

## Restaurants Industry

## Restaurants Weekly: Most read of 2023

Price Objective Change

**W/e 12/29: Restaurants outperform the market**

For the week ended 12/29, the S&P Restaurant Index (+0.9%) outperformed the market (S&P 500: +0.4%). Performance was mixed by segment, with both limited- and full-service restaurants among the week's leaders and laggards. Small cap restaurants broadly led the Index, as investors adopted a risk-on posture: BROS (+7.6%) and BLMN (5.1%) strongly outperformed. In 2023, WING, SHAK, and CMG led the sector, with gains of 87.0%, 80.0%, and 64.2% respectively.

**Chart of the week: Digital ordering over time**

This week's charts of the week draw from our most read restaurant industry research report of 2023 (linked here: [Off-Premise Primer Pt. 1: Mapping the landscape & opportunity for restaurants](#)). The charts show industry sales mix – in both dollar terms and as a percentage of total – between on-premise and off-premise over time. The COVID-19 pandemic marked a step change in the ongoing shift from offline to online restaurant sales, attesting to how well-suited remote ordering and payment are to off-premise orders, where speed and accuracy trump personal service. This shift was already underway – from 2014 to 2019, online restaurant sales grew at a 50% CAGR, an order of magnitude faster the overall restaurant sales (3% CAGR) – but COVID accelerated the pace further. Online sales doubled y/y in 2020 even as industry sales declined 17%.

**Updating BLMN PO on higher market multiple**

We update our relative valuation-based PO for BLMN to reflect higher market multiples. Relative to the S&P 500, BLMN's present P/E multiple of 0.4x a discount to its 5-year average of 0.6x (excluding the COVID-19 spike) but one we expect to persist in the near term given its same store traffic declines. We apply this multiple of 0.6x (10.1x absolute vs 8.6x prior owing to higher market multiples) to our 12 month forward estimates – 4Q24 – 3Q25 EPS of \$2/97 – to arrive at our \$30 PO (vs \$26 prior).

**Industry relative valuation & restaurants comps sheet**

Relative to the broader market, the S&P 500 restaurants index is trading at a 5% premium (vs the 10-year average relative P/E multiple of 1.3x), flat versus 5% for the prior week. Our restaurants valuation and KPI sheets can be found on page 6.

**Upcoming events: ICR conference, December CPI**

Upcoming events in January include the ICR Conference, which will take place on 1/8-1/10, and December CPI data which will be released on 1/11. Please reach out to Sara Senatore or your salesperson if you are interested in catching up in the New Year.

02 January 2024

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United States  
Restaurants

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**Stock symbol key:**

BLMN: Bloomin' Brands  
BROS: Dutch Bros  
DRI: Darden Restaurants  
CAKE: Cheesecake Factory  
CBRL: Cracker Barrel  
CMG: Chipotle  
DNUT: Krispy Kreme  
DPZ: Domino's  
EAT: Brinker International  
FWRG: First Watch  
JACK: Jack in the Box  
MCD: McDonald's  
PZZA: Papa John's  
PTLO: Portillo's  
QSR: Restaurant Brands Int'l  
SBUX: Starbucks  
SG: Sweetgreen  
SHAK: Shake Shack  
TXRH: Texas Roadhouse  
WEN: Wendy's  
WING: Wingstop  
YUM: Yum Brands

**Glossary of terms:**

SSSG – same-store sales growth, or comparable sales (“comps”)

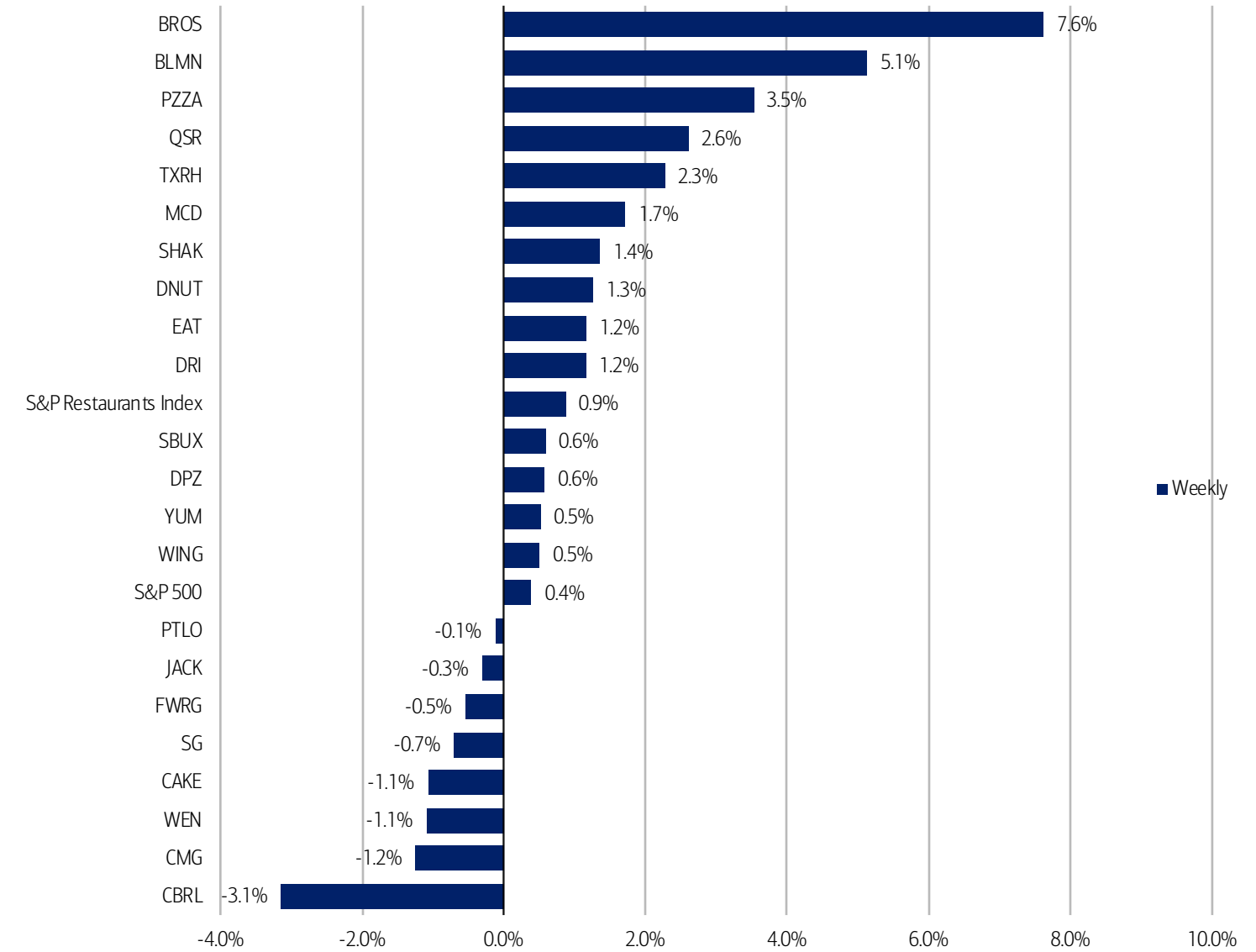
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Timestamp: 02 January 2024 05:00AM EST

