

Nespresso's new store concept showcases brand's sustainability commitment

By  Danette Breitenbach

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Nespresso recently launched its new retail environment, an immersive coffee experience and commitment to sustainability, in South Africa at its flagship store in Sandton City.



Image supplied. The Sandton City Nespresso store is the first store in South Africa to showcase the brand's new retail look and feel

The unique and brand-expansive concept first launched in Cannes, France in 2017 and is now being rolled out around the world.

The brand's first original boutique store in South Africa launched in 2011. "We wanted to renovate the Sandton store and launch our sustainable look and feel and we felt the Sandton City store was the right place to start," says Ceire Mulligan, Nespresso's retail regional operations manager.

Back to its sustainability roots

She explains that the new look and feel ties back to the brand's sustainability roots. "The brand has always verbally and digitally communicated our sustainability, but now we are tying everything back to that."

In September 2020 Nespresso has announced its mission to become carbon neutral by the end of 2022 and this will be possible thanks to a certified protocol that measures carbon footprint reduction for each new boutique opening.

"We believe strongly in our sustainability chain and supply chain, from the moment the coffee is planted all the way through that entire process to the coffee we are serving to our customers, and then the final step of the value chain, placing our product into the customers' hands," Mulligan adds.



The store tabletops are made from used coffee grounds from the Nespresso factory in Switzerland

A visual and textural experience

The new concept demonstrates this commitment and adherence to a circular economy with careful design that is restorative by nature and works to minimise waste.

The tabletops are made from used coffee grounds from the Nespresso factory in Switzerland, wood that has been 100% sourced from reforestation programmes, technological systems to reduce energy and water consumption, and a recycling collection point.

The boutique features a lush greenery wall embedded with coffee plants, bushes, and shade trees to mimic the coffee plantations that are part of the Nespresso AAA Sustainable Quality Program while the muted colour palette of rich coffee browns and crema-inspired golds to the floor tiles have been carefully designed to link to coffee.

The lampshade at the till counter is a similar design to the one used at the coffee farms when the coffees are sorted.

"Together all the elements tie into our 360 feel to what we have always communicated, but now putting it visually and texturally in the customers' hands," says Mulligan.

She adds that in addition to the new design, each store in each country also boasts a design element from that country. "In this store, we have incorporated locally designed and made lampshades over our coffee bar areas."



Each Nespresso store features a design element that is original to the country it is in. In SA it is these local lampshades

An experiential environment

She explains that it is also about making the store an experiential environment where customers can explore different touchpoints, from enjoying a coffee in the store to a masterclass.

“In the past, our stores have been a very transactional experience – the customer came in and bought a product, and left. This fresh look and feel offers an environment for the consumer; it is their boutique, and we are here just to guide them through it,” she says.

“People have taken the time to get into their car, drive here, park and come into the store. We want to bring our brand to life,” she adds.

It starts with the sales assistants - called coffee specialists - who introduce customers to the coffee range, to smelling the ground coffee in the capsule, and ending with a tasting experience. Customers can taste two coffees side-by-side to better understand their taste preferences.

“They are coffee specialists for a reason because we want to give the consumer the experience and the knowledge, so that before purchasing they can taste the product, and ask questions about the machine or accessories that match its design,” says Mulligan.



The new store concept incorporates elements of the coffee value chain such as these lampshades which are similar to the ones used when

Masterclasses for customers

The brand is taking it further with its Lab Kitchen and Masterclasses.

In the Lab Kitchen, customers can experiment with coffee recipes and personalise their coffee experience through the different Nespresso machines and is hosting masterclasses.

Masterclasses are special sessions for those who want to become true coffee connoisseurs. Classes follow a specially crafted curriculum focused on different elements of the coffee process, everything from tasting various coffees to mastering the art of coffee with milk.

“We hosted our first masterclass this past week, hosting consumers in groups of 10. We show customers how to use their machines, do different recipes and just bring the brand to life for them,” she explains.

She adds that with a brand such as Nespresso, which is a quality product, they want their customers to have the best experience of the brand at home. “The masterclasses show them how to do this.”

Going forward any new store opening in the country as well as stores up for renovation will have this format.

“This is the international standard for our stores,” remarks Mulligan.

The new Nespresso boutique concept and open format was designed by award-winning architecture and interior design practice, Universal Design Studio, founded by Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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