



Hearty Mart pulls a new card: Forays into bakery and café business

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BY PROGRESSIVE GROCER BUREAU

Retailer Hearty Mart operates 15 stores spanning some 23,000 sq.ft. of retailing area in Gujarat's rural market covering small towns and villages. The company also runs its FMCG unit through which it manufactures good quality food & grocery products and Indian spices for supplying to hotels and also for exporting them overseas.

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The story behind Bakers Point's launch is an interesting one. As an already established retailer with a particular focus on rural and semi-urban areas, Hearty Mart wanted to foray into a newer avenue that could bring more value to its Tier-2 and Tier-3 customers. The leadership had come to understand that the customers from relatively smaller towns also wanted to experience a more global cuisine. Besides the demand for good cakes, customers also seemed excited with the idea of having good pizzas, burgers, and mocktails a stone's throw away from their homes.

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to semi-urban spaces across India. The outlets have been conceived and are fashioned around bricks expressionism – an expressionist style of architecture that uses bricks as the key visible building material which originated in Germany during the early 20th century.

Hearty Mart was able to find a passionate group led by **Abid Hussain** and **Akbar Hussain** who had good exposure to the varied café delectables and a good understanding of the psyche of an Indian semi-urban customer. Together they were able to create the right mix of a good ambiance and savory and sweet treats that would attract customers of all age groups. Abid says, “With Bakers Point we wanted to create a wholesome experience for our customers. We wanted them to not just have good food but also enjoy a sophisticated place to sit and relax. I am happy that we have been able to check both the boxes.”

The first Bakers Café opened up in Sidhpur, right next to the Hearty Mart Supermarket there. The Café is a constantly bustling place which can be attributed in part to the presence of several colleges and PG accommodations in close proximity, attracting a vibrant crowd of young adults who relish their leisure time at the café. Engaged in lively conversations they enjoy their leisure time sitting there, chit-chatting about life over a pizza and a cold coffee. For them, the café holds much more significance than just a place to hang out; it represents a symbol of aspiration. As many of them plan to pursue further education or career opportunities in bigger cities after



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completing their studies, Bakers Café serves as a tangible embodiment of their aspirations.

Nadeem Jafri, Founder and Chief Mentor at Hearty Mart, says, “Food is what binds all of us together. Everyone loves talking about food. In a time where home-delivery is becoming popular in Tier-1 cities, I wanted to bring a premium café experience to Tier-2 and Tier-3 spaces so that customers get to enjoy an elegant ambiance coupled with varied bakery and café products.”

Recently a Bakers Point franchisee opened up in Becharaji, Mehsana – about 100 km away from Ahmedabad. Gauravbhai and Arun who own the franchisee were already running an established Pizza shop close to where Bakers Point has come up. On their visit to Sidhpur, they happened to visit the Bakers Café there and loved the quality of pizza bases so much that they decided to buy pizza bases specifically from Hearty Mart Bakers Point. Eventually, they decided that it would be a good move to open a Bakers Point at Becharaji itself since the pizza shop was already doing well and there was a demand within the residents of Becharaji for quality bakery products.

Bakery products tend to do well during festivals too, which indicates a shift from giving conventional mithai to something unique. Abid says that the Cashew Honey Cookies, which are prepared by them, have a long shelf-life and are used often for gifting purposes. Particularly, because the usual mithai goes bad soon and so with the cookies there is an alternative that lasts longer.

The story of Hearty Mart Bakers Point offers a valuable glimpse into the evolving taste preferences of Indian semi-urban customers. It serves as an insightful case study that highlights the immense market potential within this space and provides guidance on successfully entering it. By recognizing the desire of customers in smaller towns to experience global cuisine and creating a welcoming environment, Hearty Mart Bakers Point tapped into an underserved market segment.

This narrative sheds light on the importance of understanding the evolving needs and aspirations of semi-urban consumers and tailoring offerings to meet their demands. It serves as a testament to the opportunities that exist for businesses willing to adapt and cater to the changing taste palates of the Indian semi-urban customer base. **PG**