

A Day at Belvedere Square

By Drew Isenock

I was born and raised about an hour outside of Baltimore. Throughout my life I have frequently participated in many of the activities Baltimore has to offer. From the Inner Harbor to Camden to Fells Point, I have been immersed in the vibrant culture that Baltimore embodies since I was young. With all my expertise, I have to say that there's one place you'll never forget.

Do you like fresh and organic foods? How about a lively atmosphere full of energetic people? Welcome to Loyola, I have just the place for you. A well-known paradise is just a few minutes down the road: Belvedere Square. On the corner of East Belvedere Avenue and York Road, this market has everything your heart (and stomach) could desire.

"I loved the tofu banh mi sandwich from Atwater's. I'm a vegetarian so I love how they have plenty of organic options for me to choose from."
Stephanie Haas
'20

Belvedere Square is home to fourteen unique "restaurants." Why the quotation marks? Because, these aren't your typical confined restaurants. It reminds me of a farmer's market with open space to walk around and explore new merchants. There is no assigned seating; all you have to do is walk up to any one of the many vendors and place your order. Take a seat wherever you please. It could be at the counter, at a high table, on metal stools, or outside; no matter where you place yourself for your meal, your food will be served by an accommodating waiter. This will be perfect for you and your new friends. Everyone gets the exact meal they want, with no need to bicker on where to eat and no need to split the check.

My most recent time at Belvedere Square was with my mother on a sixty-degree day in February. Very unusual weather, but I wasn't complaining. We were going for a Sunday brunch just to catch up and talk. Pulling into the jam-packed parking lot, we searched for a spot.

I stepped out of my vehicle a hundred yards away from the entrance. My eyes were instantaneously drawn to the unlit neon lights of the market. It reads "Belvedere Square Market," a simple name



Belvedere Square at sunset on a Sunday. By Drew Isenock

with delicious food inside. The lights hang above the entrance inviting all walks of life to come and join in the culture of Baltimore.

Approaching the market, my senses started going haywire. My nostrils were immediately filled with culinary ecstasy. Scents that were never meant to be mixed gracefully mingled and complimented one another. My ears started to ring with the laughter of those enjoying their meals on the outdoor patio. My mouth was watering even before I stepped inside. The anticipation was slowly eating me alive.

After ordering, we sat at an old rustic wooden table that had been worn down by many hungry customers before us. Waiting there for our food to come, little rascals scurried by us with their mothers close behind them. They pressed their tiny noses against the cold glass of the ice cream stand begging for their mom to buy them a treat to satisfy their sweet tooth.

After a short wait, my spicy tooth was finally satisfied by the deliverance of my "two Spring-

field Farm eggs, peppers and onions, pepper jack and bread of [my] choice with house made turkey sausage" (Atwater's menu). Biting into this glorious sandwich, it melted my soul. Drool was dripping from my mouth like a ferocious hellhound. I was no longer human, but instead I became a slave to this flawless sandwich. The juices from the homemade sausage streamed down my chin. The perfectly toasted bread disintegrated between my vigorous chomps. I didn't dare to leave a single crumb on my plate for every morsel took my taste buds to a new dimension of pleasure.

Belvedere Square is a place where all are welcome to come and enjoy themselves with an amazing meal they won't forget. I cannot wait for my next visit and the pressure of choosing which delectable organic meal I want to devour. Welcome to Loyola, and remember your new favorite hangout is just around the corner.