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ALDI LAUNCHES FIRST VICTORIAN CORNER STORE

ALDI has brought its Corner Store concept to Victoria, with doors to the curated inner-city store opening last month.



At 501 Swanson St in the heart of Melbourne's CBD, the first of ALDI's Corner Stores in Victoria is said to provide "unrivalled convenience" to Melbourne shoppers, stocking an extensive in-store range of ready-to-go meals, sushi and sandwiches as well as artisan bakery items.

Huw Longman, Director of ALDI Corner Stores, says the store format has been designed to better meet the needs of customers in high-density urban areas.

"Shopping habits continue to evolve, and we're seeing a large audience of people who prefer shopping more frequently with a hyper-focus on convenience," he said.

"The ALDI Corner Store is designed purposefully to meet these needs, taking convenience and creativity and combining it with the kind of quality and savings that only ALDI can offer. It's a curated experience for inner-city Melburnians that puts convenience

at the centre alongside ALDI's renowned value."

Layout and offer

The store features a convenience-led layout offering visitors modern interior designs, simple navigation and self-checkouts.

Grocery and fresh produce are still the core offering but are newly supplemented by a growing range of ready-to-go meals and convenience-based products, including sushi, sandwiches and other items, plus a new takeaway coffee and artisanal bakery offering from Grain & Stone.

The bakery's wide variety includes baguettes and cinnamon buns, a selection of croissants and fruit Danishes, and bacon and cheese and ricotta and spinach options.

Baked in Victoria, the ALDI-first Grain & Stone range is said to highlight the product innovation unique to Corner Store, combining modern convenience with the best of Victorian artisanship.

The store also features many of ALDI's popular offers, including Special Buys.

Designed with a difference

Design consultancy Landini Associates was behind ALDI Corner Store's design concept, as well as the first store in the new format, launched in North Sydney in July last year, and the nationwide redesign of ALDI Australia's stores before that.

The brief to Landini was to interpret the traditional ALDI model into a new format that is genuinely local, uniquely different, but recognisably ALDI.

To generate a consistent brand atmosphere and customer experience, each ALDI Corner Store features pale brick, white tiles and blockwork, terrazzo and black galvanised steel mesh, and oak and walnut surfaces.

The combination of these materials and the retail graphics solution by Landini Associates is aimed at creating a consistent appeal in details including naming and messaging, store

signage and navigation, category and subcategory checkouts, self-checkout locations, basket storage, signage on trolleys, and "unusually appealing" staff uniforms.

Rather than featuring neighbourhood photographs or signs declaring the location, each site is designed to celebrate its community through strategic local art partnerships. These artist collaborations, says Landini Associates Creative Director Mark Landini, "honour differences while embracing operational affinities and create an overall atmosphere that is consistent with the ALDI brand".

"We wanted to create a solution that is both a design signature and memorably ALDI but also something truly different," he said. "We've ensured that each ALDI Corner Store will be recognisable and distinct, both in the design parameters and by commissioning a unique artwork, painted in-situ, for each site."

As a tribute to Melbourne's artistic

community, the store commissioned a mural from acclaimed Melbourne artist George Rose, whose trademark blend of vibrant colours and abstract strokes is utilised to create a "captivating" in-store installation.

Landini Associates Graphic Design Director Ben Goss says the ALDI Corner Store brand celebrates food, people and place.

"With a combination of playful mural art and simple and direct graphic communications, the ALDI Corner Store experience is all about making the customer smile during their shopping journey," he said.

Mr Landini added: "ALDI Corner Store raises the bar for what local shopping should be: convenient, joyful and fun."

Barista brews

ALDI welcomed the first customers into the store with a cup of "award-winning, barista brewed coffee" priced at 37 cents. The pop-up Lazzio coffee cart allowed customers over the first

two days to treat themselves to the "rich, aromatic flavours" of Lazzio coffee, hand roasted in Victoria by the "acclaimed" Black Bag Roasters team, for the amount it would cost to buy the beans at ALDI and brew the coffee at home.

"We're so excited to bring a unique in-store pop-up to Melbourne for the launch of Victoria's first Corner Store," ALDI Buying Director Varun Raheja said at the launch.

"With our Lazzio coffee receiving the Golden Bean Award for the past three consecutive years and the Canstar [Customer Satisfaction] Award for being the 'best retail coffee in Australia' this year, we're confident our beans stack up and will impress the coffee-loving Melburnians."

All sales of Lazzio barista brewed coffees as part of this activation were donated directly to ALDI's national charity partner, Camp Quality, with donations doubled when customers brought a reusable cup to the store.