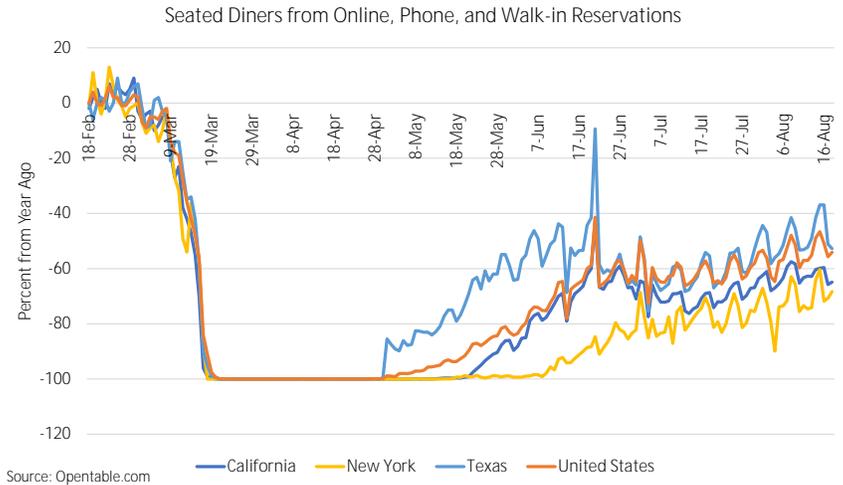
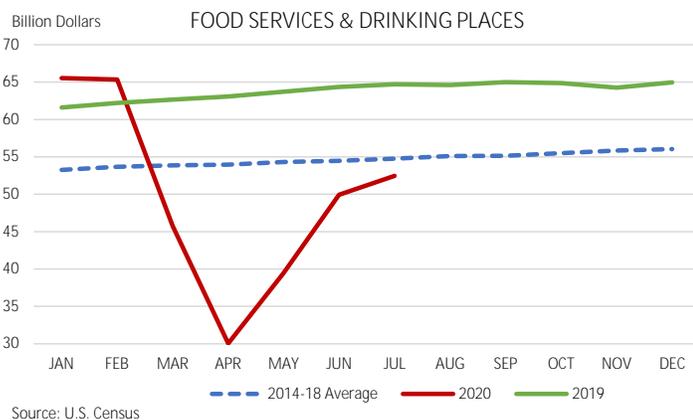


The U.S. Census Bureau recently released a document titled [Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services](#). It is a monthly document containing estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for the month of July 2020. During the month, retail and food services sales were estimated at \$536.0 billion, increasing 1.2% from June 2020 and 2.7% higher than July 2019. The estimate is adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences but is not adjusted for prices changes.

Although overall sales are showing improvement, looking deeper into segments of the economy shows that the residual impacts from COVID-19 are varied. Adjusted food and beverage store sales were \$497.4 billion through the first seven months of 2020, a 12.1% increase from the same period a year ago. Year-to-date increases have also been seen in building material and garden suppliers (up 9.7% to \$244.1 billion), non-store retailers (up 19.0% to 541.3 billion), and general merchandise stores (up 1.4% to 421.9 billion). A steep decline has occurred in clothing stores with sales down 34.4% (\$102.0 billion) through the first seven months. Sales for electronic stores (\$45.7 billion), gasoline stations (\$242.7 billion), and furniture stores (\$59.0 billion) have also dropped 19.4%, 16.5%, and 13.9%, respectively. As expected, food services and drinking places saw year-to-date sales drop 21.2% from 2019 with a total of \$348.5 billion.

In a previous DLR, [Opentable.com](#) was been referenced



because the site reports data on seated diners from online, phone, and walk-in reservations. Although this is not representative of the entire segments the information does provide insights into the decline of sales in food services and drinking places, but it also shows the recovery that has been occurring since the onset of the pandemic. The data indicates that restaurant dining plummeted to a nearly 100% reduction, compared to last year, during the first part of March and did not show signs of improving until early May. Data for the month of August (through August 18th) is showing an average reduction of nearly 55% from last year.

On the state level, New York being one of the harder hit areas for COVID-19 has seen a slower improvement in restaurant dining with any significant change not occurring until mid-June. Through the first half of August New York dining is averaging 71.6% below the prior year, according to Opentable.com. California restaurant dining started to improve in mid-May, but August data is still averaging 62.6% below 2019. Both New York and California have been trending below national levels. Texas has largely been above the national level with improvement starting in late April. For August, average restaurant dining in Texas has been 48.4% below last year. Both the Census retails sales data and Opentable.com restaurant dining data highlight the economic toll COVID-19 has taken but also point towards the recovery that is occurring.



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