

SA's most plant-based friendly fast food chains ranked

How plant-based friendly are South Africa's top fast food franchises? Plant-based advocacy organisation ProVeg South Africa assessed the big players and ranked them accordingly in a new report.



Source: [Pexels](#)

In total, 23 fast-food franchise restaurants were assessed based on varied criteria, centred largely around the number of plant-based items available on their menus.

In the top six spots for the period ending February 2022 were Kauai, Spur Steak Ranches, Panarottis, Burger King, Simply Asia, and Steers, with other franchises like Nando's, RocoMamas and KFC trailing behind.

"While the ranking report highlights a few franchises that do have good plant-based options, the biggest takeaway should be the numerous opportunities available to those franchises that don't have any, as well as opportunities for local food manufacturers who can supply the franchises with these plant-based alternatives," says Donovan Will, ProVeg South Africa country director.

ProVeg SA is the South African chapter of ProVeg International, an international food awareness organisation working to transform the global food system by replacing conventional animal products with plant-based and cultivated alternatives.

Worldwide, there has been a notable positive shift in consumer perception toward plant-based eating, causing food producers and service providers to scramble to innovate, produce and serve plant-based foods to cater to the growing market.

Driven mainly by flexitarians, these changes are not overlooked by the fast-food industry that is readily embracing the transformations in their consumer demands.

This report unpacks the assessment and focuses predominantly on the performance of the top six plant-based friendly fast-food franchise restaurants in South Africa. It highlights some of their plant-based menu items and evaluates their overall

contribution to the plant based space. It also highlights brands that are lagging in their plant-based offerings.



This assessment forms a part of ProVeg International's fast-food franchise outlets ranking that recurs in Europe and the United States of America.

Source: Supplied

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Market potential

According to a report published by Verified Market Research, the vegan fast-foods market size was valued at \$17bn in 2020 and is projected to reach \$40.25bn by 2028, growing at a compound annual growth rate of 11.40% from 2021 to 2028.

ProVeg SA states that the rising awareness about the environmental and health benefits of following a plant-based diet is considered a crucial driving factor fuelling the demand for more sustainable products by consumers of fast-food products.

"In addition, the growing consciousness about the inhumane treatment of animals by the food industry has inspired consumers to reduce their consumption of animals and to try meat analogue proteins, such as plant-based products. This shift in consumer demands and the industry's need to continually innovate are accountable for the market growth," the organisation states.

Globally, most leading fast-food restaurants have responded to the increasing interest in adopting vegan, vegetarian, and flexitarian lifestyles by offering meat alternative products, as either a new menu item or product replacement of an existing menu favourite.



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Food service, manufacturing and retail

According to ProVeg SA, the results of its ranking report indicate that there has been definite growth and inclusion of plant-based options by some of South Africa's top fast-food chains.

It adds, "It must also be acknowledged that more independent brands, such as Kauai and Simply Asia, have done well in leading the movement towards including plant-based friendly items on their menu. Furthermore, the performance of large chains like Spur, Panarottis and Burger King indicate that fast-food restaurants do have the capacity to successfully include plant-based options on their menus in South Africa.

"By far, the largest opportunity for plant-based food adoption currently sits with the meat-eating and flexitarian consumer, who may not be motivated by animal ethics, but is interested in trying these options for other benefits, such as sustainability, health or even taste. For many of the restaurants surveyed, simply replacing one of two ingredients, like meat or dairy, would result in several of their menu items being considered as either vegan or plant-based. This would appeal to a new market currently avoiding such establishments based on a lack of choice or options."



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28 Mar 2022



As the plant-based industry is continually growing, and people are becoming accustomed to meat alternatives, ProVeg SA notes that the fast-food industry in South Africa should consider partnering with a variety of South African food manufacturers and retailers which are starting to expand in this space.

There is a burgeoning number of small plant-based meat alternative food manufacturers that are establishing themselves in the South African market. Large retailers across South Africa are also rushing to produce quality plant-based meat alternatives to establish a footing in this market. This period could provide an opportunity to cement new relationships in the plant-based industry and establish South Africa as a strong plant-based fast-food player internationally.

"Through the vehicle of the South African fast-food industry, this could also provide the opportunity for South African food manufacturers to establish their products on an international scale," ProVeg adds.

Find the full [Plant-Based Fast Food Ranking 2022 here](#).

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