Since 2009, Sodexo and Garden Spot Village forged a mission-aligned partnership focused on improving the residents’ quality of life. As the needs and expectations of residents continued to evolve, Garden Spot Village recognized the growing importance of enhancing their dining program and also providing a truly innovative dining experience to which their residents are accustomed. Out of this realization grew the vision to create a commercial-quality restaurant that would rival the best dining experiences that Garden Spot Village residents have enjoyed throughout their lives. The result is The Harvest Table restaurant.
Planning for The Harvest Table, Garden Spot Village’s Chief Executive Officer, Steve Lindsey, knew that he and his team had to create a dining venue that would reflect the expectations of the contemporary resident. Future residents, particularly those of the Baby Boomer generation, are bringing with them a diversity of lifestyle experiences including an appreciation of global cuisines. But it quickly became apparent to Lindsey that in order to deliver the kind of dining venue they envisioned, a vastly different skill set and level of expertise were required to achieve their goals. These include:

- A thorough understanding of the trends and influences defining the emerging needs of today’s residents.
- Management and operational expertise in commercial-quality, retail dining.
- Innovative dining solutions including the use of technology to enhance the residents’ dining experience.
- Staff training programs and service protocols to foster greater resident engagement.

As we went through this process, we realized that we needed to reach out beyond our organization in order to partner with somebody else. Frankly that was a hurdle for us because we had always taken a fair amount of pride in being a self-operating organization. But we recognized that we were not experts to the level that we needed to be. We reached out to Sodexo. They have a great history and have just become a great partner in doing this.”

Steve Lindsey, Chief Executive Officer
Garden Spot Village

Sodexo is a leader in identifying and addressing the evolving needs and wants of today’s seniors. From the ongoing analysis of senior trends and influences to our proprietary Personix™ Market Research, we have a thorough understanding of the lifestyle preferences of current and future residents. This insight helped Sodexo in selecting the operating systems and dining platforms that would best meet the needs of the residents at Garden Spot Village.

From embracing residents’ growing appreciation for global cuisines to emphasizing the use of fresh, local ingredients to streamlining the overall ordering process, Sodexo capitalized on its market knowledge to deliver a comprehensive dining solution.
INNOVATION THROUGH SOLUTION DESIGN

The ultimate goal of The Harvest Table is to deliver a modern, retail dining experience to the residents of Garden Spot Village. For Steve Lindsey, it was also imperative that the restaurant not only be above and beyond a traditional dining program, but that it also offered the kind of quality and service that would compete with local eateries.

To deliver on this expectation, the Sodexo team integrated its vast senior living expertise with the company’s global resources and dining innovations to create a retail venue that would be second to none. One such resource was the Retail Excellence program that served as the operational foundation for the various dining platforms featured at The Harvest Table.

The training component, Retail Excellence, comprises a multiple course curriculum of Learning Labs covering topics such as Knowing the Customers, Marketing and Merchandising Standards, Culinary Process Standards, Pricing Standards and Retail Excellence Standards.

Retail Excellence training is delivered via online portal through a combination of videos and audio presentations, with each course followed by a quiz. This on-demand training provides Sodexo teams with the know how to deliver quality and excellence to the residents as well as access to the tools and resources necessary to deliver on our commitment of excellence. Through the Retail Excellence program, Sodexo has demonstrated significant success in standardizing processes that drive consistency and achieve a level of excellence that residents have come to expect.

INNOVATION THROUGH SOLUTION DESIGN

As Steve Lindsey noted, “...technology is playing an increasingly vital part in all of our lives and residents are no exception to that.” Sodexo worked in conjunction with the Garden Spot Village team to incorporate some of the latest dining technologies into The Harvest Table. This includes a “bank” of touch screen ordering kiosks located outside of the restaurant that enables residents to place customized orders without even entering the dining venue. There are also two additional touch screen kiosks strategically placed inside of the restaurant to help alleviate ordering delays at key dining platforms.

Complementing the touch screen ordering kiosks are a number of digital menu boards that display featured selections in a bold, easy to read manner. The digital displays provide a modern aesthetic to the restaurant while enabling the easy updating of menus to showcase new seasonal selections.

All of the technology utilized at The Harvest Table is proving favorable with the residents as well as the dining team since it is helping to reduce operating costs. According to Steve Lindsey, “One of challenges that we have is the population we’re serving doesn’t get a raise every year. They’re always concerned about the ongoing costs of receiving service in this type of environment. By utilizing technology, we’re able to reduce some labor and in effect, keep those costs down for our residents.

"The system allows residents to order on-site at the Harvest Table, as well as affording them the luxury to order from their apartment or cottage...or from any other place where they have a smartphone, laptop, or iPad."

Steve Lindsey, Chief Executive Officer
Garden Spot Village

TECHNOLOGY DELIVERS CHOICE AND FLEXIBILITY

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Sodexo’s partnership with Garden Spot Village in developing The Harvest Table Restaurant has resulted in a number of significant outcomes that will improve the resident experience at this innovative retirement community. Most notably, these include the development of a modern retail dining venue that rivals area restaurants; creation of innovative dining platforms designed specifically to meet the evolving tastes and preferences of current and future residents; use of the latest technology to not only enhance the residents’ dining experience but also to reduce operating cost; and the nurturing of resident and staff interaction through the use of Sodexo’s resident engagement training programs.

As I look at the relationship with Sodexo, I’ve just been really impressed with the ability of the Sodexo team to come alongside our team members. The result of that is I’ve had so many residents...come up to say, ‘You know, the food is so much better at The Harvest Table than anything we’ve had in the last 10 years.’

Scott Miller, Chief Marketing Officer
Garden Spot Village

When the Garden Spot Village team engaged with the Sodexo team, there was a lot of discussion. There was a lot of back-and-forth and it worked out really, really well. Sodexo has just been wonderful about working to achieve our vision for the restaurant and delivering everything that’s taken place.

Steve Lindsey, Chief Executive Officer
Garden Spot Village

A few of the dining platforms showcased at The Harvest Table include a Brick Oven Pizza featuring an authentic wood-fired pizza oven for that authentic Italian flavor; a Mongolian-Themed Grill / Wok where residents can choose their favorite ingredients and sauces to create their very own signature dish; and an expansive Salad Bar that uses Sodexo’s Seasons program to offer fresh ingredients from local farms as well as enticing seasonal selections.