

# French hardware giant Leroy Merlin readies to open in SA

French home improvement retailer Leroy Merlin is preparing to open its first store on the African continent in Edenvale, Gauteng on Friday, 28 September 2018.



Leroy Merlin is a household name in Europe and the third largest hardware retailer in the world with a presence in 14 countries: France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Poland, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Brazil, Cyprus and China.

The first South African branch will open at Stoneridge Centre, Greenstone Hill with a total surface area of 17,000m<sup>2</sup> and 150 sales consultants on hand to assist customers. The retailer is promising the South African DIY market "the widest selection of construction, home improvement, home decor products and tools", with more than 50,000 references in large quantities and ample stock availability.

Departments will include construction bathroom, kitchen, home decor, garden, hardware, electrical, carpentry, plumbing, tools, fix & fasten, storage and lighting. Products on offer range from locally made goods from premier SA brands to internationally sourced items, 40% of which are imported from Europe.

## Value-adding services

Customers will get to experience a modern store with showrooms to inspire and infographics to better understand how to choose and how to install products. With the aim to make customers' lives easier, Leroy Merlin offers free Wi-Fi, click-and-collect within two hours, a price guarantee, express delivery, lay-by as well as free wood cutting, custom-made blinds, curtains and curtain rods.

The Stoneridge store has built partnerships with Kandua that recommends qualified contractors for various projects, Coastal Hire for tool hiring requirements and Mugg and Bean to satisfy customer's hunger and thirst.

As part of its brand-building efforts, 15 months ago Leroy Merlin created a Workshop Fan Group of enthusiastic DIYers who gather together a few times a week to create and share their passion with one another. Due to the success of these workshops and requests from fans, the retailer will be hosting workshops daily when the store opens.

## **Focus on 'phygital'**

Leroy Merlin has also set up an online platform for customers who prefer to shop online.

"I really think that our new concept we call phygital, the best of physical and the best of digital, will offer a unique experience that South African customers deserve and when I see the energy and the pleasure our team members show towards their work, I am very confident that we will succeed," says Cédric Sennepin, Leroy Merlin South Africa country leader.

"Leroy Merlin really believes in the potential of the country and other stores are already in preparation."

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