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**Exhibit 1: Restaurant stocks outperformed the market last week**  
BofA Restaurants Coverage Weekly (5-day) Share Price Performance



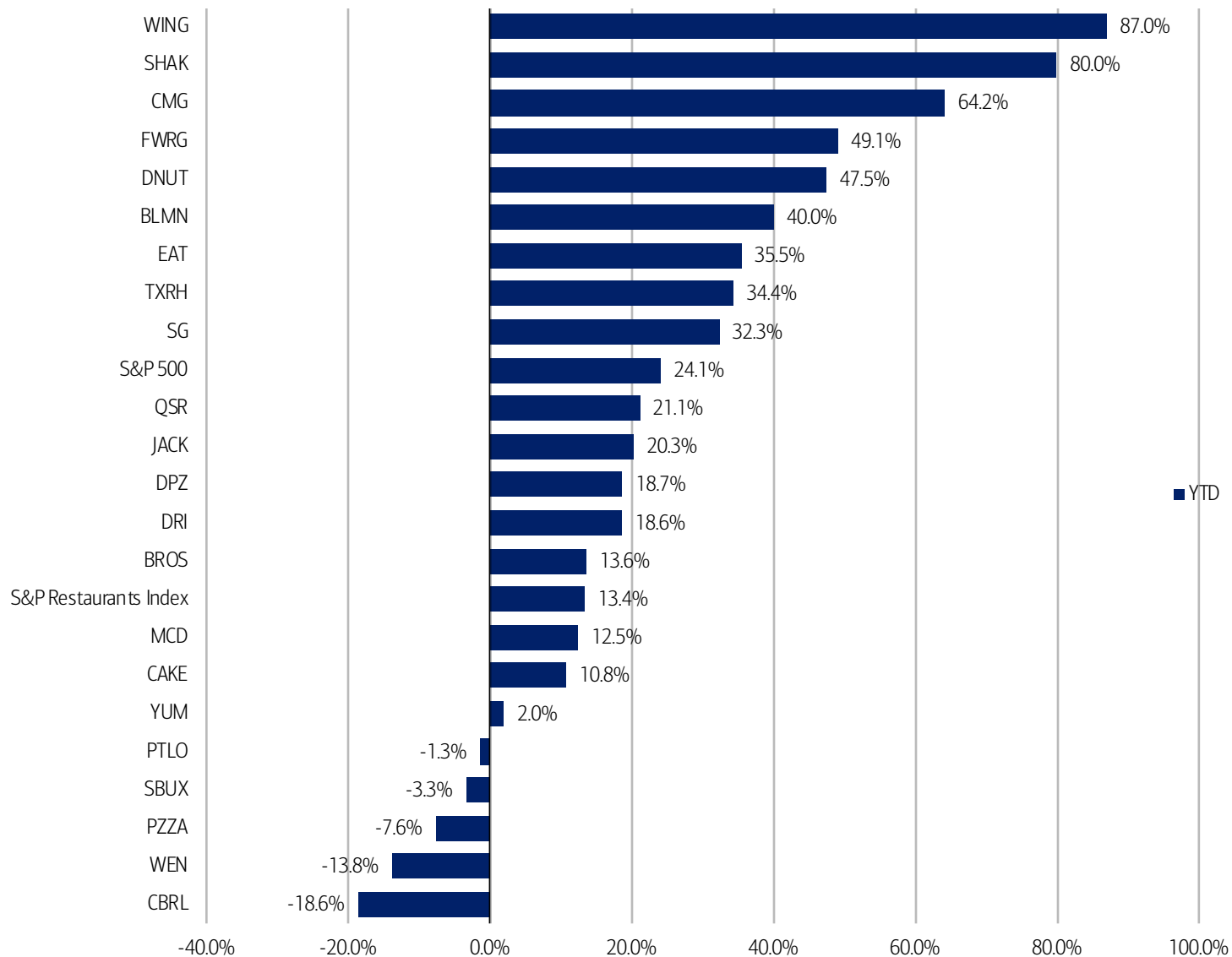
Source: Bloomberg

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**Exhibit 2: YTD, WING and SHAK lead**

BofA Restaurants Coverage YTD Share Price Performance



Source: Bloomberg

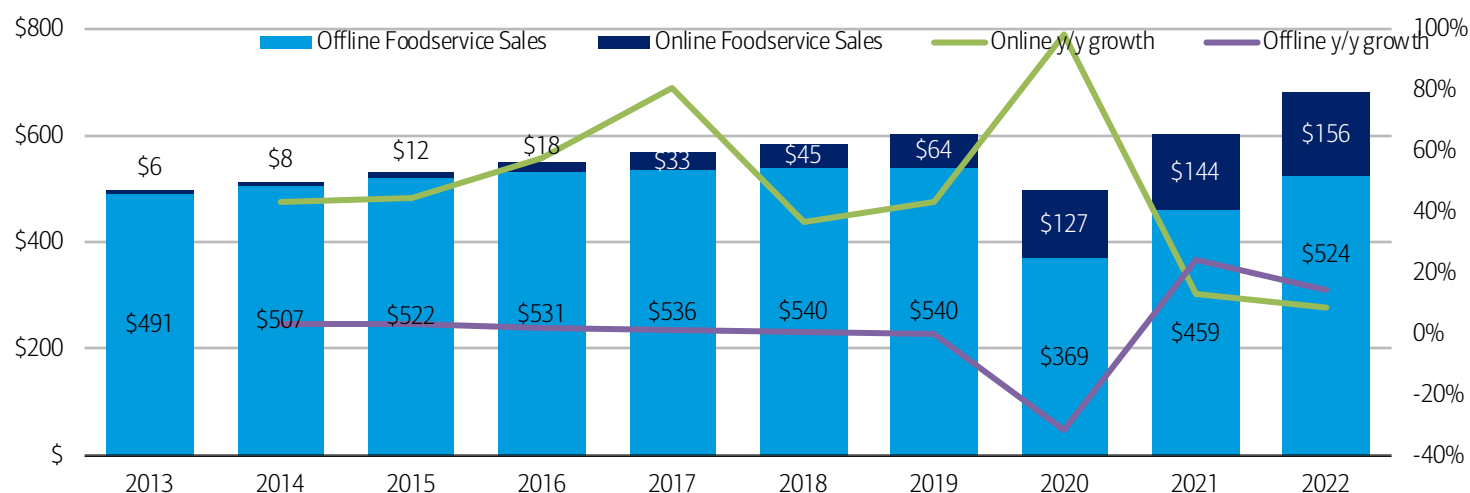
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## Chart of the week: Digital ordering over time

This week's charts of the week draw from one of our most read research reports of 2023 (linked here: [Off-Premise Primer Pt. 1: Mapping the landscape & opportunity for restaurants](#)). The most requested charts from the primer were off-premise sales channel mix over time. The COVID-19 pandemic also marked a step change in the ongoing shift from offline to online restaurant sales, attesting to how well-suited remote ordering and payment are to off-premise orders, where speed and accuracy trump personal service. This shift was already underway – from 2014 to 2019, online restaurant sales grew at a 50% CAGR, an order of magnitude faster the overall restaurant sales (3% CAGR) – but COVID accelerated the pace further. Online sales doubled y/y in 2020 even as industry sales declined 17%.

