



Community

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The supermarkets versus all the rest

Supermarkets and the discount drug stores

Do you recognize a bargain when you see one? Do you know which non-food items to drop in your basket at the supermarket and which should wait until you go to the drug store? Our Times community reporters — all married or with children — thought they were careful shoppers but the lesson learned from last week's shopping spree was that it's not easy.

Comparisons are difficult. Even when the same brands are carried by both supermarkets and discount drug stores, often the same sizes are not. We also found that biggest wasn't always best. Surprisingly, sometimes items in the same store were a better buy in a smaller size.

Our only suggestion for the careful shopper is to keep a permanent list of most-bought items and occasionally record prices in both types of store.

		DOMINION	SHOPPERS DRUG MART	YOU SAVE AT	
				SUPER MARKET	DISCOUNT DRUG
DENTAL PRODUCTS					
Polident tablets	32	\$.95	.99	.04	
Ultra-Brite toothpaste	150 ml	1.75	1.59		.16
Crest toothpaste	100 ml	1.33	1.19		.14
	50 ml	.77	.79	.02	
Colgate	150 ml	1.77	1.59		.18
Oral-B	1% oz.	.99	.96		.03
Dentu-Creme	100 ml	1.15	1.26	.11	
	50 ml	.99	.96		.03
MOUTHWASH					
Scope	6 oz.	.99	1.21		
Listerine	150 ml	.95	1.13	.18	
DEODORANTS					
Ultra Ban spray	9 oz.	1.79	1.88	.09	
Right Guard	6 oz.	1.45	1.37		.08
Soft & Dri	10 oz.	1.99	2.29	.30	
MEDICINE CHEST					
Bayer aspirin children's	24	.49	.43		.06
Bayer aspirin adult	100	1.19	1.04		.15
Bayer aspirin	200	1.99	1.97		.02
Phillips					
Milk of Magnesia	12.3 oz.	1.19	1.26	.07	
Ex-Lax squares	18	.95	.81		.14
Ex-Lax squares	36	1.39	1.39		
Ex-Lax pills	30	1.29	1.29		
Rolaids	3 roll pk.	.77	.69		.08
bottle	135	1.89	1.79		.10
Bromo Seltzer	regular size	1.05	1.21	.16	
	family size	1.44	1.47	.03	
	economy	1.99	2.19	.20	
Q-Tips	180	.89	.84		.05
	90	.65	.74	.09	
Curad regular	100	1.89	1.97	.08	
MEN'S TOILETRIES					
Noxzema instant foam	350 ml	1.29	1.09		.20
Gillette Foamy	15 oz.	1.49	1.23		.26
After-shave Hai Karate	4 oz.	1.75	2.26	.51	
Brut 33 lotion	120 ml	1.79	2.35	.56	
Aqua Velva	4 oz.	1.13	1.22	.09	
SHAMPOO					
Breck	400 ml	2.19	1.97		.22
Clairol	450 ml	2.59	2.19		.40
Head & Shoulders tube	100 ml	1.75	1.59		.16
SOAP, LOTION					
Ivory soap, 3 bars	bath size	.75	.73		.02
Johnson baby shampoo	350 ml	2.29	1.97		.32
Rose Milk hand lotion	240 ml	1.51	1.47		.04
MEDICINE CHEST					
Penaten cream	med. size	1.67	1.59		.08
Curad bandages	60 with 3 sizes	1.41	1.43	.02	
Neo Citran	10 packs	1.77	1.39		.38
Anacin	60 tablets	1.21	1.33	.12	
Vicks Cough syrup	142 ml	1.39	1.57	.18	
CLEANING AIDS					
Windex, tin	20 oz.	1.21	1.19		.02
Lysol spray	16 oz.	1.71	1.69		.02
Sunlight dish washing detergent	24 oz.	.87	.85		.02
Sunlight detergent	5 lbs.	2.51	2.49		.02
MISCELLANEOUS					
O Cedar mop		4.98	4.47		.51
Raid	16.3 oz.	2.99	2.97		.02
Off	9.4 g.	2.59	2.67	.08	
Johnson Raid strips	3.3 oz.	2.59	2.77	.18	
Paper cups, hot & cold	51 cups	.75	.69		.06
Q-Tips	90	.73	.69		.04
Kotex	12	.99	.99		

Shopping for non-food items — and saving money — is strictly a matter of shoe leather. It takes a lot of comparison shopping to find the lowest prices. Last week our Times community reporters compared discount drug prices with supermarket prices.

