

# Philip Morris opens first South African retail boutique

Tobacco company Philip Morris International (PMI) has opened its first South African boutique store at the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town, which will serve as the primary retail space for the company's smoke-free tobacco product, IQOS. South Africa is the fourteenth country where PMI has established a bricks-and-mortar retail presence for the device.



The smoke-free alternative was brought to market after a decade of research and an investment exceeding \$3-billion. IQOS is currently available in 31 markets globally and [launched in South Africa](#) earlier this year.

“We are proud to be pioneers in a new product category that has the potential to reduce risk and will continue to innovate to ensure that our vision of a smoke-free future becomes a reality. We understand that millions of men and women who smoke cigarettes are looking for less harmful, yet satisfying alternatives and we intend to give them that choice,” says Marcelo Nico, managing director of Philip Morris Southern Africa.

## A desirable destination

“We designed this store with two main purposes in mind. The first is to provide important information to adult smokers about smoke-free alternatives to cigarettes. The other is for the thousands of adult South Africans who have already made the choice to switch to IQOS, to come to the store to personalise their devices, get any needed support, and hear the latest news about IQOS,” says Blaine Dodds, head of marketing for RRP at Philip Morris Southern Africa.

“We chose the V&A Waterfront as the location for this store because it serves as a desirable destination for both South Africans and international visitors,” Dodds adds.

## A smoke-free future

“Designing a smoke-free future is an ambitious task; one we cannot achieve alone,” continues Nico. “All stakeholders in the tobacco industry have a role to play and we are encouraged by the growing number of experts, regulators and government bodies that are taking steps to support the role that science and innovation can have in public health.”

PMI's stated vision is for all current smokers to switch to their scientifically substantiated smoke-free products – already PMI produces more than 32 billion HEETS (tobacco sticks), and hopes to reach 50 billion by 2018.

“Since we launched in South Africa, we have seen a trend where more than 1,000 smokers a month are switching from cigarettes to IQOS, and we are more confident than ever that these products have the potential to fundamentally transform our cigarette business to potentially less harmful alternatives,” Nico says.

For example, he adds: “Nearly 4 million smokers worldwide have already quit smoking cigarettes and converted to the new alternative, proving that this designing a smoke-free future is a concrete possibility. In South Africa alone 70% of smokers that have switched to IQOS have fully converted to the system and are enjoying the benefits of this technology.”

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