### Exhibit 3: Online ordering buoyed restaurant sales in 2020; online sales growth slowed through reopening but remained positive

U.S. restaurant sales by order modality, Online vs Offline, and year-over-year growth (as %)



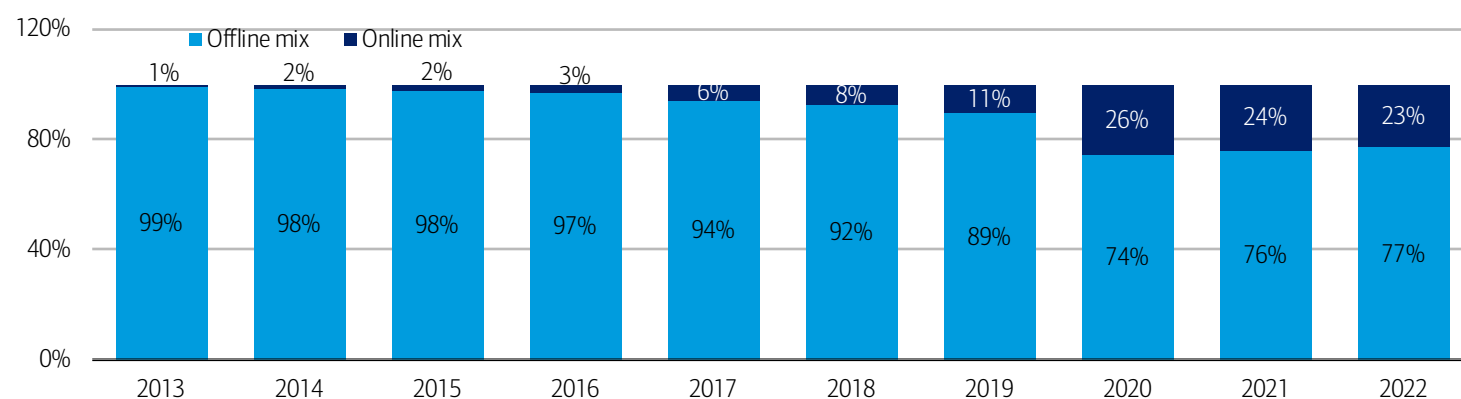
Source: Euromonitor

**Note:** Online sales refers to those orders made over the internet using a computer, mobile phone, or other device. Orders can be made through a dedicated application or over the web. Orders made online through third-party delivery sites (e.g., just-eat.co.uk, grubhub.com, foodik.ru, yemeksepeti.com, and others) would be considered part of online sales. The online measure refers only to orders, not payment—an order made online and paid in cash on delivery would still be considered an online order. Offline: All orders not made via the internet, using a personal computer or any type of connected mobile device.

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### Exhibit 4: As a percentage of total, online sales channels increased ~240% in the first year of the COVID pandemic and retrenched only slightly through the 2021-2022 reopening

Offline and online channel sales mix (as a % of total U.S. restaurant sales)



Source: Euromonitor

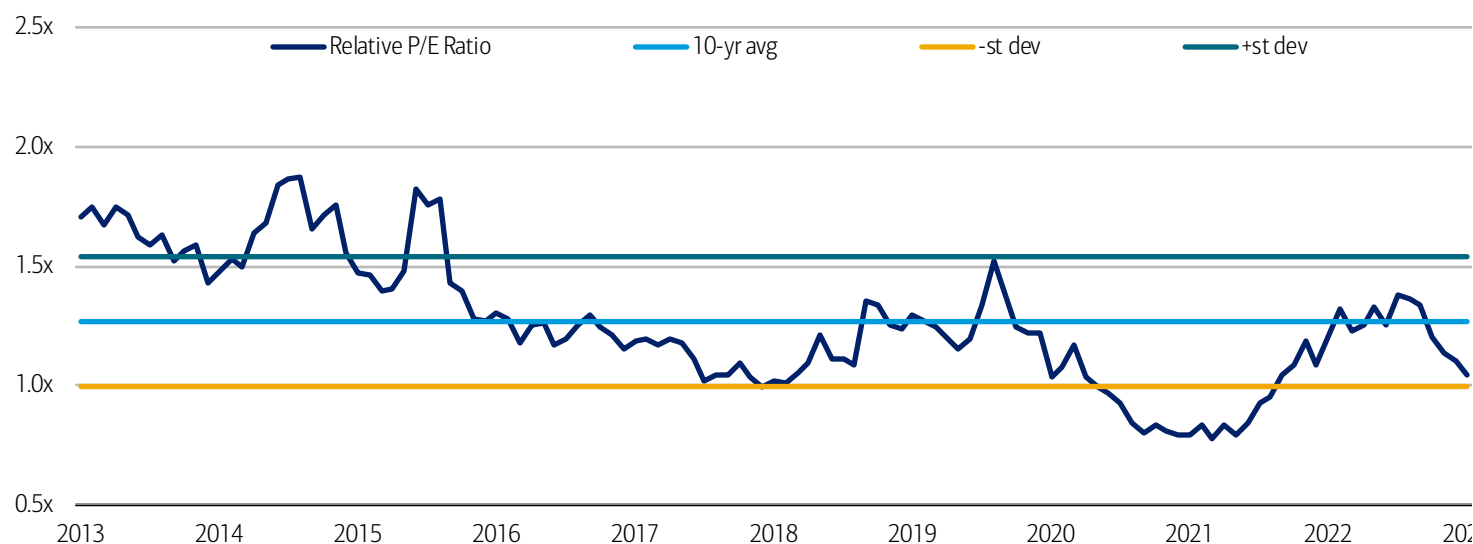
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# Valuation & comps sheet

## Exhibit 5: The S&P 500 Restaurant Index Relative P/E is below its 10-year average

S&P 500 Restaurants Index P/E (10-year history)

