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U.S. spending on food services and accommodations rose 2.3% after inflation in October

A National Restaurant Association analysis found nominal spending climbed 6.2%, showing prices drove much of the gain

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U.S. household spending on food services and accommodations increased in October, with growth continuing after adjusting for inflation but at a much slower pace than the rise recorded in current-dollar terms.

According to a National Restaurant Association analysis published on Wednesday, November 25, spending in the category rose 6.2% from October 2025 in nominal terms, meaning before removing the effect of price changes. In real terms, which adjust for inflation, spending was up 2.3%. The figures were based on the Bureau of Economic Analysis personal consumption expenditures report released on Wednesday, November 25.

The gap between the two measures was 3.9 percentage points. That difference shows that a large share of the increase in consumer outlays reflected higher prices rather than a comparable rise in the volume of meals, lodging and related services purchased. Even so, the positive real reading indicates that spending in the sector expanded in inflation-adjusted terms as well.

From September to October, nominal spending on food services and accommodations edged up 0.3%, according to the same analysis. The information reviewed did not provide a real month-to-month figure for the category, and it did not include sector dollar totals that would allow an independent calculation of the absolute increase in spending.

The data matter because food services and accommodations are a large part of consumer services spending in the United States. The personal consumption expenditures series is closely watched by businesses, investors and policymakers because it offers a broad measure of what households are buying across the economy. In this case, the October figures suggest that consumers were still increasing their spending on restaurant and lodging-related services, but that inflation continued to account for a meaningful part of the gain in sales value.

The category reported in the PCE data combines food services and accommodations, so the available aggregate figure does not show how much of the increase came from restaurants and bars and how much came from hotels and other lodging businesses. That means the data cannot, on their own, show whether dining demand or travel-related spending was the stronger driver in October.

The National Restaurant Association cited the BEA release as the underlying source for the figures. In the PCE framework, nominal data are expressed in current dollars, while real data are adjusted to remove price effects. That distinction is important in a period when headline revenue can rise faster than actual consumption.

The October reading points to continued consumer demand in the sector, but it also underlines the difference between more money being spent and more services being consumed. For restaurant operators, hotel companies and others tied to discretionary household spending, the split between the 6.2% nominal increase and the 2.3% real increase offers a clearer picture of how much of the market’s growth came from higher transaction values and how much came from underlying demand.