

Foodservice @Retail

'From Market To Table' Is Theme of Giant Eagle's Market District Express Format

by Mike Berger/*editor—Northeast*

Giant Eagle is betting that a slimmed-down, two-story Market District Express store anchored by a 155-seat restaurant and the best of its Market District items are a recipe for success in Bexley, Ohio.

The main twist in this Market District Express, which is only 30,000 total s.f., is that a 6,000-s.f. restaurant has been incorporated into the design.

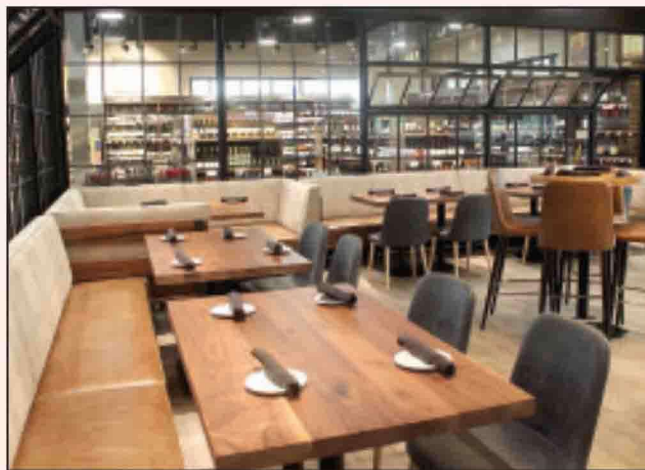
Brian Ferrier, Giant Eagle regional VP of operations, said the concept is built around the idea of "table by Market To Table."

Executive Chef Michael Vardaris will make use of the ingredients found in the store's deli, seafood, prepared foods, produce, organic and grocery departments for his menu at "table by Market District." It's a full-service restaurant serving lunch and dinner, with dishes inspired by fresh, seasonal ingredients. Menu prices range from \$6-\$11 per plate. There is a range of seating available, from tables for two to tables for large groups.

The restaurant also has extensive beer and wine lists. There are 18 craft beers on tap, and shoppers can order wine by the glass or select a bottle of wine from the 1,200 varieties available in-store for the selling price of the bottle plus a \$10 corkage fee.



Brian Ferrier,
regional VP of
operations for
Giant Eagle.



The in-store restaurant "shops" other store departments for its menu items.



Store Manager Jennifer Yee, Bexley Mayor Ben Kessler and Laura Karet, Giant Eagle CEO (middle of photo) and store staff celebrate the grand opening of the Market District Express.



The theory of a Giant Eagle Market District is an enhanced food shopping experience geared toward food enthusiasts. In multiple locations in Pennsylvania and Ohio, the Market District stores feature teams of chefs and other culinary professionals preparing fresh foods from scratch. The Market District stores also place emphasis on natural, organic and specialty, along with national, brands.

Giant Eagle officials said the new Bexley store offers customers the best of Market District in a more intimate store setting.

"We are thrilled to open our first Ohio Market District Express location in Bexley," said Dan Donovan, Giant Eagle marketing director. "As a family-owned company, we appreciate Bexley's close-knit community and wanted to deliver a versatile shopping destination that made sense for the city and its families."

The planning of the store was a collaborative effort among Giant Eagle team members, city officials and residents. The store itself used to house Bexley City Hall and is considered prime real estate. It's across the street from a private college and not far from Ohio State University. Bexley is a suburb of Columbus, Ohio.

Giant Eagle CEO Laura Karet, who helped develop the Market District format concept, said with every new format, there is a lot of experimentation and tweaking, and "we learned from each one. But I think with this Market Express, we have a winner here. It represents the best of our stores, and we are excited about the restaurant."

She praised the collaborative effort that went into planning the store.

"This is a unique location on Maine Street in Bexley, and they wanted the store to be a jewel of the community. They want Main Street to thrive," Karet said.

In her remarks at the ribbon cutting on Aug. 18, Karet said Bexley "is the nicest store we have built and for the community in Bexley. It's been talked about for years; four years to be exact. Bexley is a special partner for us. It's been quite a collaborative effort, and all who got involved did a spectacular effort."

She praised all the team members who helped prepare for the store opening and added that Giant Eagle is looking for team members "who are passionate about food."

Karet added if the Bexley store does well, it will lead to other Market Express stores in the future.

Ferrier said the best-selling items of every Market District are featured in the Market Express format. He said the store





The covered patio eating area outside the table by Market District restaurant.

layout is based on convenience, value and comfort for the shopper, with décor and lighting reflecting a comfortable feel.

Some of the features of the store include:

- 24 aisles of food and grocery on two floors.
- Two aisles of kosher and international foods.
- An in-store sushi section.
- A "Meals to Go" section at the front of the store.
- An outside cafe located near the beginning of the store and an outside eating area adjoined to the table restaurant.
- Beer, wine and liquor—Market District Express will carry more than 1,200 varieties of wine and more than 400 craft, domestic and

imported beers. The section allows shoppers to build their own six-pack for \$10.99.

- Local—Carefully curated products from more than 20 local purveyors, ranging from pasta sauce to potato chips, and sourced from within 150 miles of the store.
- Freshly cut meats—Market District-made sausages, marinated meats, burgers, beef, pork, poultry and more.
- Produce—Grown across the globe and by farmers in Columbus, Ohio.
- Health, beauty and wellness—Filled with natural and organic cosmetics, vitamins and personal care products.
- "Free From" section including gluten-free and free-from-allergens items.

Bexley Market District Express at a Glance

Leadership

Brian Ferrier, regional VP of operations

Jennifer Yee, store leader

Matthew Vardaris, executive chef

Store Hours: 6 a.m.-11 p.m., seven days a week

Restaurant Hours: 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Sunday through Thursday; 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday and Saturday

Team Members: 70 store team members, 40 restaurant team members

Parking: On-site parking lot with capacity for approximately 100 vehicles

Building Size: 30,000 s.f. on two stories (15,000 s.f. per floor)

Marquee store offerings

Restaurant: "table by Market District," a full-service restaurant, features more than 20 menu options. In total, there are 155 seats, including 104 indoor seats in the designated dining area, 15 at the bar and 36 on the outdoor patio.

Curbside Express: An online grocery ordering service that caters to on-the-go customers. Combining the ease of online ordering with the convenience of parking lot pickup, customers can complete their grocery shopping without having to leave their vehicles.

Local: The flavor of Central Ohio can be found throughout the store with carefully curated offerings from more than 20 local purveyors.

Beer and Wine: With more than 400 craft, domestic and imported beers, and more than 1,200 varieties of wine. Any bottle of wine available in-store can be enjoyed at table by Market District for the selling price of the bottle plus a \$10 corkage fee.

Fuelperks!: Giant Eagle Advantage Card customers earn \$0.20 fuelperks! on every qualifying purchase of \$50 or more.

Community involvement

Apples for the Students: Beginning in September, enrolled Bexley-area schools will earn double Apples for the Students points.

Taste of Bexley: Market District Express will partner with the Bexley Area Chamber of Commerce as the presenting sponsor of Taste of Bexley 2016. The event will take place Oct. 10 at the Franklin Park Conservatory.

Bexley Farmers' Market: The Bexley Farmers' Market will occur on select Thursdays this fall.