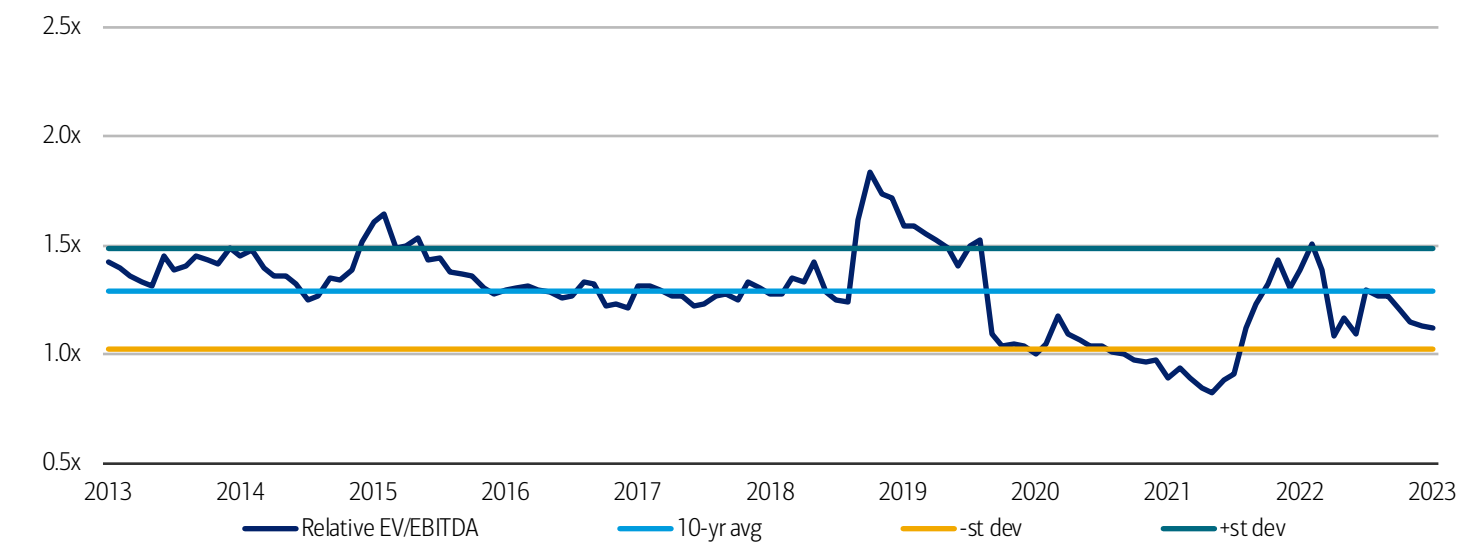


Source: Bloomberg

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## Exhibit 6: The S&P 500 Restaurants Index Relative EV/EBITDA is below its 10-year average

S&P 500 Restaurants Index Relative EV/EBITDA (10-year history)



Source: Bloomberg

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**Exhibit 7: Restaurant companies across the Limited Service and Full Service industries**

Restaurants valuation sheet

\$ in mm except per share values						Price Performance			EV/EBITDA			P/E			EBITDA			EPS				
Company	Rating	Last Price	Price Objective	Upside/Downside to PO (%)	1 wk	3M	YTD	Market Cap	Enterprise Value	2022	2023E	2024E	2022	2023E	2024E	2022	2023E	2024E	2022	2023E	2024E	
Limited Service																						
Dutch Bros	BROS	Buy	\$31.67	\$48	52%	6%	36%	12%	\$5,609	\$5,575	62.5x	36.8x	27.1x	191.2x	85.3x	69.2x	\$89	\$151	\$206	\$0.17	\$0.37	\$0.46
Krispy Kreme	DNUT	Buy	\$15.09	\$19	26%	0%	21%	46%	\$2,544	\$3,446	18.1x	16.1x	12.4x	50.5x	48.2x	33.2x	\$191	\$214	\$278	\$0.30	\$0.31	\$0.45
Starbucks	SBUX	Buy	\$96.01	\$121	26%	1%	5%	-3%	\$109,135	\$121,857	19.3x	17.0x	14.5x	32.5x	27.1x	23.0x	\$6,304	\$7,163	\$8,404	\$2.96	\$3.54	\$4.18
Domino's Pizza	DPZ	Buy	\$412.23	\$483	17%	1%	9%	19%	\$14,379	\$19,254	22.7x	21.3x	18.9x	32.9x	28.2x	25.0x	\$848	\$903	\$1,019	\$12.53	\$14.63	\$16.51
Jack in the Box	JACK	Buy	\$81.63	\$95	16%	-1%	18%	20%	\$1,611	\$3,350	6.0x	10.3x	9.9x	NM	13.3x	12.1x	\$559	\$324	\$337	\$5.82	\$6.15	\$6.74
El Pollo Loco	LOCO	NC	\$8.82			0%	-1%	-11%	\$277	\$363	5.4x	6.5x	6.8x	15.2x	12.4x	12.4x	\$68	\$56	\$54	\$0.58	\$0.71	\$0.71
McDonald's	MCD	Neutral	\$296.51	\$291	-2%	2%	13%	13%	\$215,071	\$249,518	22.2x	18.1x	16.8x	29.3x	25.2x	23.7x	\$11,242	\$13,783	\$14,848	\$10.11	\$11.77	\$12.49
Papa John's	PZZA	Buy	\$76.23	\$89	17%	4%	12%	-7%	\$2,497	\$3,279	15.7x	14.9x	13.4x	26.0x	28.8x	23.5x	\$209	\$220	\$245	\$2.93	\$2.64	\$3.24
Carrols Restaurant Group	TAST	NC	\$7.88			6%	20%	479%	\$429	\$865	5.1x	5.9x	5.8x	-11.3x	NM	16.1x	\$168	\$146	\$148	-\$0.70	\$0.48	\$0.49
Restaurant Brands International	QSR	Underperform	\$78.13	\$65	-17%	2%	17%	21%	\$36,040	\$47,679	21.7x	20.1x	18.8x	25.3x	24.8x	23.9x	\$2,201	\$2,366	\$2,542	\$3.09	\$3.15	\$3.27
Wendy's	WEN	Underperform	\$19.48	\$21	8%	-1%	-5%	-14%	\$4,018	\$6,286	12.6x	11.7x	11.0x	22.6x	19.5x	18.1x	\$498	\$539	\$572	\$0.86	\$1.00	\$1.08
Wingstop	WING	Buy	\$256.58	\$285	11%	0%	43%	86%	\$7,547	\$8,181	75.8x	60.1x	53.5x	140.0x	110.1x	90.2x	\$108	\$136	\$153	\$1.83	\$2.33	\$2.84
Yum! Brands	YUM	Neutral	\$130.66	\$130	-1%	1%	5%	2%	\$36,625	\$47,444	20.6x	19.3x	17.8x	29.0x	24.8x	22.9x	\$2,307	\$2,454	\$2,670	\$4.51	\$5.28	\$5.71
Chipotle Mexican Grill	CMG	Buy	\$2,286.96	\$2,570	12%	-1%	25%	65%	\$62,765	\$61,556	41.9x	32.6x	27.3x	69.8x	51.7x	42.2x	\$1,468	\$1,888	\$2,258	\$32.78	\$44.26	\$54.13
Portillo's	PTLO	Buy	\$15.93	\$25	57%	-1%	4%	-2%	\$1,162	\$1,455	18.0x	14.6x	13.2x	20.2x	23.6x	20.2x	\$81	\$99	\$110	\$0.79	\$0.68	\$0.79
Sweetgreen	SG	Buy	\$11.30	\$16	42%	-1%	-4%	32%	\$1,270	\$1,026	-21.1x	-23.4x	69.9x	-11.2x	-17.8x	-30.8x	-\$49	-\$4	\$15	-\$1.01	-\$0.64	-\$0.37
Cava	CAVA	NC	\$42.98			1%			\$4,883	\$4,873	88.3x	69.2x	62.2x	NM	NM	NM	\$55	\$70	\$78	NM	\$0.13	\$0.14
Limited Service Average													22.2x	7.7x	20.8x	44.1x	33.7x	27.8x				
Full Service																						
BJ's Restaurants	BJRI	NC	\$36.01			9%	53%	37%	\$837	\$917	7.2x	8.7x	7.4x	NM	NM	27.6x	\$128	\$105	\$124	\$0.07	\$0.79	\$1.30
Bloomin' Brands	BLMN	Neutral	\$28.15	\$30	7%	5%	14%	40%	\$2,444	\$3,510	6.9x	6.4x	6.5x	11.2x	9.9x	10.3x	\$506	\$546	\$541	\$2.51	\$2.86	\$2.74
Cheesecake Factory	CAKE	Neutral	\$35.01	\$33	-6%	-1%	16%	10%	\$1,778	\$2,328	7.4x	9.7x	8.5x	22.9x	13.2x	11.0x	\$316	\$240	\$273	\$1.53	\$2.65	\$3.19
Dine Brands	DIN	NC	\$49.65			1%	0%	-23%	\$767	\$1,918	9.8x	7.8x	7.7x	8.0x	7.8x	7.7x	\$197	\$247	\$248	\$6.20	\$6.40	\$6.43
Darden Restaurants	DRI	Buy	\$164.30	\$193	17%	1%	15%	19%	\$19,768	\$21,290	13.9x	13.4x	11.8x	22.2x	20.5x	18.5x	\$1,531	\$1,590	\$1,800	\$7.40	\$8.00	\$8.88
Brinker International	EAT	Underperform	\$43.18	\$37	-14%	1%	37%	35%	\$1,909	\$2,866	8.0x	8.4x	7.0x	14.0x	15.2x	12.3x	\$358	\$340	\$408	\$3.09	\$2.85	\$3.51
Dave & Buster's	PLAY	NC	\$53.85			2%	45%	52%	\$2,164	\$3,461	5.5x	6.7x	6.1x	NM	16.4x	12.6x	\$629	\$519	\$567	NM	\$3.28	\$4.27
Red Robin Gourmet Burgers	RRGB	NC	\$12.47			3%	55%	123%	\$193	\$378	2.9x	5.2x	4.9x	-3.8x	-10.7x	-17.4x	\$129	\$73	\$77	-\$3.26	-\$1.17	-\$0.72
Texas Roadhouse	TXRH	Buy	\$122.23	\$123	1%	2%	27%	34%	\$8,163	\$8,094	17.7x	15.9x	13.3x	NM	26.8x	22.1x	\$457	\$509	\$609	\$3.97	\$4.57	\$5.54
Cracker Barrel	CBRL	Underperform	\$77.08	\$68	-12%	-3%	15%	-19%	\$1,710	\$2,243	8.4x	9.8x	8.8x	12.6x	14.1x	13.3x	\$266	\$229	\$255	\$6.10	\$5.47	\$5.78
Denny's	DENN	NC	\$10.88			2%	28%	18%	\$578	\$840	11.9x	9.8x	9.2x	20.9x	17.7x	15.6x	\$71	\$86	\$91	\$0.52	\$0.61	\$0.70
First Watch	FWRG	Buy	\$20.10	\$28	39%	-1%	16%	49%	\$1,202	\$1,303	18.7x	14.0x	12.4x	NM	41.5x	37.5x	\$70	\$93	\$105	\$0.22	\$0.48	\$0.54
ONE Group Hospitality	STKS	NC	\$6.12			3%	11%	-3%	\$191	\$248	5.0x	6.2x	4.5x	NM	27.2x	11.9x	\$50	\$40	\$56	NM	\$0.23	\$0.52
Full Service Average													9.3x	9.4x	8.4x	15.1x	16.6x	14.3x				
SPX			\$4,771.98				24%		\$5,258		14.8x	14.6x	13.1x	22.9x	22.1x	19.7x	\$356	\$360	\$401	\$217.72	\$215.49	\$241.87

