

'A game-changer for Winnipeg'

DOWNTOWN DINERS WILL FEAST AT HARGRAVE STREET MARKET, CITY'S FIRST HIGH-END FOOD HALL FEATURING ENTIRELY LOCAL FARE

By: Martin Cash

Posted: **07/18/2019 6:00 AM**



Two towers of True North Square are completed, with residents starting to move into the 25-storey apartment building and 70 per cent of the office tower occupied.

By early fall, those tenants and residents — and the rest of the downtown — will also have a 25,000-sq.-ft. food hall to enjoy.

Hargrave Street Market will be a high-end, open-concept food hall with entirely local offerings occupying the second floor of the office tower at 242 Hargrave St., with a brewery and tasting room as well as a 5,000-sq.-ft. gourmet grocery store on the street level with access from the public square.

Designed in the style of chef-centric food halls popping up in big cities around the world, True North Real Estate Development president Jim Ludlow said they didn't invent the concept but put a Winnipeg twist on it.



"The opportunity for us was to create a mixed-use offering around sports and entertainment on the northeast flank and convention in the southwest flank and mixed use in the centre," he said. "Critical to all this was a food offering."

This won't be anything like a cookie-cutter, national brand food court. It is nearly all local, with the only import being Lake of the Woods Brewing Company from Kenora, which will be brewing beer on site. Gusto North — a full-service restaurant run by the Mottola Group, operators of Pizzeria Gusto and Merchant Kitchen — will anchor the second-floor space and spill out onto the second floor terrace with an outdoor patio. Mottola will also

operate new burger and taco offerings and a cocktail bar, all surrounding the open-concept food hall that will have more than 500 seats and capacity for more than 600 people.

Rounding out the tenants will be the second location of Miss Browns, the Exchange District sandwich and breakfast joint, the third Fools + Horses coffee shop, and Saburo Kitchen, the newest concept from the chefs and owners behind Yujiro and Gaijin Izayaka with their take on ramen and donburi bowls.

Perhaps the most consequential feature to Hargrave Street Market will be the addition of specialty food store Mottola Grocery, a 5,000-sq.-ft. urban food format that will include prepared meals curated from the hundreds of recipes from Mottola's restaurants and gourmet and specialty foods, some of which might not be available elsewhere in the city, as well as fresh produce and some grocery items. It is scheduled to be open by the end of the year.



That shop will be on the street level with escalator access to the second floor food hall, which will connect to the Skywalk system east and west throughout the downtown.

"We're very excited," said Bobby Mottola, managing partner of Pizzeria Gusto. "We understand the food business and how to get people out of their homes. It comes down to good food, community... a genuine offering. We wanted to be part of something even bigger than the food hall... downtown, its growth, the opportunity the site creates."

When the hotel and condo tower across the street are complete and the Wawanesa office tower goes up, there

will be an additional 5,000 people living and working in the immediate neighbourhood that only a few years ago had a surface parking lot and a motel.

But Hargrave Street Market is being built for more than only the True North Square tenants and residents.

Ed Lam, chef and partner in two successful Winnipeg Japanese restaurants, who will open Saburo Kitchen in the food hall, said the estimated foot traffic will be 30,000 to 40,000 during the lunch hour.



"I think the Chipmans and True North have done a very good job linking up the downtown, creating this whole downtown atmosphere that we lacked the last decade," he said.

Marcelle Rademeyer, president and CEO of Beauligh, a Mississauga-based retail consulting firm that specializes in urban environment, consulted on Hargrave Street Market and has worked on a number of food halls from 5,000 to 50,000 square feet. She said getting it licensed was important, to extend the hours beyond just lunch time.

"I think this is going to be a game-changer for Winnipeg defying everything that happened before," she said. "They have put together an amazing group of talented operators who are very passionate about what they do, which is key."

Taras Manzie, co-owner of Lake of the Woods Brewing Company, said they were excited to be invited to participate in the development. He's also still working through the challenges of making beer in such a location.

While laughing, he said, "Producing beer in an environment that is in the middle of a food hall is normally not how beer is made."

Ben Gillies, co-owner of Fools & Horses Coffee Co., said everyone is pumped about the development.

"For us, we have always been very keen to promote and support downtown and see the downtown grow and evolve," he said. "We think it is just fantastic to be able to share many of the things that make the Winnipeg culinary scene so wonderful and dynamic."

