

# Yuppiechef to open first physical store

Online kitchenware and homeware retailer, Yuppiechef, has announced the launch of its first brick and mortar store signaling the start of its omnichannel journey. The outlet is due to open at the Willowbridge Shopping Centre in Tyger Valley on 1 October 2017.



Yuppiechef co-founder and MD, Andrew Smith says the brand aims to integrate smart technologies to make the experience between Yuppiechef.com and the physical store seamless.

“The Willowbridge shop signifies the next step in the Yuppiechef journey and is in response to a changing global dynamic in retail. Consumers increasingly expect cross-channel capability from brands and, while the assumption is that traditional stores should be moving online, so too is there pressure on online brands to have a physical presence. The Cape Town store will be the first of a few outlets that are planned over the next five years.”

Interior design studio ARRC designed the shop and its director, Jon Case says, “The brief was exciting yet challenging at the same time. Yuppiechef asked us to take a brand that has flourished in a digital space for 11 years and bring it to life in the physical sense. Most brands undertake this process in the opposite direction, so the brief was unusual.”

“The store has a warm feel with natural timbers and smoky undertones. The materials are raw in nature and create a perfect balance between luxury and an industrial edge. The store was designed to be approachable yet allowing the products to stand out.”



## Seamless transition from digital to actual

The design also boasts a functional test kitchen as well as a 'genius bar' where consumers can connect with the online store and continue their shopping experience, select an address for delivery or update their Yuppiechef profiles. Customers can also set up a wedding registry in-store, subscribe to a monthly food, craft beer or wine subscription or have a gift beautifully wrapped with Yuppiechef style.

Smith says that the Yuppiechef team spent an inordinate amount of time considering how to design the consumer experience in the physical store so that there is a seamless transition from the digital outlet. "Curating the experience between our two channels was critically important in the planning process and our intention is that we will pioneer this thinking in South African retail with the launch of the new outlets."

From modest beginnings in the front lounge of co-founder Andrew Smith's Cape Town home with a product range of just 12 items and only 200 orders in the first year; Yuppiechef has grown to now offer more than 6,000 kitchen and home products from over 400 local and international brands, shipping to five countries in Southern Africa.

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