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PANERA CANCELS CONTROVERSIAL “CHARGED” LEMONADES

THE FAST-CASUAL CHAIN FACED CONCERNS AND LEGAL ACTION BECAUSE SOME CUSTOMERS SAID THEY HAD SEVERE MEDICAL REACTIONS TO THE BEVERAGES.

By Charles Passy



- Panera is hardly the only restaurant to remove a menu item. In most cases, it's simply that an item wasn't selling. **Arlene Spiegel**, a New York-based restaurant consultant, said that in our increasingly data-driven world, dining spots often look at sales reports daily to see which items are moving — and which aren't. Based on such information, they can make the call to discontinue something more confidently.
- **Spiegel** added that other factors are also at play. In some instances, an item is too labor-intensive to make. Other times, specialty equipment might be required, which adds to the cost and preparation time.
- Not that restaurants aren't aware that some diners might be disappointed when an item faces the chopping block, **Spiegel** said. There are also many instances when a chef keeps a dish on a menu simply because they like it and hope they can convince patrons to order it in the long run.
- *“Chefs would like to do more, not less,” Spiegel said.*
- Discontinued items sometimes return, occasionally or permanently, because of customer demand. Some menu items have that cult following, and it's hard for a restaurant to ignore that.

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