

Top 30 Women in Food — 2024 —

Presented by Lunchbox

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Purpose & Methodology

About the List

The inaugural Top 30 Women in Food list debuted in 2021, built by a small marketing team that wanted to highlight the industry leaders that were too often overlooked across other lists. Since then and onto our fourth list, we’ve officially titled 120 leaders - spanning across executives, operators, chefs, authors - as a Top 30 Women in Food.

Methodology

Lunchbox opens up nominations annually to source 60 final nominees that enter a voting round for our Top 30 Women in Food industry list. Each round, both nominations and voting, is open for two weeks for public submissions. Once public votes are collected, candidates are evaluated and selected based on public popularity.



2023 Women in Food
[Read the List](#)



2022 Women in Food
[Read the List](#)



2021 Women in Food
[Read the List](#)

Top 30 Women in Food of 2024

Presenting our Top 30 Women in Food of 2024

Lunchbox presents the Top 30 Women in Food of 2024, recognizing 30 of the top women leaders spanning across the restaurant and hospitality industry.

Selected by the restaurant industry itself, these are our Top 30 Women in Food for 2024.



Amanda Hyde
SPB Hospitality

Amanda Hyde, SVP of Operations at SPB Hospitality, tracks nearly two decades of experience in restaurant operations. Her journey from Bob Evans to Logan's Roadhouse and Mimi's Cafe reflects her ability to drive operational efficiency and customer satisfaction across diverse brands.



Angela Lape
Frisch's Restaurants

Angela Lape brings over 20 years of industry experience to her role as Regional Director of Operations at Frisch's Restaurants. Before joining Frisch's, she was a Franchise Operations Business Consultant at Yum! Brands and held managerial positions at Skyline Chili and Buffalo Wild Wings. Angela is also actively involved in mentoring programs, fostering leadership development in the foodservice industry.



Anna Tausin
Big Chicken

Anna Tausin, Head of Marketing at Big Chicken, has a robust background in the B2B hospitality sector, leading initiatives at ChowNow and the National Restaurant Association. With extensive experience in marketing, industry relations, and innovation, Anna is currently driving marketing strategies at Big Chicken while also serving as Principal at The Good Kind consultancy, focused on sharing innovative solutions across the B2B Hospitality space.



Brandy Blackwell
Another Broken Egg Cafe

Brandy Blackwell, VP of Marketing at Another Broken Egg Cafe, brings over a decade of marketing expertise to her role. With previous stints at Jimmy John's, Tijuana Flats, and McAlister's Deli, Brandy is recognized for her innovative approach to technology implementation, as highlighted in her [recent feature](#) in FSR Magazine.



Carin Stutz
Hawaiian Bros, Kura Sushi

Carin Stutz, with 50 years in the restaurant industry, has held key positions as Board Member, President, and CEO across various brands, including Hawaiian Bros, Kura Sushi, and Cosi. Notably, she co-founded the GLEAM Network, providing mentorship to underserved individuals in foodservice, and has held executive roles at Native Foods, McAlister's Deli, and Brinker International.



Carissa De Santis
BRIX Holdings

As Chief Technology Officer at BRIX Holdings, Carissa De Santis leads technology and digital efforts across a portfolio of 8 multi-unit restaurant brands. With over a decade of experience in technology roles at enterprise-level restaurant brands, Carissa is a driving force behind digital innovation in the industry.



Catherine Lederer

Chopt

Catherine Lederer, SVP of Food & Beverage at Founders Table, has 15 years of experience spearheading guest satisfaction and operational strategies in foodservice. Her tenure at Chopt Creative Salad Company and role as Director of Sustainability at Le Pain Quotidien demonstrate her commitment to culinary excellence and sustainability practices.



Cherryh Cansler

Networld Media Group

With over 8 years of experience as VP of Events at Networld Media Group, Cherryh Cansler is a professional in organizing large-scale industry conferences. Her leadership spans 9 online publications and multiple widely-popular industry events.



