REVROOM INDUSTRY BRIEF · THAILAND F&B · OCTOBER 2026

# TikTok made it famous: riding (and surviving) Thailand's viral food trends

A single video can fill a restaurant in Thailand overnight. The harder question is what is left six weeks later, when the crowd has moved on to the next one.

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**Executive summary.** This is our second brief on restaurants in Thailand. The first one was about LINE OA, the channel restaurants use to stay in touch with their guests. This one is about TikTok, where more and more guests decide where to eat next.

The numbers are big. TikTok's ad tools count around 56 to 59 million adult users in Thailand. LINE MAN's own data shows what a viral trend does to orders: cheese tea orders went up seven times in 2024, and matcha orders went up 300% in 2025. But copies come fast. After one influencer's shop made banana cake famous, more than 2,000 restaurants added it to their menu. In 2025 alone, more than 2,000 new shio pan shops opened on LINE MAN.

So how do you ride a trend without getting burned, and how do you keep the guests it brings in once the hype is gone? That is what this brief is about. If you missed our LINE OA brief, just ask us for a copy.

01

## TikTok is where Thai diners find their next meal

TikTok's own advertising tools put its adult audience in Thailand at around 56.6 million (DataReportal, October 2025), and a separate 2026 extract from TikTok Ads Manager shows about 58.6 million users aged 18 and over. Those are ad-reach figures, not a count of unique people, and they likely overstate real usage, but the order of magnitude matches LINE's 54 to 56 million monthly users. In practice, a restaurant in Thailand is dealing with two platforms of almost the same size: one where guests discover places, and one where businesses talk to them.

The Reuters Institute's Digital News Report 2026 adds context on how deep the habit runs. TikTok reaches 55% of Thais for news alone, among the highest of the 48 markets surveyed, and among under-25s it has already overtaken Facebook. Thailand also ranks among the leading countries for creator attention: 43% of Thais say they pay most attention to individual creators, against 26% for mainstream media brands. The money has followed. Internet advertising overtook television in Thailand for the first time in 2025, and TikTok's ad revenue in the country grew 63% that year to 6.8 billion baht.

| INDICATOR | FIGURE | SOURCE |
|---|---|---|
| TikTok adult ad audience, Thailand | ~56.6M | DataReportal / Meltwater, October 2025 (ad reach, 18+) |
| TikTok weekly reach for news | 55% | Reuters Institute, Digital News Report 2026 |
| Thais paying most attention to creators | 43% | Reuters Institute, Digital News Report 2026 (vs 26% for news brands) |
| TikTok ad revenue growth in Thailand, 2025 | +63% | Kantar / DAAT, cited by Reuters Institute (6.776bn baht) |

Ad-reach figures come from TikTok's planning tools and are not audited user counts. Treat them as an indicator of scale, not a precise audience size.

**What we could not confirm:** we found no recent, Thailand-specific study measuring how many diners choose a restaurant because of a TikTok video. The closest data point is a 2022 Milieu Insight survey in which 29% of Thai respondents said they used TikTok to search for information, though in Thailand the top search category was clothing, not food. We cite it as a signal of search behaviour, not as proof of restaurant discovery.

02

## What a viral trend actually does to demand

LINE MAN Wongnai publishes year-end order data from more than 10 million users. It is the best public record of how social media trends translate into actual orders in Thailand.

| TREND | YEAR | DOCUMENTED EFFECT ON LINE MAN |
|---|---|---|
| Cheese tea | 2024 | Orders up sevenfold |
| Banana cake | 2024 | Orders up 115%; more than 2,000 restaurants added it after influencer Bew Varaporn's LINE MAN-only shop Bonnana made it famous |
| Butter-stuffed Thai egg cake | 2024 | Orders up 50%, from a Songkhla variation of a childhood snack |
| Pork leg rice | 2024 | Searches up 50% after a Moo Deng moment went viral, overtaking shabu and sushi |
| Matcha | 2025 | Orders up 300%, to more than 6.5 million cups |
| Shio pan (salt bread) | 2025 | More than 2,000 new shio pan shops opened on the platform |

Source: LINE MAN Wongnai year-end food trend reports, December 2024 and December 2025.

LINE MAN itself called 2024 the year of the "eat-fluencer," crediting social media creators with turning ordinary or forgotten dishes into national bestsellers. Two things stand out in the data. First, the spikes are real and large, and they are not a Bangkok-only story: the butter egg cake craze started in Songkhla. Second, the crowd arrives fast. A trend that starts in one shop becomes a menu item in thousands within months, and whatever edge the first movers had shrinks with every copy.

