

Ritter's Frozen Custard wants to expand into Buffalo market

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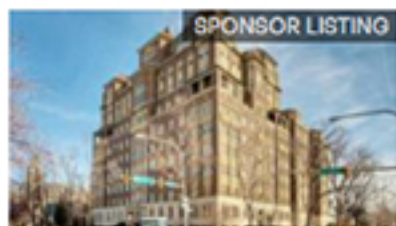
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Ritter's Frozen Custard wants to add a new location to its growing list of sites.

And, that spot just happens to be the Buffalo Niagara region.

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The Buffalo area has been identified as one of the targeted expansion sites as Ritter's parent company, Trufoods LLC, looks to grow its footprint, especially in the Northeast and Midwest.

"Buffalo is a great opportunity area for us," said [Gary Occhiogrosso](#), Trufoods president and chief development officer. "There's a great mix there."

Ritter's has 22 locations, with the closest in Ohio, and another 20 in various development stages. While much of the company's focus has been in Texas and Florida, Occhiogrosso said it is time to look to places like the Buffalo Niagara market.

Trufoods is hoping to land franchise operators for the local Ritter's Frozen Custard locations. Franchises can be had for a \$25,000 fee. The actual start-up costs can run around \$500,000.

While chain does have some stand-alone sites, Occhiogrosso said they tend to do better in high traffic areas like shopping centers or next to movie theaters.

"Our goal is not to set people up for failure, but to set them up for success," Ritter said.

Ritter's is best known for its custard and ice cream products ranging from cones and sundaes to novelty items and cakes. The chain also sells hotdogs, french fries and hamburgers.

"Ours is a very destination-orientated business," Occhiogrosso said.

Occhiogrosso said he envisions the Buffalo Niagara area having between four and six Ritter's locations. Depending on talks with possible franchise operators, the first could be open by late in this year's fourth quarter, although early 2017 is more realistic.

Besides Ritter's Frozen Custard, Trufoods also owns the Wall Street Deli, Naked Chicken Co. and [Arthur Treacher's](#) Fish & Chips chains.

James Fink covers real estate, commercial development and government

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