



## Lifestyle shopping experience at Hobart Superspar

*The same management team from Broadacres Superspar in Fourways has brought the lifestyle experience – albeit in a smaller trading area of 1 600m<sup>2</sup> – to the Bryanston community with the launch of Hobart Superspar in March.*

### The food experience

“A lot of people living in Bryanston were already shopping at Broadacres Superspar, so we just brought a similar shopping experience closer to home for them,” says one of the owners, Pat Tarr. Although only half the trading floor size of Broadacres at 1 600m<sup>2</sup>, Hobart Superspar is a lifestyle experience on its own.

The service departments act as destination points within the store and Tarr says they have focused on the theatre of a shopping experience by employing two specialised chefs to cook up dishes at customers’ request.

### Fresh look

“Our offering differentiates us from the balance of the market and the food side is a big component of our business,” she says. This focus is complemented by the way the store has been designed and the choice to go with more natural and simple finishes in shades of beige and light brown creates a more neutral background which allows the food and product to stand out as the hero.

The store is designed around giving customers a lifestyle shopping experience

## Upmarket Joburgers welcome a theatre of food into their community

BY LAURA DURHAM

**Hobart Superspar officially opened its doors on 24 March – much to the delight of the Bryanston community who are now able to enjoy the high level of service, quality and food experience they have come to know at Broadacres Superspar ... right on their doorstep**

– it is aesthetically pleasing and makes them feel comfortable in the environment,” she says. The shopping flow is also very similar to that of Broadacres, with a natural progression through the different departments, as well as similar merchandising layouts. “The flow makes sense and there is no time wasted by customers trying to locate a department,” she says. Energy-saving light bulbs and an energy efficient refrigeration system are some of the green initiatives in place at Hobart Superspar.

### Focus on food

The food floor, which takes up nearly a third of the trading floor greets customers as they walk in the entrance past a colourful display of flowers and is made up of Fresh Produce, Home Meal Replacement (HMR), Cheese, Bakery and Butchery. The HMR department has a daily menu, 40% of which are regular favourites and the balance is based on season, day of the week and customer requests. “During the week we focus on easy meals for the family to enjoy at home (e.g. spaghetti bolognese) and for weekends we have an ▶

## STOREWATCH ►

entertaining menu – making entertaining at home easy for our customers (e.g. beef Wellington)," Tarr explains.

In line with their entertaining focus during weekends, Hobart Superspar has an impressive catering menu – ranging from snack platters to casseroles to roasts. "Customers can even bring their own bowls if they'd prefer and we'll make the dish in there – it's all about making entertaining at home easier," she says. Customers are able to pick up their orders from 8am on the day they require the catering.

### Our kind of market

The customer base at Hobart Superspar is similar to the shoppers at Broadacres, Tarr says, "and it's the type of clientele we are used to – and like – dealing with". For the loyal Broadacres shoppers, the Hobart store is much more convenient for them – particularly during the week when they tend to do top-up daily purchases. "But, of course, we are aiming for trolley shops here – and we seem to have filled a need in the Bryanston community," she says.

The store has catered specifically for an upmarket customer base like the Bryanston community (LSMs 8-10) by including a specialised range of imported stock from the UK and US. "Our ranges are really unique and different and offer our customers something more than your average supermarket," says Tarr.

"We also open at 7am to cater for those moms that have forgotten something for a school project, or for parents looking for lunchbox fillers. We also benefit from business people grabbing breakfast or a cake for the office on their way to work," she says. Weekends are very busy too, especially around Sunday lunchtime. This is no doubt influenced by churchgoers from across the road looking for an easy and delicious meal solution.

### Fresh service

The butchery has an impressive gourmet line-up and they encourage customers to place orders for special cuts. "We are currently busy with menus for the butchery too – which will give customers ideas of what they can put together for meals at home, and how to prepare the different meats available," says Tarr.

The Fresh Department is stocked daily and the staff prepare fresh fruit salads –

these are also available in displays on the food floor.

The bakery has a wide range of baked goods and confectionery and the qualified pastry chef in the department is available for special orders. The staff start baking early in the morning to ensure that everything is fresh on a daily basis.

Due to the space constraints, Tarr and her team have had to do some serious range rationalisation in their General Merchandise department. "We do have the range, we just had to reduce the facings," she said. "But it will be interesting to see how effective we have been in our choices, based on stock turn and customer feedback as the weeks go by," she adds.

### Managing excellence

Tarr brought across a core team of key managers and staff in each department

Store: **Hobart Superspar**

Location: **Bryanston, Johannesburg**

Trading area: **1 600m<sup>2</sup>**

Tills: **11**

Staff: **110**

Trading hours:  
**7am to 7.30 pm**

from Broadacres (about a third of the Hobart staff complement) and they were able to take responsibility of the newcomers. "We went through a strict process of screening, evaluation and tailor making training programmes for each of the departments in order for all staff to reach the level we expect by opening," she says. It was also very convenient having the training school and expertise already at Broadacres.



*The store assists customers with all their entertaining needs through their extensive catering menu – ranging from snack platters to casseroles to roasts. Customers can even bring their own bowls if they'd prefer.*



*The store is designed around giving customers a lifestyle shopping experience and the natural progression of the departments makes for an enjoyable and relaxing shop. This is boosted by the light and natural finishings throughout the store.*



Customers are able to choose from an impressive gourmet line-up in the butchery, which is one of the sought-after destination points within the store.



A well-stocked wine cellar appeals to the upmarket customer base and the Tops next door is another add-on for customers' convenience.

Hobart Superspar is all about the food experience for customers. Two expert chefs are constantly available to take requests and demonstrate them with flair and skill – one upstairs and the other in the HMR department.



## The people

Despite being situated in an upmarket suburb of Johannesburg, Hobart Superspar has a strong sense of social responsibility – “because there’s always someone in need of something,” says Tarr. Every year, the management team identifies a number of charities and needy groups and helps them out wherever they can. Diepsloot is a special place as many of the staff come from there – so the Spars are assisting a school and orphanage with food and toy donations. They also assist the Bryanston Methodist Church’s feeding scheme. “We are very involved and very committed,” Tarr says.

## Exciting challenges

One of the biggest and most pressing challenges that Tarr and the management team at Hobart Superspar are facing is getting to know the area they are trading in and the customers that frequent the store. They have set up a customer care desk where staff make sure they are always available to listen to customers in a quiet environment. “We view a complaint as a suggestion on how to improve our business. We make sure that each one is followed up, acted upon and that the customers get regular feedback,” she says. “The challenge to ourselves is making sure that our service levels always meets our customers’ expectations,” she adds.

The kiosk, which is fully stocked with airtime, prepaid electricity and Lotto, adds convenience for customers. Another added service is the Spar Tops next door, which complements the wine cellar in-store.

## The opening

Hobart Superspar received a lot of publicity before the opening through teasers and adverts in the local community paper, as well as leaflets that were handed out at the surrounding intersections. “We wanted to tell the people of Bryanston that we were the same team from Broadacres bringing that shopping experience closer to home,” she says.

“On our opening we were hugely overwhelmed. We were exceptionally busy but things have calmed down a bit now,” Tarr says.

It is now easier to focus on great, individual service. “Of course, it will be important to get to know our rates of sale and turnovers...and this will come in the next couple of weeks,” she adds.