



5 WAYS TO OPTIMIZE YOUR RESERVATION STRATEGY

A practical perspective for high volume restaurants

01 Stop treating demand as a fixed constant

Strong demand does not behave the same way every night. Weekday and weekend patterns, menu mix, staffing levels, and guest behavior, all influence how pressure builds during service. Reservation strategy should always adjust accordingly rather than rely on fixed assumptions. Optimizing demand starts with recognizing where flexibility matters most.

02 Pace arrivals with the kitchen and the floor in mind

Evenly spaced reservations do not always translate to evenly spaced service. Arrival patterns should reflect how the kitchen produces, the floor turns, and where the bottlenecks actually occur. When pacing aligns with operational realities, teams feel supported rather than rushed, and guests experience a smoother flow from arrival to departure.

03 Revisit turn times as living assumptions

Turn times are often set once and left untouched. In practice, they should evolve as menus change, staffing shifts, and guest expectations adjust. Treating turns as dynamic rather than fixed creates more realistic pacing and protects the guest experience during peak periods.

04 Align floor configuration with how service really runs

Floor plans on paper do not always reflect how tables are used during service. Reservation strategy should account for server sections, staffing coverage, and recovery space when service falls behind.

05 Design the system to support leadership, not override it

Reservation systems should reinforce leadership judgment, not replace it. When settings are overly rigid or disconnected from daily execution, teams are forced into constant workarounds. The strongest systems provide structure while still allowing flexibility.