant

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iQprofile[™] Arcos Dorados

	2021A	2022A	2023E	2024E	2025
(US\$ Millions)					
Return on Capital Employed	4.6%	8.9%	9.5%	9.6%	9.7%
Return on Equity Operating Margin	21.8%	51.6%	43.6% 7.6%	32.8%	28.8%
Free Cash Flow	5.2% 143	7.3% 128	(2)	7.8% (13)	8.3% 22
Tree castifiow	143	120	(2)	(15)	22
Q method SM – Quality of Earnings*					
(US\$ Millions)	2021A	2022A	2023E	2024E	2025
Cash Realization Ratio	5.7x	2.5x	2.1x	2.0x	2.0>
Asset Replacement Ratio	1.0x	1.8x	2.6x	2.2x	2.0
Tax Rate	41.1%	37.8%	40.5%	39.0%	38.0%
Net Debt-to-Equity Ratio	225.8%	142.7%	126.5%	106.9%	88.1%
Interest Cover	2.8x	7.2x	8.6x	7.7x	8.5>
Income Statement Data (Dec)					
(US\$ Millions)	2021A	2022A	2023E	2024E	2025
Sales	2,660	3,619	4,251	4,399	4,535
% Change	34.1%	36.1%	17.5%	3.5%	3.1%
Gross Profit	1,761	2,392	2,820	2,925	3,021
% Change	34.7%	35.8%	17.9%	3.7%	3.3%
EBITDA	272	387	471	516	557
% Change	304.9%	42.2%	21.8%	9.7%	7.9%
Net Interest & Other Income	(64)	(38)	(26)	(46)	(47)
Net Income (Adjusted)	45	140	176	182	202
% Change	NM	208.5%	25.4%	3.2%	11.2%
(US\$ Millions)	2021A	2022A	2023E	2024E	20251
Net Income from Cont Operations (GAAP)	45	140	176	182	202
Depreciation & Amortization	120	120	145	171	183
•					
Change in Working Capital	93	84	16	13	8
Change in Working Capital Deferred Taxation Charge	93 0	84 0	16 39	13 0	3
Change in Working Capital Deferred Taxation Charge Other Adjustments, Net	93 0 0	84 0 1	16 39 (2)	13 0 0	8 0 4
Change in Working Capital Deferred Taxation Charge Other Adjustments, Net Capital Expenditure	93 0 0 (115)	84 0 1 (217)	16 39 (2) (377)	13 0 0 (378)	(373)
Change in Working Capital Deferred Taxation Charge Other Adjustments, Net Capital Expenditure Free Cash Flow	93 0 0 (115) 143	84 0 1 (217) 128	16 39 (2) (377) -2	13 0 0 (378) -13	(373) 22
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Change in Working Capital Deferred Taxation Charge Other Adjustments, Net Capital Expenditure Free Cash Flow % Change Share / Issue Repurchase	93 0 0 (115) 143 NM NA	84 0 1 (217) 128 - 10.3% NA	16 39 (2) (377) -2 NM NA	13 0 0 (378) -13 -735.7%	(373) 22 NM
Change in Working Capital Deferred Taxation Charge Other Adjustments, Net Capital Expenditure Free Cash Flow % Change Share / Issue Repurchase Cost of Dividends Paid	93 0 0 (115) 143 NM NA 0	84 0 1 (217) 128 - 10.3% NA (32)	16 39 (2) (377) -2 NM NA (40)	13 0 0 (378) -13 -735.7% NA (42)	(373 22 NM NA (44
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Company Sector

Restaurants

Company Description

Arcos Dorados is the world's largest McDonald's franchisee, and Latin America's leading quick service restaurant operator. The company has exclusive rights to operate or sub-franchise restaurants in over 20 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Brazil represents about half of revenues and nearly 60% of EBITDA. Arcos Dorados was created in 2007 via the acquisition of McDonald's assets in the region. The company completed a \$1.4bln initial public offering in April 2011.