Chrissy Ouellette

Lunchbox

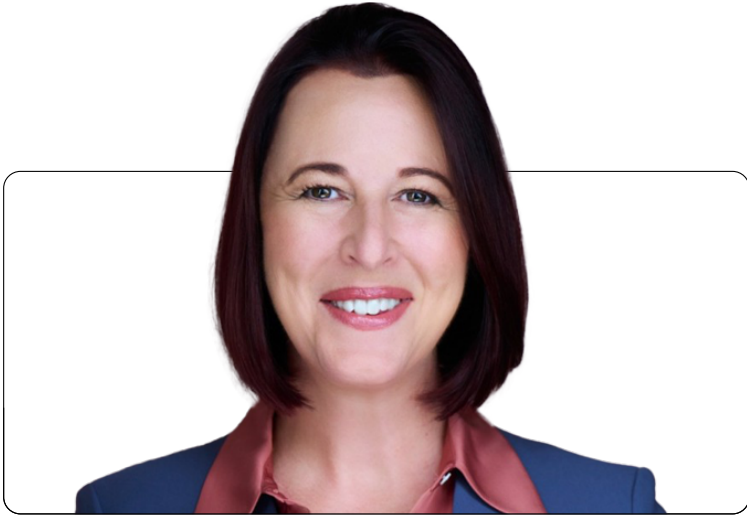
Chrissy Ouellette, VP of Sales & Partnerships at Lunchbox, joined Lunchbox over a year ago after spending 5 years with SpotOn. Her strategic initiatives propelled SpotOn's expansion from a \$625M to a \$4B company, showcasing her talent in driving success through partnership development and sales strategies. Prior companies include POSDATA Group, CDE, Vanco Payment Solutions, and CPAY.



Cindy Syracuse

BurgerFi

Cindy Syracuse, Chief Marketing Officer at BurgerFi, brings a wealth of marketing experience to her role, with previous stints at Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza and Firehouse Subs. She is currently a partner in the DFW Restaurant Group, operating 20+ locations in the DFW area.



Claudia Lezcano

Fuku

Claudia Lezcano, CEO of Fuku, possesses over 25 years of corporate marketing and leadership experience across multiple industries including hospitality, major league sports, and QSR. Her previous roles within the restaurant industry include leading brands, Burger King and Church's Chicken. She currently holds a Board of Director position at Bluestone Lane and MyVenue.



Courtney Smith

True Food Kitchen

Courtney Smith, currently consulting for True Food Kitchen, has held leading marketing roles at various prominent restaurant chains. Her expertise in field marketing and catering sales programs is reflected in her contributions to brands like Newk's Eatery, La Madeleine, Corner Bakery Cafe, and Firebird Restaurant Group.



Danielle Vona

Bloomin' Brands

Danielle Vona, SVP and Chief Marketing Officer at Bloomin' Brands, is renowned for her strategic leadership in marketing. With a diverse background encompassing roles at Sonic and PepsiCo, Danielle's contributions extend beyond her professional endeavors, as seen in her involvement with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay.



Denise Pedini

Newk's Eatery

Denise Pedini, Chief Marketing Officer at Newk's Eatery, brings over three decades of marketing expertise to her role. Her previous leadership positions at Pizza Inn and Pizza Hut underscore her proficiency in driving brand awareness and customer engagement strategies.



Elizabeth Baxter

Torchy's Tacos

As Chief People Officer at Torchy's Tacos, Elizabeth Baxter leverages her 4 years of experience to drive culture initiatives and people engagement while also running the brand's Torchy's Family Foundation, which funds disaster and humanitarian relief. Her experience includes notable contributions to organizations like Make-A-Wish and Forbes HR Council.



Gracie Prasanson

Jason's Deli

Gracie Prasanson, Vice President of Sales at Jason's Deli, leads the sales department in growing B2B sales and off-premise relationships. She facilitates catering sales strategies for over 150 locations across 28 states. With 30 years of experience in the industry, Gracie's has an impressive track record, listing brands like IHOP, Cracker Barrel, and Denny's.



Julie Wade

Taziki's Mediterranean Cafe

Julie Wade, Senior Director of Marketing at Taziki's, brings extensive experience from her 7 year tenure at Yogurt Mountain Franchising. While leading at Taziki's, she also holds an advisory role at Networld Media Group, a leading business-to-business media communications company.



Jennifer Bell

Lettuce Entertain You

Jennifer Bell, Chief Marketing Officer and Partner at Lettuce Entertain You Restaurants, brings over two decades of marketing experience to her role and oversees all marketing initiatives at the brand. Advising as a Board Member at Culinary Care, Jennifer aids the organization in its efforts to bring healthier and happier lives to cancer patients through food.



Jennifer Saunders-Haynes

Subway

Jennifer Saunders-Haynes, with over 15 years in the hospitality industry, currently serves as Director of Global Catering at Subway. Recognized for her role in implementing ezCater at over 13,000 Subway locations, she's credited with capturing substantial incremental revenue for the brand. Jennifer's memberships in [ForbesBLK](#) and the [Women's Foodservice Forum](#) underscore her commitment to industry advancement and diversity.



Jillian Wheeler

Sweetgreen

Jillian Wheeler, Creative Director at Sweetgreen, brings over a decade of experience in creative direction and design to her role. Her innovative campaigns and diverse background in CPG contribute to Sweetgreen's brand identity and well-renowned customer engagement.



Joanna Bonder

Zaxby's

Claudia Lezcana, CEO of Fuku, possesses over 25 years of corporate marketing and leadership experience across multiple industries including hospitality, major league sports, and QSR. Her previous roles within the restaurant industry include leading brands, Burger King and Church's Chicken. She currently holds a Board of Director position at Bluestone Lane and MyVenue.