Then we visited the specialty food stores — reaching no new conclusions but making a few observations.

We did agree that going into a grocery store hungry is mistake number one. Taking children is mistake number two it's hard to resist their pleas for junk foods. Lack of knowledge on nutrition is mistake number three because these factors combine to whittle away at your budget.

It's not always the biggest package that contains the most food value for your money: Two large bags of granola with raisins and nuts may look pretty small beside two large boxes of marshmallow-filled cereals but that big box of

cereal is probably 96 per cent carbohydrate.

A good supply of milk, eggs, cheeses, fresh fruits and vegetables to be served daily are also good buys. Even if the price tag seems high, that's where the food-value is found.

Protein requirements can be obtained most cheaply from organ meats such as liver and heart. Other protein sources are seeds, nuts and beans. Chicken and fish are excellent buys, lower in cost per serving and excellent sources for protein.

Another important food requirement often overlooked is unsaturated oils. They contain vitamin E and should be added daily to fresh salads.

Sometimes the foods that are best for us seem to carry a high price tag. But the nutrition is concentrated and if you eat properly, you'll find yourself eating less. And that's a plus!

Supermarkets and the fresh produce markets

Fresh produce looks and tastes better than frozen or canned products yet the consumer spends more money on fruits and vegetables in cans and freezer bags than they do fresh.

The Times shopped at four stores to compare produce—not only in price, variety and quality but also establishing if the consumer can pick his own produce or if it is pre-packaged.

Pre-packaging often prevents the customer from checking the quality of the produce. It also means the shopper may buy more produce than can be consumed before the items spoil.

Although employees in the produce department will re-weigh a portion of a package for you, this is time-consuming and awkward.

Shopping is made difficult in many stores because of the lack of identifying labels. Only Safeway stores out of those surveyed marked everything clearly.

We visited the Credit Valley Fruit Market on Dundas Street, Fruit Fair at Sheridan Mall, and both the A & P and Safeway stores at the malls on Hurontario Street south of Dundas.

The Credit Valley Fruit Market had by far the best variety of produce as well as the largest quantity from which to choose. Items were left unpackaged in bins allowing customers to select individually.

Fruit Fair and Safeway had good variety and quantity and in both stores if a fruit or vegetable came prepackaged it was also offered loose in another bin.

A & P had a smaller selection but the produce was fresh, although not everything was available individually.

Prices were taken June 7 and some differences in prices will reflect differences in size.

Item	Credit Valley Fruit Market	Safeway	Fruit Fair	A&P
VEGETABLES				
Yellow peppers	\$.99/lb.	\$.79/lb.	\$1.98/lb.	no stock
Green sweet	.49/lb.	.59/lb.	.49/lb.	3 for .59
peppers				
Celery stalks	.69/pack	.79/pack	.55/pack	.89/pack

	Credit Valley Fruit Market	Safeway	Fruit Fair	A & P
Iceberg lettuce				
Chinese lettuce	.49/head	.59/head	.39/head	.59/head
Romaine lettuce	.25/lb.	.49/lb.	.29/lb.	no stock
	.59/head	.39/head	.59-79 to size	.49/head
Boston head lettuce				
Leaf lettuce	.39/head	.35/head	.69/head	no stock
Cucumbers	.39 each	.29 each	.49 each	2 for .49
Radishes	2 bunch/.49	2 bunch/.59	4 / 1.00	3 for 1.00
Green onions	3 bunch/.59	2 bunch/.39	2 / .59	bunch/.59
Endive	priced to size	.39 a bunch	.59/lb.	2 bunch/.49
Bean Sprouts				
Chayote	no stock	.59/lb.	.59/lb.	no stock
Eggplant	3 bunch/1.00	.89/lb.	no stock	no stock
	.69/lb.	.69/lb.	.69/lb.	no stock