Investment Rationale

ARCO's digitalization efforts could be the most advanced among regional QSR rivals. The company appears to be sustaining delivery as markets normalize, lowering crew costs, and mitigating food cost pressures with revenue management and client relationship management initiatives. Overall QSR penetration rates remain low, and we look for market exits and disruption to accelerate share gains. App adoption and data analytics also fuel new opportunities to drive traffic and ticket.

Stock Data

Average Daily Volume

906,620

Exhibit 1: Arcos Dorados 4Q23 - consolidated income statement SSS grew 29.2% ex Venezuela, Adj. EBITDA +16.3% y/y, EPS +2.4%; USD, mn

	4Q22	4Q23	% Chg	BofA	vs Est	Cons	vs Cons
Total Restaurants	2,312	2,278	-1.5%	2,352	-3.1%		
Comparable Sales Ex. Vz., % Chg (ex FX)	35.7%	29.2%		27.4%		18.7%	
Comparable Sales, % Chg (ex FX)	37.3%	32.4%					
Net Revenue	1,018.6	1,175.5	15.4%	1,174.1	0.1%	1,135.1	3.6%
Adjusted EBITDA ¹	114.1	132.6	16.3%	131.8	0.6%	130.7	1.4%
Operating Income	81.5	81.8	0.3%	91.9	-11.0%	95.0	-13.9%
Net Interest Income / (Expense)	(6.5)	(17.9)	173.3%	(8.3)	115.2%	(9.5)	88.6%
Pretax Income	74.7	63.9	-14.5%	83.6	-23.5%	85.5	-25.3%
Income Tax Credit / (Expense)	(20.1)	(7.8)	-61.2%	(17.5)	-55.7%	(33.0)	-76.4%
Effective tax rate	26.8%	12.2%	-1,467bp	21.0%	-883 bp	38.5%	-2,635bp
Net Income	54.5	55.8	2.4%	65.8	-15.2%	52.6	6.1%
EPS	0.26	0.26	2.4%	0.31	-15.2%	0.25	6.1%
Adj. EBITDA Margin	11.2%	11.3%	8bp	11.2%	5 bp	11.5%	-24bp
Operating Margin	8.0%	7.0%	-104bp	7.8%	-87 bp	8.4%	-141bp
Net Margin	5.3%	4.7%	-60bp	5.6%	-86 bp	4.6%	11bp

^{1: 4}Q23 excludex USD7.4mn non-cash expenses related to higher impairments and write-offs of long-lived assets

Source: Company filings, Bloomberg, BofA Global Research estimates



Exhibit 2: Arcos Dorados segment data
SLAD operating leverage offsets some expense pressure in Brazil and NOLAD; USD, mn