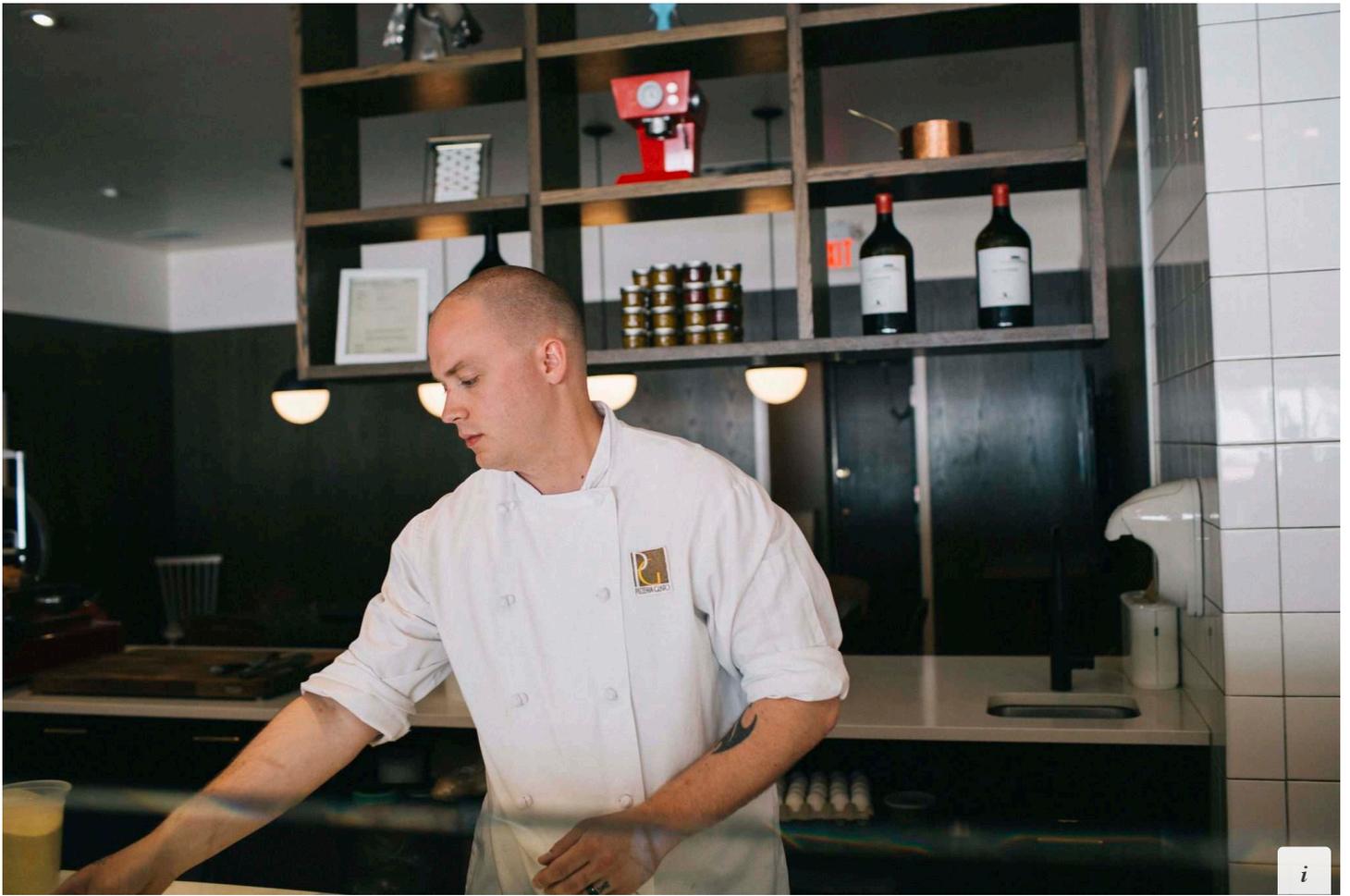
The significant financial commitment from all parties means everyone has made a long-term commitment and is prepared to be patient, Ludlow said. There is reason to be confident that with the right execution, this cosmopolitan concept will work in Winnipeg.



"As we see more elements come on stream we see more activity, not just at Bell MTS Place or the RBC Convention Centre," he said. "All that synergy is dramatically increasing density in our downtown. In order to maintain that and service it, we strongly believe that a unique, local, premium quality offering — including grocery — downtown will work."

"There's a very big difference between a food hall and a national brand food court. They have their place," he said. "This is a different offering."

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Martin Cash has been writing a column and business news at the Free Press since 1989. Over those years he's written through a number of business cycles and the rise and fall (and rise) in fortunes of many local businesses.

[Read full biography](#)

THE TENANTS OF HARGRAVE STREET MARKET:

- Mottola Grocery
- Lake of the Woods Brewing Company
- Gusto North
- Yard Burger
- The Good Fight Taco
- Rose Bar
- Saburo Kitchen
- Miss Browns

- Fools + Horses

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