What the data does not show is the other half of the curve. LINE MAN publishes which items rose, not how quickly they fell back, so there is no public Thai figure for how long a food trend lasts. Anyone quoting a precise "trend lifespan" for Thailand is guessing.

03

## Why most trends burn out, and what they cost on the way

### 1 The copycat wave

When 2,000 restaurants add the same banana cake or open the same shio pan counter, novelty stops being a reason to visit. Prices compress, and the guest who queued for the original has a dozen closer options a month later.

### 2 The ingredient squeeze

Viral demand hits supply chains that were never sized for it. At a Kyoto auction in May 2025, tencha, the leaf used for matcha, sold 170% above the previous year, and Singapore distributor Tealife temporarily limited orders. The Dubai chocolate craze contributed to a pistachio shortage in 2025, according to an Iranian producer cited by the Associated Press. A trend item priced in January can lose its margin by June.

### 3 Shorter and shorter cycles

Regional evidence suggests the cycle is accelerating. In South Korea, industry observers noted in early 2026 that new dessert crazes were arriving before the previous one had even subsided, and the tanghulu shops that opened during the 2023 to 2024 boom faced closures once the craze faded. In Vietnam, Tuoi Tre reported in 2026 that businesses investing heavily in

storefronts and equipment for viral items often scale back once interest moves on. These are not Thai figures, but Thai diners follow the same feeds.

### 4 The regulars you crowd out

A two-hour queue for a trend item is great content but a poor experience for the regular who just wanted their usual table. Viral weeks that alienate a restaurant's base cost more than they show on the till.

**Not every trend dies.** Some settle into a lasting, cheaper, everyday version. Matcha's 2025 surge also pushed iced green milk tea to the top of LINE MAN's drinks ranking, overtaking black coffee, as guests found a more affordable way to keep the flavour. In South Korea, Dubai chocolate outlived its first wave and became a dessert category in its own right. The pattern worth watching is not the spike itself, but whether a trend starts producing affordable variations that people order without having seen a video first.

04

## Ride it, adapt it, or skip it

The decision is less about the trend than about what it would take to serve it. A trend that fits into an existing kitchen is a cheap experiment. A trend that requires new equipment, a new lease or a dedicated shop is a bet on a curve nobody can see the end of.

### Worth riding when...

- It uses ingredients and equipment you already have
- It fits what guests already come to you for
- It can run as a limited-time item, so ending it is a decision, not a failure
- The margin still works at peak ingredient prices
- Your team can absorb a queue without hurting regular service

### Probably skip when...

- It needs new machines, extra space or a separate outlet
- It depends on one imported ingredient with a volatile price
- Hundreds of restaurants nearby already sell it
- Your version would be a weaker copy of someone else's
- You have no way to follow up with the guests it brings in

Restaurants that handle trends well tend to treat them as limited editions with a planned end date, priced for impulse and promoted hard while they last, rather than as a new permanent line. That keeps the downside small and the exit clean.

05

## The part most restaurants miss: who came, and how to make sure they come back

A viral spike brings in first-time guests who came for one item. If nobody captures who they were, the spike is a one-off revenue event: the restaurant paid for it in queues, overtime and ingredient costs, and kept nothing it can use next month. TikTok does not hand over viewer lists, and orders placed through LINE MAN do not give a restaurant's LINE Official Account the guest's details, as our first brief explained.

The capture has to happen at the restaurant: a QR code on the table, the receipt or the takeaway bag that invites guests to follow your LINE OA and leave their details, ideally with a reason to do it on the spot. Once they are on the list, the follow-up should not be about the trend item they came for. It should give them a reason to try what makes your restaurant worth returning to.

- **Capture during the spike, not after.** The queue is the moment guests are most curious about you. A week later, most of them have moved on to the next video.
- **Tag guests by why they came.** "Came for the trend item, first visit" is a different audience from your regulars, and deserves a different message.
- **Follow up with your signature, not the fad.** A second visit built on your core menu is worth more than a repeat order of something every shop on the street now sells.
- **Measure the only number that matters.** Of the guests who came during the trend, how many came back within 30, 60 and 90 days? That figure tells you whether the viral moment built your business or just borrowed it.

06

## What restaurants can actually do about it

Here's the blunt truth: a viral moment you can't build on is just borrowed attention. And when the crowds move on, the restaurant is left with a few more pieces of equipment, more competitors and little to show for the hype.

