

Gen Z Suffers from ‘Menu Anxiety’ When Dining Out — With Many Too Scared to Order Their Own Meals

By [Adriana Diaz](#)

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Add going out for dinner to [the lengthening list of things](#) Gen Z simply can’t — or won’t — [do like the rest of us](#).

A surprising majority of young people reported suffering from “menu anxiety” while eating in a public setting, a study conducted by British restaurant chain Prezzo found.

Researchers asked more than 2,000 people how relaxed they felt while eating out, hoping to gauge how enjoyable the experience is for everyone.

About 86% of Gen Z adults (aged 18 to 24 in this study) admitted they have suffered from “menu anxiety” when dining in restaurants — compared to 67% of all respondents.

Some of these young adults (34%) reported feeling so anxious, they wind up asking other people at the table to speak to waiters on their behalf.

“[While] most people look forward to dining out during the [holiday] season, we know — as our research shows — it can be stressful for some,” Dean Challenger, CEO of Prezzo, told The Post in a statement.

The frequent occurrence of this very specific fear appeared to be triggered by the increasingly exorbitant cost of a meal out, along with the respondent worrying about not being able to find something they like on the menu, or, after the fact, regretting what they ordered.

Some even took it to the extreme, with almost 40% of Gen Z customers saying they simply wouldn’t go out for dinner — if they couldn’t check the menu first.

A similar study, this one conducted in the United States, found that [three in 10 Americans](#)

[have “menu anxiety”](#) with — surprise — Gen Zers being more nervous than older generations.

The survey of 2,000 adults found younger generations were far more likely to have anxiety while ordering — 41% of Gen Z and millennials (aged 18-43), compared with only 15% of Gen X and baby boomers (aged 44-77).

Gen Z has continuously reported [alarming rates of general anxiety](#), which has trickled down to impact typically inconsequential and enjoyable activities such as [taking vacations](#) and dining.

Gabriel Rubin, Professor of Justice Studies at Montclair State University, recently released a study reporting that [Gen Z is more afraid of the world than than previous generations](#).

He explained that many Gen Zers he’s studied have trouble socializing in real world conditions.

“They are digital natives but, between COVID and other factors, they have missed out on important in-person social skills,” Rubin told The Post.

“Because so many Gen Zers are anxious and because so many have trouble in non-digital social spaces, even activities as simple as ordering food sometimes become things to be avoided.”

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