	Credit Valley Fruit Market	Safeway	Fruit Fair	A & P
FRUIT				
Kiwi	\$.49 each	.69 each	no stock	no stock
Cantaloupes	.39 each, small	.79 each	.69 each	.79 each
	1.29 each, large			
Pineapples	1.39 each	.89 each	1.59 each	no stock
Honeydew melons	1.19 to 1.35 each	1.59 each	1.29 each	1.39 each
Avocados				
Coconuts	priced to size	.39 each	.89 each	no stock
Granny Smith apples	.59 each	.49 each	no stock	no stock
Sweet cherries	.69/lb.	.69/lb.	.79/lb.	.69/lb.
Nectarines	1.39/lb.	1.49/lb.	1.49/lb.	1.89/lb.
Seedless grapes	no stock	1.29/lb.	1.59/lb.	.99/lb.
Red plums	1.69/lb.	1.49/lb.	1.79/lb.	1.89/lb.
Peaches	1.39/lb.	1.49/lb.	1.69/lb.	1.19/lb.
Lemons	.39/lb.	.49/lb.	.39/lb.	.59/lb.
	5 for .89	4 for .99	3 for .69	4 for .59

The supermarket and specialty meat store

It's probably impossible to compare meat prices and arrive at conclusions that tell a real story. For our meat shopping last week we chose Loblaws and Bittner's — and found that they trim their meat differently and use dissimilar names for similar cuts, making specific comparisons very nearly impossible. Although more than twenty different cuts of fresh meats were on display at Bittner's — which caters to the carriage trade — only seven of these could be directly compared with the Loblaws we visited.

Bittner's has specialty items: London broil steak (ground steak wrapped with a strip of sirloin and broiled like a filet mignon) which, last week, was \$2.19 a pound and was not available at any of the supermarkets we visited.

Nor was rouladen — at \$2.45 a pound. This is strips of top round, ready to be stuffed. The usual stuffing is bacon, dill pickle and onion — but you can create your own.

Filet mignon, the king of beef steak, is sold, wrapped in bacon, for \$5.99.

There were comparisons that could be made, but even these must be taken with a grain of salt because there were often differences in trim and bone.

	BITTNER'S	LOBLAWS
Cube steak	\$2.45	\$1.88
Loin pork chops	1.89	1.88
Rump roast	1.99	1.38
Lean beef stew	1.89	1.00
Lean ground beef	1.69	1.00
Calf liver	3.19	3.48

Bittner's was short of the cuts of meat that are budget stretchers in most families. While Loblaws had ample supplies of beef heart (79 cents per pound), beef tongue (\$1.08), Pork kidney (45 cents), beef kidney (58 cents), blade roast (88 cents), short rib roast (88 cents), cross-cut rib (1.08) top round steak roast (1.48), fresh pork shoulder, (98 cents) and fresh pork butt (\$1.26) none of these were on view at Bittner's.

Even the beef steaks each was offering were different. Loblaws had round steak at \$1.38 per pound, top round at \$1.48, loin steak,

\$2.08, sirloin tip, \$1.98.

Bittner's beef steaks were porterhouse at \$3.15, boneless sirloin at \$2.99, T-bone at \$3.05 and New York steaks at \$5.29 — all super-eating, super expensive steaks that were slumming with a neighboring flank steak at \$1.99.

Double check your prices if you shop at Bittner's. They like to price some of their more expensive items by the half pound — and the 'half' is shown in small figures.

Loblaws — like all supermarkets — caters to the general market with the pricier meats displayed alongside their cheaper cousins.

We talked casually with a few shoppers and found that some do their day-to-day meat shopping at the supermarkets but like the specialty meat shops for special occasions.

There were a few who said they always shop at the specialty shops and this was especially true of Europeans who were raised with shopping habits that relied on the neighborhood butcher, baker and candle-stick maker.