	4Q22	4Q23	% Chg	% Local	BofA	vs Est
Brazil			, o g	70 - 0 - 0 - 0		
Restaurants	1,084	1,130	4.2%		1,119	1.0%
Comparable Sales, % Chg (ex FX)	21.9%	6.2%		6.2%	6.2%	
Net Revenue	406.3	482.8	18.8%	11.8%	473.2	2.0%
Operating Profit	67.3	73.6	9.4%	2.7%	76.2	-3.4%
Operating Margin	16.6%	15.3%	-132bp		16.1%	-85bp
Adjusted EBITDA	81.2	93.7	15.4%	8.3%	94.2	-0.5%
EBITDA Margin	20.0%	19.4%	-58bp		19.9%	-48bp
SLAD (ex-Vz)			<u> </u>			
Restaurants	492	501	1.8%		502	-0.2%
Comparable Sales, % Chg (ex FX)	70.7%	85.3%		85.3%	69.0%	
Net Revenue	345.8	381.2	10.2%	87.0%	403.9	-5.6%
Operating Profit	24.9	26.4	5.7%	209.0%	27.7	-4.9%
Operating Margin	7.2%	6.9%	-30bp		6.9%	5bj
Adjusted EBITDA	32.3	42.0	29.9%	177.7%	36.6	14.9%
EBITDA Margin	9.3%	11.0%	167bp		9.0%	197bj
SLAD						
Restaurants	590	584	-1.0%		590	-1.0%
Net Revenue	351.6	392.1	11.5%	94.3%	412.9	-5.0%
Operating Profit	23.4	24.6	5.1%	220.7%	25.2	-2.4%
Operating Margin	6.6%	6.3%	-38bp		6.1%	17bj
Adjusted EBITDA	31.3	41.0	31.0%	180.9%	34.6	18.7%
EBITDA Margin	8.9%	10.5%	155bp		8.4%	209bj
NOLAD						
Restaurants	638	647	1.4%		643	0.6%
Comparable Sales, % Chg (ex FX)	19.6%	5.4%		5.4%	5.4%	
Net Revenue	260.8	300.4	15.2%	7.5%	288.0	4.3%
Operating Profit	19.1	19.1	0.0%	-7.7%	20.2	-5.1%
Operating Margin	7.3%	6.4%	-97bp		7.0%	-63bp
Adjusted EBITDA	27.9	31.1	11.7%	3.6%	31.1	0.2%
EBITDA Margin	10.7%	10.4%	-32bp		10.8%	-42b _l
Corporate and Others						
Operating Profit	(28.3)	(35.5)	-25.6%	-96.5%	(29.7)	19.8%
Adjusted EBITDA	(26.4)	(33.3)	-26.1%	-100.0%	(27.9)	19.0%
Consolidated (ex-Vz)						
Restaurants	2,312	2,361	2.1%	Т	2,352	0.4%
Comparable Sales, % Chg (ex FX)	35.7%	29.2%		29.2%	27.4%	
Net Revenue	1,012.8	1,164.5	15.0%	36.3%	1,165.1	-0.1%
Operating Profit	83.1	83.6	0.6%	30.3%	94.4	-11.5%
Operating Margin	8.2%	7.2%	-103bp		8.1%	-93bp

Exhibit 2: Arcos Dorados segment data

SLAD operating leverage offsets some expense pressure in Brazil and NOLAD; USD, mn

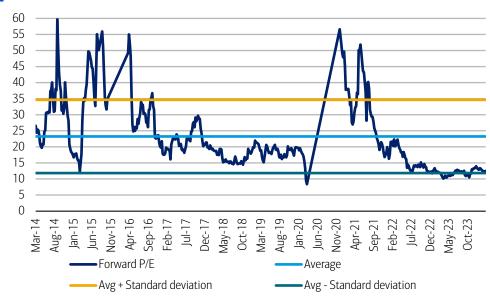
	4Q22	4Q23	% Chg	% Local	BofA	vs Est
Adjusted EBITDA	115.1	133.6	16.1%	33.7%	133.8	-0.2%
EBITDA Margin	11.4%	11.5%	11bp		11.5%	-1bp

Source: Company financials, BofA Global Research estimates

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Valuation

Exhibit 3: ARCO is trading nearly one standard deviation below its historical P/E average of 22x Consensus forward 12-month P/E



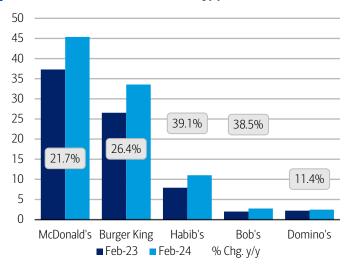
Source: Bloomberg, BofA Global Research



Brazil app downloads and usage

Exhibit 4: Brazilian restaurant app downloads continue to grow

Brazil, cumulative downloads (mn) and % Chg y/y

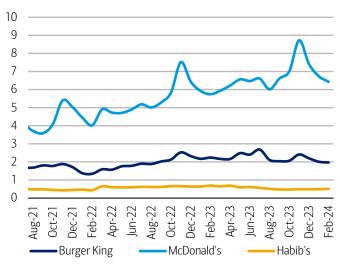


Source: Sensor Tower, BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 5: McDonald's leads peers with 6.4mn monthly active app users in Brazil