Jodie Stetz

Red Robin

Jodie Stetz, Chief People and Culture Officer at Red Robin, has dedicated over two decades to fostering a positive workplace culture. Her leadership has, and continues to be, instrumental in supporting over 2,200 team members across 500 locations.



Katie Walker Rankin

Landry's

Katie Walker Rankin, VP of Off-Premise Operations at Landry's, taps into 16 years of experience in restaurant operations. Responsible for the off-premise operations team that supports 500+ properties, 50 brands, all digital ordering channels, and the brand's virtual portfolio, Katy makes an impactful contribution to the brands growth.



Kelly Cooke

Salsarita's

Kelly Cooke, Chief Marketing Officer at Salsarita's, is recognized for her expertise in digital loyalty programs and marketing strategies. Her accolades, including 9 years with Salsarita's and recognition by [QSR Magazine](#) and [Nation's Restaurant News](#), underscore her influence in the industry.



Kim DeCarolis
Craveworthy Brands

Kim DeCarolis, SVP of Strategic Growth at Craveworthy Brands, has a track record of driving sales and growth strategies. With previous roles at FAT Brands, Punchh, and PathSpot, Kim brings over 13 years of expertise in partnerships, revenue growth, and leadership.



Leslie Barr
Chicken Salad Chick

With a decade of experience in growing catering sales at leading brands, Leslie Barr, Director of Company Marketing & Catering at Chicken Salad Chick, oversees the growth of catering operations and engagement initiatives. Her previous roles include leadership positions at Moe's Southwest Grill and The Honey Baked Ham.



Mary Jane Riva
Pizza Factory

Jennifer Bell, Chief Marketing Officer and Partner at Lettuce Entertain You Restaurants, brings over two decades of marketing experience to her role and oversees all marketing initiatives at the brand. Advising as a Board Member at Culinary Care, Jennifer aids the organization in its efforts to bring healthier and happier lives to cancer patients through food.



Melissa Heidman
Noodles & Company

Mary Jane Riva, CEO of Pizza Factory, has dedicated over three decades to the brand's growth and success. Under her leadership, Pizza Factory has received numerous accolades, including Franchise Business Review's "Top Franchises Satisfaction" award six years in a row.



Robin Robison
Modern Restaurant Concepts

Robin Robison, Chief Operating Officer at Modern Restaurant Concepts, brings 5 years of leadership experience to her role. As a member of the Food Tech Council at Lunchbox and an Advisory Council Member at RLC, Robin is dedicated to driving innovation and operational excellence in the restaurant industry.



Tana Davilla
Dutch Bros

Tana Davila, Chief Marketing Officer at Dutch Bro's Coffee, possesses over 20 years of experience in consumer packaged foods, foodservice, and leading brands across both franchise and corporate business models. Her leadership at Dutch Bro's reflects her commitment to driving brand growth and innovation, tapping on her previous experience at CKE and P.F. Changs. Tana also holds a spot on the Advisory Board of Technomic

2023 Alumni

Industry Extraordinaires

Christine Barone President of Dutch Bros Coffee	Hawa Hassan Founder & CEO of Basbaas Foods	Kristen Barnett Founder & CEO of Hungry House	Kat Eckles Co-Founder & Chief Brand Officer of Clean Juice
Mandy Shaw Founder & CEO of Blaze Pizza	Nikky Phinyawatana Founder & CEO of Asian Mint	Renee Erickson Chef & Co-Owner of The Walrus and the Carpenter	Shelly Harris Restaurant Category President of Focus Brands
Stephanie Sentell SCP Restaurant Operations & Innovation at Inspire Brands	Susan Taylor President & CEO of Juice It Up!	Sydney Webb Founder & CEO of Toto	

Industry Visionaries

Coleen Albritton Director of Information Technology & Franchise at Bloomin’ Brands	Michelle Bythewood President of Salata	Katherine Cooper Chief Operations Officer at Little Caesars Pizza	Kelsey Cipriano Director of Loyalty & E-Commerce at Walk-On’s Sports Bistreaux
Stacy Fields Director of Digital Experience at MOOYAH	Dawn Gillis Chief Technology Officer at Freebirds World Burrito	Renee Hourigan Sr. Director, Off-Premise Innovation at Subway	Robin Peters Executive Director at Firehouse Subs
Rachel Ruggeri EVP & Chief Finance Officer at Starbucks	Cathy Zafer-Fredericks Operational Consultant at Coulee Coffee		

