

# Furniture and decor design destination Always Welcome expands to Cape Town

South African retail cooperative Always Welcome, a multi-brand destination for furniture, decor and homeware production from premier African designers, has opened its first showroom in Cape Town.



Photographer credit: Elsa Young. Source: Supplied

Always Welcome Heritage House spans two floors of an 18th-century provincial heritage site in the heart of Cape Town's city centre. It brings together 40 of southern Africa's leading designer-manufacturers to present a bold collection of furniture, lighting and homeware that celebrates the next phase of contemporary design from the continent.

## Established and emerging design houses

Ranging from established design houses like Dokter and Misses, Houtlander, The Urbanative, Kino, and MashT Design Studio, to emerging studios full of promise like Neimil, Deft, Node and Ananta Studio, the project is a tribute to the stories and skills of the growing design collective's unique diversity of voices.

In the carefully restored building – that has had uses since its establishment in 1771 that range from blacksmithing to retail, to tobacco manufacture – visitors can expect a curated mix of the collective's offerings presented in a series of domestic settings, as well as a gift store of smaller, suitcase-friendly items by the likes of Skinny la Minx, House of Harhaz, Okra Candle and several others.





Photographer credit: Elsa Young. Source: Supplied





## Feeling at home

Always Welcome merchandising and operations director Alan Hayward has set out since inception to see each Always Welcome store being imagined as a response to the context of the city, and curated to feel like stepping into the home of a



good friend.

In display, the new Cape Town store brings together an eclectic mix of design and art from the collective that moves away from gallery-style 'white cube' presentations into one that is more familiar, and at home.



### Inside Always Welcome's striking new Kramerville showroom

18 May 2022



"We want visitors to sit on chairs, appreciate artworks up close, take their shoes off to feel the rugs on their feet, and make the experience of Southern African design a more humane, comfortable one for anyone interested in design," Hayward explains.

"Following almost two years of requests from the design community in Cape Town for Always Welcome to open a store in the Mother City, we're so happy to have finally found the perfect home for our designers," says Always Welcome cofounder Garreth van Niekerk.

"Of course none of this would've been possible without them, and the support of our new partners in the city, the inspiring Habitus sustainable heritage developers, who believe wholeheartedly in the mission of Always Welcome to expand the possibilities of southern African design on the continent."

## Habitus partnership

Always Welcome Heritage House is the first outpost of a new partnership in the mother city between the designer collective and inner-city 'sustainable heritage' developers Habitus.

Founded by entrepreneurs Victoria Engelhorn, Tim Harris and Brad Armitage, the new store is one of Habitus' 'lighthouse' initiatives in the bustling Breechinct area, intended to uplift the experience of Cape Town, and restore the inner-city's vital mix of social, commercial, creative, wellness and integrated work environments back into their thriving pre-pandemic status.



### Durban design duo triumphs in Nando's Hot Young Designer search

27 Oct 2022



"We count ourselves extremely blessed to have connected with Always Welcome," says Habitus' Brad Armitage. "Creating a platform and space where people can connect with each other, express their creativity, share their passions and



exchange ideas is at the heart of the Habitus ethos. Always Welcome embodies this spirit like few other retail brands and their partnerships with the design community are both authentic and truly representative of South African design.

“This collection of the finest that South African design has to offer will be a huge attraction not only for the design-led tourist, but also proud local enthusiasts, savvy collectors and design lovers.”

Always Welcome Heritage House is located at 108 Shortmarket Street, Cape Town.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>