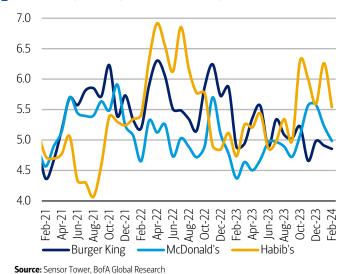
Brazil, monthly active app users (MAU), mn



Source: Sensor Tower, BofA Global Research

Exhibit 6: McDonald's frequency lags peers, but gap is narrowing

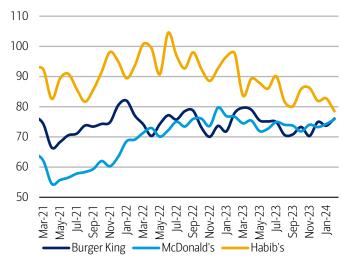
Brazil, monthly frequency (sessions per monthly active app user)



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Exhibit 7: Users spend an average of 76 seconds per session on the McDonald's app

Brazil, average time per session, seconds



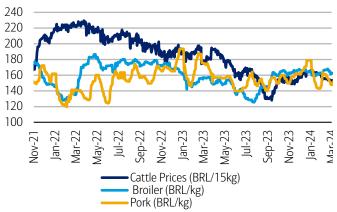
Source: Sensor Tower, BofA Global Research

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Cost environment improving

Exhibit 8: Beef prices are lower y/y...

Brazil protein prices index, Jan-2019 = 100



Source: ESALQ, BofA Global Research, Bloomberg

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Exhibit 9: ...and inputs as a whole are fairly flat

ARCO input cost basket, USD, % chg y/y



Source: BofA Global Research, Bloomberg



Food lags CPI in Brazil, leads elsewhere

Exhibit 10: Brazilian Food and beverage inflation accelerated to +2.5% y/y in February

CPI: total vs. food, % chg y/y



Exhibit 11: Argentine food inflation over 300% y/y in February

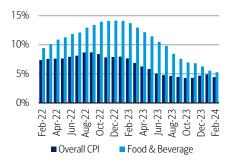
Overall CPI & Food Inflation, % Chg y/y



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Exhibit 12: Mexican food inflation slowed to 5.3% y/y in February, but continues to lead the overall CPI

Overall and food & beverage CPI, % chg y/y



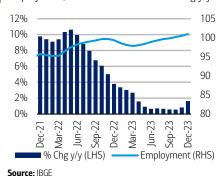
Source: INEGI

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Macroeconomic indicators

Exhibit 13: Brazilian job growth improving, +1.6% y/y in December

Employment, mln of inhabitants and % chg y/y



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Exhibit 14: Brazilian real wages up 3.1% y/y in December

Real vs. nominal wages, % chg y/y



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Exhibit 15: Brazilian consumer confidence has weakened, but still up 4.9% y/y in February

Total consumer confidence



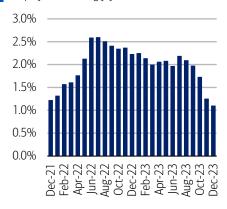
Source: FGV

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8

Exhibit 16: Argentine employment still growing in December, up 1.1% y/y

Employment, % Chg y/y



Source: INDEC

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Exhibit 17: Argentine wage increases lagging inflation

Real vs Nominal wages, % Chg y/y



Source: INDEC

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Exhibit 18: Sharp deterioration in Argentine consumer confidence

Consumer confidence, % Chg y/y



Source: UTDT

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Exhibit 19: Strong Mexican formal employment growth of 3.1% y/y in December

Total employment registered in IMSS, % chg y/y

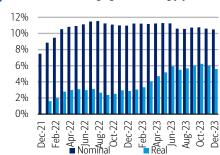


Source: IMSS

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Exhibit 20: Mexican real wage growth accelerated during 2023 as inflation moderated; up 5.6% y/y in December

Nominal and real wage growth, % chg y/y



Source: IMSS

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Exhibit 21: Mexican consumer confidence up 6.2% y/y in January

Overall consumer confidence, % chg y/y



Source: INEGI



Price objective basis & risk

Arcos Dorados (ARCO)

Our \$14.50 price objective is based on a 15x forward-year (2025E) EPS, within ARCO's historical valuation range and supported by strong execution and market share gains.