Source: BofA Global Research estimates, Bloomberg for companies not covered; NC – Not Covered



**Exhibit 8: Restaurant companies across the Limited Service and Full Service industries**

Restaurants key performance indicators sheet

\$ in mm except per share values					EPS			growth y/y (%)		
Company	Rating	Last Price	Price Objective	Upside/Downside to PO (%)	2022	2023E	2024E	2022	2023E	2024E
<b>Limited Service</b>										
BROS	Buy	\$31.67	\$48	52%	\$0.17	\$0.37	\$0.46	-44%	124%	23%
DNUT	Buy	\$15.09	\$19	26%	\$0.30	\$0.31	\$0.45	-11%	5%	45%
SBUX	Buy	\$96.01	\$121	26%	\$2.96	\$3.54	\$4.18	-8%	20%	18%
DPZ	Buy	\$412.23	\$483	17%	\$12.53	\$14.63	\$16.51	-7%	17%	13%
JACK	Buy	\$81.63	\$95	16%	\$5.82	\$6.15	\$6.74	-9%	6%	10%
MCD	Neutral	\$296.51	\$291	-2%	\$10.11	\$11.77	\$12.49	9%	16%	6%
PZZA	Buy	\$76.23	\$89	17%	\$2.93	\$2.64	\$3.24	-16%	-10%	23%
TAST	NC	\$7.88			-\$0.87	\$0.48	\$0.49	50%	-155%	3%
WEN	Underperform	\$19.48	\$21	8%	\$0.86	\$1.00	\$1.08	5%	16%	8%
WING	Buy	\$256.58	\$285	11%	\$1.83	\$2.33	\$2.84	-23%	27%	22%
YUM	Neutral	\$130.66	\$130	-1%	\$4.51	\$5.28	\$5.71	-1%	17%	8%
CMG	Buy	\$2,286.96	\$2,570	12%	\$32.78	\$44.26	\$54.13	29%	35%	22%
PTLO	Buy	\$15.93	\$25	57%	\$0.79	\$0.68	\$0.79	NM	-14%	17%
SG	Buy	\$11.30	\$16	42%	-\$1.01	-\$0.64	-\$0.37	-82%	-37%	-42%
Limited Service Average										
<b>Full Service</b>										
BJRI	NC	\$36.01			\$0.03	\$0.79	\$1.30	-96%	2520%	66%
BLMN	Neutral	\$28.15	\$30	7%	\$2.51	\$2.86	\$2.74	-7%	14%	-4%
CAKE	Neutral	\$35.01	\$33	-6%	\$1.53	\$2.65	\$3.19	-42%	74%	21%
CHUY	NC	\$38.23			\$1.29	\$1.90	\$1.96	-32%	48%	3%
DIN	NC	\$49.65			\$6.09	\$6.40	\$6.43	-5%	5%	0%
DRI	Buy	\$164.30	\$193	17%	\$7.40	\$8.00	\$8.88	71%	8%	11%
EAT	Underperform	\$43.18	\$37	-14%	\$3.09	\$2.85	\$3.51	-1%	-8%	24%
PLAY	NC	\$53.85			\$2.76	\$3.28	\$4.27	NM	NM	30%
RRGB	NC	\$12.47			-\$2.53	-\$1.17	-\$0.72	116%	-54%	-39%
TXRH	Buy	\$122.23	\$123	1%	\$3.97	\$4.57	\$5.54	13%	15%	21%
CBRL	Underperform	\$77.08	\$68	-12%	\$6.10	\$5.47	\$5.78	18%	-10%	6%
DENN	NC	\$10.88			\$0.50	\$0.61	\$0.70	-18%	22%	14%
FWRG	Buy	\$20.10	\$28	39%	\$0.22	\$0.48	\$0.54	NM	124%	10%
STKS	NC	\$6.12			NM	\$0.23	\$0.52	NM	NM	129%
Full Service Average										
<b>SPX</b>										
		\$4,771.98			\$217.72	\$215.49	\$241.87	1%	-1%	12%

