

Boar's Head: 'Cadillac of lunchmeats' now at Lewiston Tops



DiMino's Lewiston Tops added a series of cheeses and meats, recently debuted Boar's Head products, and reconfigured its deli areas. DiMino's Lewiston Tops is located at 906 Center St. Visit <https://www.topslewiston.com>.

Continued from Page 1

Boar's Head Has Arrived

The grocery store has noticeably added product to the meat and cheese sections, while also improving the accessibility and look of the display areas.

"I do everything to actually enhance my business and make it better for the consumer. So, I felt that our specialty cheese sales needed to be enhanced," DiMino said. "We

used to be the top-selling cheese department in the whole Tops chain. And then it went away from more of a self-service type of thing, as opposed to service.

"And there are a variety of cheeses that have been kind of discontinued by the corporation, in regards to carrying. So, I felt that, if I wanted to be in cheese business, I needed to go back to the way it was probably 15 years ago.

"I went to a full-service program – a cut program. That means that we actually get the wheels of cheeses and cut them into different shapes and sizes."

For the customer, that means more options.

DiMino said, "Having a person right behind the counter cutting cheese, you have the opportunity to ask that person questions – what you would like to do. We're going to be working on some charcuterie boards for everyday use, and stuff like that."

In addition, "We've added quite a bit of variety – and we're still actually bringing more cheeses in as we speak – some higher-end and some other cheeses that we feel will be good for our customer," DiMino said.

Around the periphery, "It's a whole different concept," DiMino said. "We put in a new island for our deli department; we've expanded our varieties of fresh pasta from Rana; we extended our soup collection – prepackaged soups; and that should help us out greatly in regards to some more ideas for the customer. A larger hummus area. And then we wanted to reconfigure our carryout café.

"With the COVID, I mean, obviously, our café, for seating, has been closed since the inception of the COVID. So, we decided to turn a hot case and kind of concentrate on the meals and stuff that we package up. That's a different look for them and some remerchandising."

DiMino's Lewiston Tops added Boar's Head products. DiMino said he's been interested in this product line for some time.

"I have a vacation home on the West Coast. The grocery store that I shop in has Boar's Head. It's something my wife enjoys. And we

thought it was just a natural tie-in. It is the premium brand, or the Cadillac of lunchmeats," he said. "It's also more service-oriented. We cut to order everything. They're trained specifically by Boar's Head.

"So, right now as we speak, we have the largest selection of Boar's Head products in Niagara County, and pretty close to the largest selection in Western New York."

Local Love

Along with product renovations, local merchants have become more prominent inside DiMino's Tops Lewiston – with product from Dragonfly Jams & Jellies, Brickyard Brewing Company and Gallo, among others.

"I go to all the stores in my area; I know where my customers are. I want to make sure that there's no reason for them to shop anywhere else," DiMino said. "That's always been our charge – and it always will be. We provide, we think, the best service around; and, in doing so, we want to sell the best products possible.

"If you look in a supermarket around here, nobody sells home-grown maple syrup; no one sells local honey. Little shops do, but not a major supermarket. We're all about having the best possible products for our customer."

DiMino said spotlighting local vendors isn't just about being a good neighbor. Rather, he said the products sell well and are of superior quality.

"There's more entrepreneurs trying to be relevant to the local area," he said. "We've never stopped – since the store's inception – bringing in new products from different areas. These just happen to be more local products."

He noted, "You know, the Drag-

DiMino Offers Update on Other Lewiston Projects

In addition to the work at Tops, Anthony DiMino said, "My other projects are all going to be done, hopefully, at or before Memorial Day. That would be Colonial Valley Plaza (exterior enhancements) and the bandshell" in Academy Park.

onfly Jellies that I have in the store was all culminated by going to a farmers market and asking him if he would like to be in my store. Same thing with the honey; same thing with the syrup. The (Geoffrey) Zakarian products, and his Lewiston roots with his wife. You know, The Brickyard beers – why would I not have Brickyard beer here, since we have a brewery right down the street? I have Gallo products. We sell his sauce here.

"The No. 1 item in the whole store actually is DiCamillo's bread. We sell more units of DiCamillo's bread than any other item in the whole store. Third is Como sauce. We're the No. 1 Como sauce seller in Western New York, per store. We average about 20 to 25 cases a week."

Renovations Conclude

DiMino has overseen a series of significant renovations in the past decade, including new entryways, bathrooms, glass cases and self-scan machines, plus a walk-in beer room, reshaped aisles, gravity-fed shelving and a completely revamped produce department.

"Once the Starbucks is in the store, I could probably say – without hesitation – that is probably the end of my remodeling career," DiMino said. "That will make our store as up-to-date and as upscale as I possibly could get the store."

Though he has spent considerable money on improvements, DiMino said, "We have the same prices ... as every other Tops market in Niagara County and in Western New York. There is no difference. I pay for pricing and a franchise just like a McDonald's. You're not going to buy a hamburger from somebody in Western New York, in Niagara Falls, and the price is gonna be different in East Aurora. It's not; it's all the same.

"We are exactly the same way. The only reason why we're more up-to-date, or more cognizant of changing things, is because I'm a franchise store. We believe – and my father believed – in making sure that we're as up-to-date as possible. And we put our money back into our associates, and back into our store. That's why we've been here since 1964."

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