

Sandton City adds five athleisure stores

Adidas recently opened its 'HomeCourt' performance store at Sandton City. Over the next two months, more boutique sportswear brands, collections and collaborations will be joining the mall. Plein Sport, the world's luxury active sportswear brand, will debut its first South African store at Sandton City. Also sought-after performance apparel names Under Armour, Puma and Kappa will all open at Sandton City.



Jonathan Sinden, Liberty Two Degrees' asset management executive for Sandton City, explains that athleisure is an evolution of fashion, rather than a trend or a fad. "Mixing casual, couture and athletic wear has essentially created an entirely new clothing category. Athleisure blurs the lines between locker room, dressing room and boardroom."

Athleisure is emblematic of bigger cultural trends, including the widespread shift to health and fitness. This is increasing consumer participation in sport and exercise leading to a greater, wider customer base for activewear. Social media is also driving this concept as young consumers are increasingly exposed to fitness and lifestyle icons, both locally and internationally. The social element of training together is also growing athleisure because it is another occasion to dress for.

In a time-scarce world, people want hassle-free clothing. Athletic wear is generally more durable and has wrinkle and odour resistance from its tech-infused fibres. In addition, people are no longer prepared to feel constrained by their wardrobe and want to be flexible to face anything the day brings. Athleisure has influenced high fashion, from couture sneakers and limited-edition trainers to chic clothing for work, sport and lounging around. Luxury brands are introducing athleisure lines. Sportswear brands are launching designer collaborations.

Sinden believes that athleisure is a perfect fit for Sandton City shoppers, as they prize brands that mix a sense of fashion with fitness. “Consumers have added another dimension to how they perceive modern luxury and it includes investing in their health and well-being. This new idea of luxury is as versatile, durable, flexible and comfortable as it is contemporary and cosmopolitan.”

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