Source: BofA Global Research estimates, Bloomberg for companies not covered; NC – Not Covered



**Exhibit 9: Stock Mentioned**

Stock prices and ratings mentioned in this report

<b>BofA Ticker</b>	<b>Bloomberg ticker</b>	<b>Company name</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Rating</b>
BLMN	BLMN US	Bloomin Brands	US\$ 28.15	C-2-7
EAT	EAT US	Brinker Intl	US\$ 43.18	C-3-9
CMG	CMG US	Chipotle Mex Grill	US\$ 2286.96	B-1-9
CBRL	CBRL US	Cracker Barrel	US\$ 77.08	B-3-7
DRI	DRI US	Darden Restaurants	US\$ 164.3	B-1-7
DPZ	DPZ US	Domino's Pizza	US\$ 412.23	B-1-7
BROS	BROS US	Dutch Bros	US\$ 31.67	C-1-9
FWRG	FWRG US	First Watch	US\$ 20.1	C-1-9
JACK	JACK US	Jack in the Box	US\$ 81.63	C-1-7
DNUT	DNUT US	Krispy Kreme	US\$ 15.09	C-1-7
MCD	MCD US	McDonald's	US\$ 296.51	A-2-7
PZZA	PZZA US	Papa Johns Int	US\$ 76.23	B-1-7
PTLO	PTLO US	Portillo's Inc.	US\$ 15.93	C-1-9
QSR	QSR US	Restaurant Brands In	US\$ 78.13	B-3-7
YQSR	QSR CN	Restaurant Brands In	C\$ 103.32	B-3-7
SBUX	SBUX US	Starbucks	US\$ 96.01	B-1-7
SG	SG US	Sweetgreen	US\$ 11.3	C-1-9
TXRH	TXRH US	Texas Roadhouse	US\$ 122.23	B-1-7
WEN	WEN US	Wendy's Co	US\$ 19.48	B-3-7
WING	WING US	Wingstop Inc	US\$ 256.58	C-1-7
YUM	YUM US	Yum Brands Inc	US\$ 130.66	B-2-7

Source: BofA Global Research

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**Price objective basis & risk****Bloomin Brands (BLMN)**

Relative to the S&P 500, BLMN's present P/E multiple is 0.4x, below its 5-year average (excluding the COVID-19 spike). We believe the multiple is unlikely to expand in the near term given the lack of visibility on the demand environment. We apply this multiple of 0.6x (10.1x absolute) to our 12 month forward estimates - 4Q24-3Q25 EPS of \$2.97- to arrive at our \$30 PO.

Downside Risks: 1) Bloomin' Brands same-store sales growth could be slower than expected if macro headwinds translate into lower restaurant consumption or sales driving initiatives lack traction, 2) Restaurant-level margins could come under further pressure if topline growth falters, 3) Normalizing G&A expense could pressure margins.

Upside Risks: 1) Same-store sales growth could exceed expectations if menu or marketing initiatives prove better than expected, 2) Cost saving initiatives could drive restaurant level margins above historical averages, 3) Ability to improve already low G&A expense ratio could support margins.

**Brinker International (EAT)**

Brinker's relative valuation to the S&P is 0.6x, in line with its 5-year historical average (0.6x), which we view as the relevant time frame given higher leverage and slower growth vs the more distant past. We valuation to remain in line with the historical range as Chili's growth trajectory normalizes, and the market is less willing to ascribe a premium multiple for a potential turnaround. Applying a 0.6x relative multiple (absolute P/E 9.2x) to our 12-month-forward EPS (F25: \$4.01) we arrive at our \$37 PO.



Upside risks are i) higher-than-expected demand from consumer trade-down into lower price point casual dining brands, which could drive Chili's sales volumes above our forecasts, ii) higher than forecasted debt pay down, which could expand Chili's relative multiple above our target valuation, iii) higher margins and returns at Chili's as a result of moderating commodities and wage inflation.

Downside risks are i) a significant slowdown in consumer spending could pressure EAT's topline growth, exacerbating the risk of company's high operating and financial leverage, ii) increased competitive intensity from casual dining peers, which would put downward pressure on Chili's average volumes and unit level returns.

### **Chipotle Mexican Grill (CMG)**

Our \$2,570 price objective is based on earnings power. At the current unit growth rate, we think Chipotle should be able to reach its targeted 8000 store count in roughly 8 years. By then we'd expect AUVs to be \$4.2 mm - under the assumption that comps increase in-line with cost inflation - and margins to be in line with prior peaks of 27%. Assuming a G&A of 5%, which is more similar to mature company operated systems, this system would generate \$6.8bb in EBITDA. At a 20x multiple, consistent with current valuation multiples on high growth companies, the implied EV would be \$159bb, or \$63bb discounted back to today at WACC of 10%. We then add the current net cash and project out 12 months at cost of equity of 10% to derive our price objective of \$2,570.

Downside risks are: 1) lower than expected consumer uptake of new product innovations or digital ordering capabilities, 2) higher than expected food or labor costs that Chipotle is unable to offset with increased pricing, and 3) macroeconomic pressures that slow consumer income growth or otherwise dampen consumption.

### **Cracker Barrel (CBRL)**

Relative to the market, CBRL's P/E multiple is below its 10-year historical average of 0.9x. We expect valuation to remain compressed as demand headwinds among CBRL's largest customer base (65+ and older, lower income) and broader discretionary spending pressures persist. We apply a 0.7x relative P/E multiple to our forward estimates 12 months from now (2Q25-1Q26, \$5.52) to arrive at a \$68 PO, that translates into an absolute PE of 12.3x.

