

Contemporary glass, steel awnings enrich V&A dining experience

The V&A Waterfront has completed its large-scale awning installation across the property's Quayside Terrace restaurants. The new, permanent glass-and-steel designed structure has replaced the spattering of umbrellas that lined the terrace area overlooking Quay 5 basin.



Now complete, the service area for each restaurant flows out to include the outdoor terrace immediately in front of their restaurant. This gives diners the option of either being seated indoors, or enjoying an alfresco meal at each restaurant, regardless of the weather.

In addition to offering greater protection from Cape Town's notorious storms in winter and the South-Easter in summer, the new, transparent structure offers harbour views for which restaurants at the V&A Waterfront are well-known. The installation has also improved access to the restaurant area and created a clear line-of-sight that enhances the customer experience of the range of restaurant offerings.

New restaurants

Restaurants whose outdoor areas have been included in this redesign are City Grill, Gibsons and Karibu. In addition to a new atmosphere created by the awnings installation at Quay 5, the V&A Waterfront has also opened a number of new restaurants around the property to expand its dining offering. Diners can look out for the new Life Grand Café, MAREsOL, Vista Marina and GINJA restaurants.

Speaking on the R15 million project, retail executive, Alex Kabalin said, "Food forms an important focus of our experiential retail offering. The Quay 5 terrace is already popular, as it maximises the natural environment with its appealing views and natural light. Not only do the awnings provide an improved visitor experience, they also enable the outdoor terrace to be used throughout the year, which makes good business sense.

New retail offerings

Also new to the V&A retail landscape, and in line with the retail strategy of continual improvement to the Victoria Wharf tenant mix, are a number of well-known international brands and stores. These include international clothing brands Banana Republic, Ted Baker, Michael Kors, and Hackett; Danish retailer Day Birger et Mikkelsen; shoe specialists Tread + Miller;

international hair experts Soho; and Argentinian lifestyle brand La Martina. A number of stores have also recently completed refurbishments.

“We’ve worked hard over the winter months to ensure our planned projects, new stores and new dining offerings are ready ahead the Cape Town summer season, which is our busiest time of year. The V&A Waterfront is an experience, no matter whether visitors come to shop, dine or simply admire the harbour views, and this season we can guarantee a number of new experiences,” said Kabalin.

Double-digit growth

In a national retail market characterised by weak growth and declining profits, the V&A Waterfront’s latest retail trade results continue to buck the gloomy economic trend by delivering double-digit retail growth.

This year’s retail sales saw an increase of 26% in the first half of the year and a 19% increase for Q2 and Q3 of 2016. Domestic and international tourism was buoyed in the first quarter of 2016, causing retail figures to leap by 30% over 2015, when visitor numbers declined because of the new visa regulations and the Ebola outbreak on the continent. Not only do the 2016 figures reflect the retail sales growth achieved by the Waterfront, they also prove that the property continues to outstrip national sales and inflation significantly.

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