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German discount grocer plans more NYC stores

As Aldi's first store opens in Rego Park, Queens, the German chain is already preparing to bring its version of the discount grocery business to other city locations as well.

By [Lisa Fickensch](#)

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Discount supermarket chain Aldi is opening its first store in the city Thursday, in Rego Park, Queens. But it has much bigger ambitions in this area than just one store.

Crain's has learned that the German company has inked two more deals in the Bronx and Bayshore, L.I., to open stores there within the next 12 months.

"We are looking for other opportunities in the city," said Bruce Persohn, vice president of Aldi's South Windsor division in Connecticut, adding that Aldi is focusing on all five boroughs as well as Long Island.

In the Bronx, Aldi signed a lease at 1750 E. Gun Hill Rd. near the Westchester County line in a nearly vacant shopping center. The 18,000-square-foot store is expected to open late this year, though construction has not begun yet.

In Bayshore, Aldi has a space at 1851 Sunrise Highway. The Rego Park store is located at 61-11 Junction Boulevard.

Aldi operates about 2,500 stores in Germany and has its European headquarters there. (Its U.S. headquarters is in Batavia, Ill.) There are Aldi stores in 17 other European countries.

Known for its low prices and store-branded products, Aldi stores do not have deli, bakery or butcher departments.

"Everything we do is towards reducing the overall costs of our stores so we can pass along our saving to consumers," said Mr. Persohn. "Those departments add significantly to the cost of operations."

Aldi saves money on staffing as well. It does not have union contracts, according to Robert Gorland, a vice president of supermarket site consultant Matthew P. Casey & Associates, though employees tend to be paid higher than average wages. In part, that's because there are fewer of them. It's not unusual to find just one cashier at an Aldi store, added Mr. Gorland.

Although the stores have limited selections—they may offer one kind of mushroom or one size of carrot, for example—their private-label products are considered high quality, said Mr. Gorland.

In Rego Park today, consumers got their first taste of Aldi, which offered complimentary tastings of its products.

Aldi's owners, Theo and Karl Albrech, also own Trader Joe's supermarket chain, though they are not involved in the U.S. operations of the company.

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