Upside risks: higher-than-expected same store sales growth from digital/off-premise sales initiatives, faster-than-expected recovery in post-pandemic travel and tourism demand, better-than-expected contributions from the Maple Street Biscuit Company acquisition. Downside risks: higher-than-expected wage inflation, worse-than-expected margin contraction from elevated food costs, sluggish recovery in leisure travel demand.

### **Darden Restaurants (DRI)**

Our 12-month \$193 price objective is based on a target relative P/E multiple (1.0x) on our forward estimates (\$10.25). Our target relative multiple (vs the S&P) is in-line with Darden's 10-year historical average multiple, and implies an 18.9x absolute P/E multiple. While investors remain cautious on restaurant spending, we believe fundamental outperformance by best-in-class operators like DRI will prove attractive.

Downside risks are 1) lower-than-expected customer acceptance of menu price increases, 2) inability to offset higher than expected food or labor costs with increased pricing, 3) macroeconomic pressures that slow consumer income growth, 4) slower-than-expected unit growth as a result of inflationary pressures (i.e., utilities costs) and supply-chain constraints.

### **Domino's Pizza (DPZ)**

Given that Domino's returns and growth have consistently outpaced those of the broader market, we believe its historical range remains relevant and we expect the multiple to be

stable. We apply the historical average relative P/E multiple of 1.3x to our EPS estimates 12 months from now (4Q24-3Q25: \$18.14) to arrive at our \$483 PO, or PE of 26.7x.

Downside risks: Market share gains for other larger competitors in the pizza category that impedes Domino's growth, global economic or social issues could disrupt same store sales growth or affect expansion in international markets, and competitive activity in the pizza category remaining high.

### **Dutch Bros (BROS)**

Our \$48 price objective denotes estimated fair value based on normalized earnings power for BROS. We estimate that at \$9.2 bb in sales, assuming stable RLMs and 8% G&A, BROS would generate \$1.5 bb in EBITDA. Applying a 14x multiple and discounting back equates to a \$48 fair value in one year. We believe a 14x multiple is justified by Dutch Bros' long growth runway and high returns, and we note it is comparable to other restaurants and retailers with similar growth profiles that have sustained elevated earnings multiples over time.

Risks to our price objective: Dutch Bros could face execution risks to sustain a mid-teens store growth rate which would impede the implied sales growth of our saturation analysis. Margins and returns could also be lower-than-expected if Dutch Bros faces greater margin pressures than anticipated.

### **First Watch (FWRG)**

We believe FWRG should trade a premium consistent with its faster growth and higher returns. FWRG currently trades in line with its peer group of restaurants and retailers with similar above-market growth rates. We believe a valuation in line with other high growth peers is justified owing to FWRG's faster than average topline growth, extended growth runway, as the brand goes national, and higher incremental returns, with restaurant level ROIs of about 40% or 2x other full service restaurants. We apply a 14x multiple to our forward EBITDA estimates (4Q24-3Q25, \$22mm) to arrive at our \$28 PO. This target multiple is in line with high growth peers' average of 14x.

Downside risks: higher-than-expected cannibalization of existing restaurants due to new store openings, staffing challenges and/or higher-than-expected wage inflation, higher-than-expected occupancy costs as First Watch ramps-up new stores at a faster rate.

Upside risks: higher-than-expected AUVs of new units, faster-than-expected SSS growth, lower labor and G&A costs.

### **Jack in the Box (JACK)**

Our \$95 price objective is based on a 0.7x relative PE multiple (13.1x absolute) applied to our 12 month forward earnings estimates (F25: \$7.29). This is a material discount to highly franchised peers MCD, YUM and QSR given historically slower growth and more capital-intensive ownership model.

Downside risks to our price objective are: 1) sales could soften due to economic or competitive pressures, 2) food and labor costs rise and margins come under renewed pressure, 3) execution risk around speed of service, menu and marketing initiatives which are critical to driving sales at Jack in the Box.

### **Krispy Kreme (DNUT)**

We believe a premium valuation is justified owing to DNUT's robust double digit topline growth, extended growth runway, and higher incremental returns. We apply a 13x multiple (similar to high growth peers) to our forward estimate 12 months from now (4Q24-3Q25: \$299mm) to arrive at our \$19 PO.

Downside risks: potential industry headwinds from higher-than-expected wages, logistics, and commodity cost inflation, competition from other indulgence and

foodservice businesses, and failure to achieve targeted unit growth due to higher than expected costs or other factors.

Upside risks: faster than expected growth in global access points, organic growth above the company's stated long-term growth targets, higher than expected share gains in the global indulgence and foodservice markets.

### **McDonald's (MCD)**

Our 12-month \$291 price objective is based on a 22x P/E multiple on our forward estimates, in line with a relative P/E multiple of 1.3x reflecting limited opportunities for margin expansion due to the franchised model, despite continued topline strength. We apply the relative P/E multiple to our 4Q24-3Q25 estimates (of \$13.22) to arrive at our \$291 PO.

Risks to our price objective:

To the upside, McDonald's could sustain elevated comps for longer than expected based on company-specific initiatives or industry dynamics. Margins and returns could exceed expectations if McDonald's reduces the pace of investments or identifies unexpected savings opportunities. If investor risk tolerance shifts sharply lower, the relative attractiveness of McDonald's defensive positioning would increase.

To the downside, McDonald's comps could decelerate faster than we anticipate, from either a lack of traction in company initiatives or a deteriorating demand environment. Margins could compress more than expected if McDonald's fails to pass through inflation in food and labor costs.

### **Papa John's International (PZZA)**

Our \$89 PO is based on 4Q24-3Q25 EPS (\$3.73) and a 1.5x multiple relative to the S&P (23.9x absolute multiple), in line with its 10-year historical average.

Downside risks: slower-than-expected consumer growth, increased competition in response to slower consumer spending driving promotional intensity, higher-than-expected inflationary pressures, labor shortages.

### **Portillo's Inc. (PTLO)**

We set our \$25 PO based on steady state earnings power. We assume PTLO grows its store base at 13% to reach 725 stores in the long term, and that average volumes grow with inflation. At \$7.7 bb in sales, assuming stable RLMs and 8% G&A, PTLO would generate \$1.4 bb in EBITDA. Applying an 11x multiple and discounting back equates to a \$25 fair value in one year.

Risks to our PO: potential industry headwinds from wage inflation (MSD-HSD run rate for the industry) and food cost volatility, inability to fully offset downward pressure on volumes and margins from new store openings, and execution risks as the company looks to sustain a 10% unit growth rate.

### **Restaurant Brands International Inc. (QSR / YQSR)**

Relative to the S&P 500, currently QSR's earnings multiple stands at 1.1x, in line with its 5-yr average. We view this multiple as appropriate as lagging sales trends and greater investment needs drive lower estimate revisions. We apply a 1.1x multiple to our 12 months forward EPS estimate (4Q24-3Q25) EPS to arrive at a price objective of \$65 (C\$89.80). Our 1.1x relative multiple (vs the S&P 500) translates to an absolute P/E multiple of 18.2x.