Industry Innovators

Becky Coulter Director of Marketing at Alfred Coffee	Debra Chrapaty Chief Technology Officer at Toast	Ellie Russitano Head of Operations at PAR Technology	Jill Grogan VP of Marketing at Papa Gino’s & D’Angelo Grilled Sandwiches
Kristin Lynch Director of Strategy & Analytics at Paytronix	Nithya Das Chief Operating Officer & Chief Legal Officer at Olo	Tracey-Ann Young Chief Brand Officer at Cinnabon	Tressie Lieberman VP of Digital Marketing & Off-Premise at Chiptole
Trish Giordano Chief Sales & Marketing Officer at Early Enterprises & Co-Founder of VDC			

2022 Alumni

Alex Sadhu & Viveka Hulyalkar Co-Founders of Beam	Allison Page Founder & CPO at Sevenrooms	Amy Jones-Hom VP of Operations at Sweetgreen & Sr. Vice President at Reef	Andrea Hernandex Founder of Snaxshot
Angela Diffly Co-Founder of Restaurant Technology Network	Betsy Chen Sr. Product Manager at Bentobox	Bettina Makalintal Journalist at Bon Appetit	Bridget Siegel COO at &Pizza
Chelsea Kingsbury Head of People at Lunchbox	Deena McKinley CMO at Papa Gino's & CMO at D'Angelo Grilled Sandwiches	Emmanuelle Skala SVP of Customer Success at Toast	Jamie Marshall Co-Founder & COO at SnackPass
Joanna Fantozzi Senior Editor at Nation's Restaurant News	Kat Cole COO & President of Athletic Greens	Kristen Hawley Journalist at Expedite	Leslie Leaf CCO at Revel Systems
Marguerite Zabar Mariscal CEO at MomoFuku	Meredith Sandland Author of Delivering the Digital Restaurant	Michelle Korsmo President & CEO at National Restaurant Association	Monica Sauls CPO at Bojangles
Nancy Luna Restaurant Correspondent at Insider	Pinky Cole Founder & CEO at Slutty Vegan	Rebecca Price Partner at Primary Ventures	Shannon Achillarre VP of Operations at Sushi Maki
Sheilina Henry Group VP, Diversity & Inclusion of Bloomin' Brands	Shelby Dworek Marketing Systems Manager at Clean Juice	Stacey Arenson Marketing Director at Chowly	Tracy Skeans COO & CPO of Yum Brands
Trinity Mouzon Wofford Co-Founder of Golde	Wendy Wang & Andrea Xu Co-Founders of UmamiCart	Zandra Magarino CPO at ThinkFoodGroup	

2021 Alumni

Adrienne Cheatham Top Chef	Alison Kaizer Head of Talent at Lunchbox	Allison Page Founder & Chief Product Officer at SEVENROOMS	Amanda Goetz Founder of House of Wise
Amy Jones-Hom Vp of Operations at Sweetgreen	Angela Diffly Co-Founder of Restaurant Technology Network	Ayesha Curry Entrepreneur	Catherine Tabor CEO & Founder of Sparkfly
Christina Tosi Co-Founder of Milk Bar	Drew Barrymore Actress & Host at The Drew Barrymore Show	Emmanuelle Skala SVP of Customer Success at Toast	Helena Hambrecht Co-Founder of Haus
Jackie Woodward Chief Brand & Marketing Officer at Bojangles	Jenn Harris Journalist at LA Times	Joanna Fantozzi Senior Editor at Nation's Restaurant News	Joanna Stern Journalist at Business Insider
Kat Cole COO & President of Athletic Greens	Kayla Giovinazzo CEO at Eat Clean Bro	Kim & Vanessa Pham Co-Founders of Omsom	Kristen Hawley Journalist at Expedite
Krystle Mobayeni CEO & Co-Founder at BentoBox	Laureen Moyal Founding Partner & Creative Director at Paperwhite Studio	Leslie Leaf Chief Customer Officer at Revel Systems	Nicole West VP of Digital Strategy & Product at Chiptole
Nyesha Arrington Top Chef	Pinky Cole Owner & Founder of Slutty Vegan	Rachael Nemeth CEO & Co-Founder at Opus Training	Rachel Rozen Chief Customer Officer at Lunchbox
Rita Patel Chief Marketing Officer at Buffalo Wild Wings	Susan Carroll-Boser VP of Tech at White Castle	Taja Dockendorf Founder of Pulp + Wire	Viveka Hulyalkar CEO & Co-Founder at Beam Impact
Wendy Wang & Andrea Xu Co-Founders of UmamiCart			

Congratulations to Our Top 30 Women in Food

Wrapping up the 2024 Top 30 Women in Food List, this year's nominees and winners were nothing short of inspiring. We hope this list ignites ambition and confidence within the women we share this space with to continue to shape the future of the food and restaurant tech industry.

Congratulations to this year's list honorees, and a special shoutout to our Top 30 Women in Food alumni. To learn more about the industry list, [click here](#).