Risks to our price objective are weaker investor sentiment, operating restrictions, COVID or other transmission concerns, corporate governance, including differential voting and no tagalong rights, competition, weaker local FX rates, asset write-downs, higher input costs, rising labor costs, excessive investment requirements, restrictions on promotions and advertising, other regulatory changes, execution challenges, competition, macroeconomic sluggishness, debt and/or franchise agreement breaches, and political uncertainties.

Analyst Certification

We, Robert E. Ford Aguilar, CFA, Vinicius Pretto and Wellington Santana, hereby certify that the views each of us has expressed in this research report accurately reflect each of our respective personal views about the subject securities and issuers. We also certify that no part of our respective compensation was, is, or will be, directly or indirectly, related to the specific recommendations or view expressed in this research report.

Latin	America -	Consumer	Coverage	Cluster
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Alsea	Investment rating	Company	BofA Ticker	Bloomberg symbol	Analyst
Arcos Dorados	BUY				
AFEZO & CO		Alsea	ALSSF	ALSEA* MM	Robert E. Ford Aguilar, CFA
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Latin America - Consumer Coverage Cluster

Investment rating	Company	BofA Ticker	Bloomberg symbol	Analyst
	Walmex	WMMVF	WALMEX* MM	Robert E. Ford Aguilar, CFA
	Walmex	WMMVY	WMMVY US	Robert E. Ford Aguilar, CFA

IQmethod[™] Measures Definitions

Business Performance	Numerator	Denominator
Return On Capital Employed	NOPAT = (EBIT + Interest Income) \times (1 - Tax Rate) + Goodwill Amortization	Total Assets — Current Liabilities + ST Debt + Accumulated Goodwill
		Amortization
Return On Equity	Net Income	Shareholders' Equity
Operating Margin	Operating Profit	Sales
Earnings Growth	Expected 5 Year CAGR From Latest Actual	N/A
Free Cash Flow	Cash Flow From Operations — Total Capex	N/A
Quality of Earnings	Numerator	Denominator
Cash Realization Ratio	Cash Flow From Operations	Net Income
Asset Replacement Ratio	Capex	Depreciation
Tax Rate	Tax Charge	Pre-Tax Income
Net Debt-To-Equity Ratio	Net Debt = Total Debt — Cash & Equivalents	Total Equity
Interest Cover	EBIT	Interest Expense
Valuation Toolkit	Numerator	Denominator
Price / Earnings Ratio	Current Share Price	Diluted Earnings Per Share (Basis As Specified)
Price / Book Value	Current Share Price	Shareholders' Equity / Current Basic Shares
Dividend Yield	Annualised Declared Cash Dividend	Current Share Price
Free Cash Flow Yield	Cash Flow From Operations – Total Capex	Market Cap = Current Share Price × Current Basic Shares
Enterprise Value / Sales	EV = Current Share Price × Current Shares + Minority Equity + Net Debt +	Sales
	Other LT Liabilities	
EV / EBITDA	Enterprise Value	Basic EBIT + Depreciation + Amortization

Manethod 3^{ss} is the set of BofA Global Research standard measures that serve to maintain global consistency under three broad headings: Business Performance, Quality of Earnings, and validations. The key features of iQmethod are: A consistently structured, detailed, and transparent methodology. Guidelines to maximize the effectiveness of the comparative valuation process, and to identify some common pitfalls.

Relatabase* is our real-time global research database that is sourced directly from our equity analysts' earnings models and includes forecasted as well as historical data for income statements, balance sheets, and cash flow statements for companies covered by BofA Global Research.