Upside risks: better-than-expected results on sales trends and market share gains as a result of investments in stores, technology, and marketing spend. Faster than expected turnaround in the Burger King brand. Faster-than-expected growth of the Tim Horton's

brand.

Downside risks: Higher than expected G&A spending, continued lag in topline growth trends relative to competitors, slower than expected recovery in supply chain and/or labor constraints associated with COVID-19.

### **Starbucks (SBUX)**

Starbucks should trade at 1.5x relative to the S&P 500. This translates to an absolute multiple of 24.7x. We apply this multiple to our F25 EPS of \$4.92 to arrive at our PO of \$121. We believe that the multiple is justified given tailwinds as China reopens, increased investments associated with labor, operations, and unit development, as well as a return to a higher long term growth algorithm.

Downside risks: Starbucks' comps could decelerate faster than anticipated either from a lack of traction in company initiatives or a deteriorating demand environment. Margins could compress more than expected if Starbucks fails to pass through inflation in labor costs.

### **Sweetgreen (SG)**

Our \$16 PO is based on normalized earnings power. Assuming SG is able to reach its long-term target of 1000 stores in ten years, with 18% restaurant-level margin and 8% G&A, we arrive at \$274mm EBITDA. We apply a 16.5x terminal multiple - consistent with mature growth restaurant peers - after adjusting for SG's domestic, company-operated status - to arrive at EV of \$4.5 bb, or \$1.5 bb discounted back to today at 12%.

Downside risks include i) slower SSSG as a result of lower discretionary spending, ii) inability to gain traction in new markets outside of the urban core, iii) failure to offset food and labor cost inflation through pricing and volume growth, iv) worse than expected development challenges (construction costs, permitting) which could limit unit growth.

### **Texas Roadhouse (TXRH)**

Relative to the S&P 500, TXRH's P/E multiple is below its 5-year average of 1.2x (we exclude COVID valuation spikes from 5-year history). We view its 5-year average as the appropriate target multiple given TXRH's best-in-class traffic trends and topline growth and our expectations for further operating leverage. Our PO of \$123 is based on a relative multiple of 1.2x (vs the S&P 500 index, or a 19.4x absolute multiple) on our 12-month forward EPS (4Q24-3Q25, \$6.36).

Downside risks are: i) lower-than-expected retail beef prices and as a result, decreased value proposition for steakhouses, ii) traffic growth deceleration in response to menu price increases, iii) greater than expected slowdown in consumer spending / macroeconomic risk pressuring discretionary income, iv) slower than expected unit growth at Texas Roadhouse.

### **Wendy's Co (WEN)**

Relative to the S&P 500, Wendy's valuation is currently trading below its 5-year average (1.3x). Despite efforts to bolster the new unit pipeline, we see risks to the unit growth target. We apply a 1.1x relative multiple (17.8x absolute multiple) to our EPS 12 months from now (4Q24-3Q25: \$1.17) to arrive at our \$21 PO.

Upside risks: higher than expected incremental tailwinds / higher sales mix from breakfast or other menu innovation, faster than expected international unit growth, greater than expected market share gains as a result of strategic initiatives or competitive advantages.

Downside risks: comps could disappoint if consumers resume pre-COVID behavior faster

than expected, Wendy's could miss international unit growth targets if licensees fail to open new units at the expected pace.

### **Wingstop Inc (WING)**

We set our \$285 PO based on steady state earnings power. We assume WING grows its store base at 14% to reach 9,123 restaurants. Assuming RLMs of 30% and G&A at 1.8% of system sales we arrive at EBITDA of \$1.2bb. Applying a 18x terminal multiple in-line with mature growth franchised restaurants and discounting back we arrive at our \$285 PO.

Risks to our PO: potential industry headwinds from wage inflation, and food cost volatility, inability to fully offset downward pressure on volumes and margins from new store openings, and execution risks as the company looks to sustain a 10%+ unit growth rate.

### **Yum Brands Inc (YUM)**

Our \$130 PO is based on YUM trading at a 1.3x relative P/E multiple and works out to a PE of 20.9x on 4Q24-3Q25 EPS. On valuation, Yum Brands currently sits above its historical 5-year averages. Although EPS growth exceeded that of the market against last year's COVID depressed results, we expect growth to moderate from here. Yum's returns on assets have been stable relative to the market. We believe the historical range remains relevant and supports our estimates.

Upside risks: faster than expected recovery from COVID restrictions in China, better than expected unit growth in China, and ability for top-line growth to offset a difficult YoY comparison given 2020's strong comps.

Downside risks: weak China comp and unit growth due to slower recovery, ongoing competitive challenges in China, continued soft sales trends in the KFC and Pizza Hut brands.

## **Analyst Certification**

We, Sara Senatore and Katherine Griffin, 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.

**US - Restaurants Coverage Cluster**

Investment rating	Company	BofA Ticker	Bloomberg symbol	Analyst
<b>BUY</b>				
	Chipotle Mexican Grill	CMG	CMG US	Sara Senatore
	Darden Restaurants	DRI	DRI US	Sara Senatore
	Domino's Pizza	DPZ	DPZ US	Sara Senatore
	Dutch Bros	BROS	BROS US	Sara Senatore
	First Watch	FWRG	FWRG US	Sara Senatore
	Jack in the Box	JACK	JACK US	Sara Senatore
	Krispy Kreme	DNUT	DNUT US	Sara Senatore
	Papa John's International	PZZA	PZZA US	Sara Senatore
	Portillo's Inc.	PTLO	PTLO US	Sara Senatore
	Starbucks	SBUX	SBUX US	Sara Senatore
	Sweetgreen	SG	SG US	Katherine Griffin
	Texas Roadhouse	TXRH	TXRH US	Sara Senatore
	Wingstop Inc	WING	WING US	Sara Senatore
<b>NEUTRAL</b>				
	Bloomin Brands	BLMN	BLMN US	Sara Senatore
	McDonald's	MCD	MCD US	Sara Senatore
	Shake Shack	SHAK	SHAK US	Sara Senatore
	The Cheesecake Factory	CAKE	CAKE US	Katherine Griffin
	Yum Brands Inc	YUM	YUM US	Sara Senatore
<b>UNDERPERFORM</b>				
	Brinker International	EAT	EAT US	Katherine Griffin
	Cracker Barrel	CBRL	CBRL US	Katherine Griffin
	Restaurant Brands International	YQSR	QSR CN	Sara Senatore
	Restaurant Brands International Inc.	QSR	QSR US	Sara Senatore
	Wendy's Co	WEN	WEN US	Sara Senatore

## Disclosures

### Important Disclosures

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

Coverage Universe	Count	Percent	Inv. Banking Relationships <sup>R1</sup>	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 <sup>R1</sup>	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%

<sup>R1</sup> 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.

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Investment rating	Total return expectation (within 12-month period of date of initial rating)	Ratings dispersion guidelines for coverage cluster <sup>R2</sup>
Buy	≥ 10%	≤ 70%
Neutral	≥ 0%	≤ 30%
Underperform	N/A	≥ 20%

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