However, RevRoom helps restaurants take control of the part they can own: their relationships with guests. QR forms on tables, receipts and takeaway bags turn trend-driven visits into opportunities to collect guest contact details, including names, email addresses and LINE IDs, with consent.

AI-powered guest tagging automatically distinguishes first-time visitors from regular customers, allowing restaurants to tailor their follow-up. Someone who visited for a TikTok fad and hasn't returned receives a different message from a loyal regular. Campaigns can be managed across LINE OA, WhatsApp and email from a single dashboard, while campaign analytics help restaurants track how many guests actually return.

RevRoom can't identify who watched your TikTok videos or ordered through a delivery platform. But what it can do is help turn the guests who walk through your door into customers who come back. The real value of a viral moment is the relationships a restaurant builds long after the trend has faded.



### Turn a QR Scan Into a Regular Guest subscribed to your Line channel

Drop a QR code on your receipts, tables or takeout bags. Guests scan it, leave their name, email and Line ID and they're instantly on your Line news — subscribed to your news and promotions, ready for your next campaign.

## Ready to Turn More Guests Into Regulars?

Join restaurants across Thailand and Singapore using RevRoom to increase repeat visits, automate guest communications, and grow revenue — without growing their team.

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|---|---|
| SINGAPORE | **The hidden cost of delivery platforms**<br>Is GrabFood or foodpanda still worth it for Singapore restaurants? |
| SINGAPORE | **Grab bought Chope. Here's what actually changed.**<br>What the acquisition means for reservations, delivery and guest data. |
| THAILAND | **Why LINE OA, not email, is the backbone of restaurant marketing in Thailand**<br>How to use LINE well, what it costs and where it falls short. |
| THAILAND | **TikTok made it famous: riding (and surviving) Thailand's viral food trends**<br>This brief. |

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**Sources & notes:**

- TikTok adult ad audience in Thailand (~56.6M, October 2025): DataReportal / Meltwater / We Are Social, as compiled by TechnologyChecker's 2026 TikTok statistics; ~58.6M users 18+ from a 2026 TikTok Ads Manager extract published by Affect Group. Both are ad-reach estimates, not audited user counts.
- LINE monthly active users in Thailand (54–56M): LY Corporation investor disclosures (Sep 2025) and DataReportal "Digital 2026: Thailand", as cited in our first Thailand brief.
- TikTok news reach (55%), under-25s preferring TikTok over Facebook, creator attention (43% vs 26%), internet ad spend overtaking TV in 2025 and TikTok's +63% ad revenue (6.776bn baht): Reuters Institute, Digital News Report 2026, Thailand country page (footnotes citing MI Group and Kantar/DAAT).
- TikTok as a search tool (29% of Thai respondents; apparel the top Thai category): Milieu Insight survey, October 2022, reported by Marketing-Interactive. Older data, cited as a signal only.
- 2024 trend data (cheese tea x7, banana cake +115% and 2,000+ restaurants, Thai egg cake +50%, pork leg rice searches +50%, "eat-fluencer"): LINE MAN Wongnai "Fun Facts 2024" release; Thai PBS World, 30 Dec 2024.
- 2025 trend data (matcha +300% to 6.5M cups, 2,000+ new shio pan shops, iced green milk tea overtaking black coffee): LINE MAN Wongnai, "LINE MAN Crowns 2025 the Year of Matcha", 12 Dec 2025.
- Tencha auction price (+170%, Kyoto, May 2025) and Tealife order limits: TechCentral.ie, 9 Jul 2025. Pistachio shortage linked to Dubai chocolate: Associated Press, via BNN Bloomberg, 6 Oct 2025.
- South Korea: shortening dessert trend cycles, Asia Economy, 12 Mar 2026; tanghulu shop closures, The Korea Times, Jul 2024; Dubai chocolate as a lasting category, Daum/News1, Dec 2025. Vietnam: Tuoi Tre News, Jul 2026.
- RevRoom features (QR forms, AI guest tagging, LINE OA / WhatsApp / email campaigns, campaign analytics): revroom.beehavesoft.com.

LINE MAN does not publish how quickly trend items decline after their peak, so this brief makes no claim about the typical lifespan of a food trend in Thailand. Regional examples from South Korea and Vietnam are indicative, not Thai data.

RevRoom is an AI-powered guest marketing and CRM platform for restaurants and bars in Thailand and Singapore. © 2026 RevRoom. A product by Beehavesoft.
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