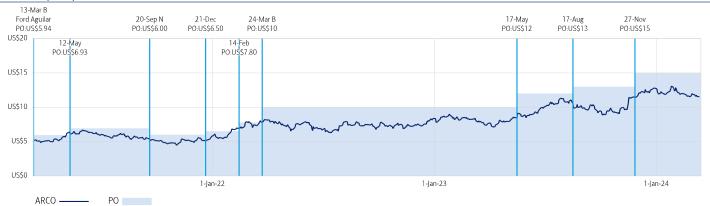
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Disclosures

Important Disclosures

Arcos Dorados (ARCO) Price Chart



B: Buy, N: Neutral, U: Underperform, PO: Price Objective, NA: No longer valid, NR: No Rating

The Investment Opinion System is contained at the end of the report under the heading "Fundamental Equity Opinion Key". Dark grey shading indicates the security is restricted with the opinion suspended. Medium grey shading indicates the security is under review with the opinion withdrawn. Light grey shading indicates the security is not covered. Chart is current as of a date no more than one trading day prior to the date of the report.

Equity Investment Rating Distribution: Restaurants Group (as of 31 Dec 2023)

Coverage Universe	Count	Percent	Inv. Banking Relationships R1	Count	Percent
Buy	21	58.33%	Buy	10	47.62%
Hold	10	27.78%	Hold	3	30.00%
Sell	5	13.89%	Sell	4	80.00%

Equity Investment Rating Distribution: Global Group (as of 31 Dec 2023)

Coverage Universe	Count	Percent	Inv. Banking Relationships R1	Count	Percent
Buy	1895	53.62%	Buy	1083	57.15%
Hold	832	23.54%	Hold	454	54.57%
Sell	807	22.84%	Sell	383	47.46%

R1 Issuers that were investment banking clients of BofA Securities or one of its affiliates within the past 12 months. For purposes of this Investment Rating Distribution, the coverage universe includes only stocks. A stock rated Neutral is included as a Hold, and a stock rated Underperform is included as a Sell.

FUNDAMENTAL EQUITY OPINION KEY: Opinions include a Volatility Risk Rating, an Investment Rating and an Income Rating. VOLATILITY RISK RATINGS, indicators of potential price fluctuation, are: A - Low, B - Medium and C - High. INVESTMENT RATINGS reflect the analyst's assessment of both a stock's absolute total return potential as well as its attractiveness for investment relative to other stocks within its Coverage Cluster (defined below). Our investment ratings are: 1 - Buy stocks are expected to have a total return of at least 10% and are the most attractive stocks in the coverage cluster; 2 - Neutral stocks are expected to remain flat or increase in value and are less attractive than Buy rated stocks and 3 - Underperform stocks are the least attractive stocks in a coverage cluster. An investment rating of 6 (No Rating) indicates that a stock is no longer trading on the basis of fundamentals. Analysts assign investment ratings considering, among other things, the 0-12 month total return expectation for a stock and the firm's guidelines for ratings dispersions (shown in the table below). The current price objective for a stock should be referenced to better understand the total return expectation at any given time. The price objective reflects the analyst's view of the potential price appreciation (depreciation).

Investment rating Total return expectation (within 12-month period of date of initial rating) Ratings dispersion guidelines for coverage cluster^{R2}

Buy	≥ 10%	≤ /0%
Neutral	≥ 0%	≤ 30%
Underperform	N/A	≥ 20%

R2Ratings dispersions may vary from time to time where BofA Global Research believes it better reflects the investment prospects of stocks in a Coverage Cluster.

INCOME RATINGS, indicators of potential cash dividends, are: 7 - same/higher (dividend considered to be secure), 8 - same/lower (dividend not considered to be secure) and 9 - pays no cash dividend. Coverage Cluster is comprised of stocks covered by a single analyst or two or more analysts sharing a common industry, sector, region or other classification(s). A stock's coverage cluster is included in the most recent BofA Global Research report referencing the stock.

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