

Pick n Pay's spaza programme unveils third store modernisation in WC

Pick n Pay's spaza modernisation programme has helped local entrepreneurs Armien and Yasmina Adams open their Something Nice Market in Blue Downs, Cape Town. The opening of Something Nice marks the third store modernisation in the Western Cape; 14 have already opened in Gauteng, where the programme was first piloted in 2016.



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The programme aims to grow a new generation of modern retail entrepreneurs. The participating entrepreneurs remain independent with both mentorship and training supplied by Pick n Pay. The programme's partners include the Old Mutual Foundation, Masisizane Fund, the National Empowerment Fund, the Western Cape department of economic development and tourism and the City of Cape Town.

Pick n Pay deputy CEO Richard van Rensburg says: "When we began this journey, we set out to help retail entrepreneurs achieve their potential without ever losing their independence, providing the means for them to create real, sustainable businesses. Empowering them, in turn, helps empower communities through employment, supplier development, and access to outstanding retail shops. We're really proud of the programme's success to date."



A new start

Armien's passion for baking was kickstarted when the then owner of Something Nice Bakery, Mr Dramat, offered him an opportunity to run his own franchise in Athlone in 1995. Within six months, he had quadrupled the store's turnover, which prompted him and his wife to quit their full-time corporate jobs and focus on their business.

Six years later, they had accumulated sufficient capital to purchase the flagship bakery in Blue Downs. The couple put all their energy into growing the business until a devastating fire in July last year saw them lose everything. They were forced to close the business while they waited for the insurance claim to be paid. "The fire made me think about retiring. But at heart, I'm a community man and I don't just give up. My 30 employees were depending on me," says Adams.

Prior to the unfortunate fire incident, he had approached the banks for a loan and various retail programmes for support. "That didn't work because the banks were wary of bad debts from our area, and the retailers I approached required that I purchase my own equipment," he says. With the insurance claim paid out, he was able to replace some of the damaged equipment and the rest was simply repaired.



Undeterred and unable to afford to remain out of business for any longer, they reopened the bakery in March this year, and slowly, customers returned.

Good news came in May when he was told he'd been selected to participate in Pick n Pay's spaza modernisation programme. This meant that the Adams' store would be modernised and equipped with new refrigeration and equipment, cutting-edge systems, and retailing techniques.



Nyanga spaza benefits from Pick n Pay modernisation programme

18 Dec 2017



New upgrades, new offerings

With their newly upgraded business, they will continue to offer their customers their established bakery offering and hot food deli section, but the 300m² store will now also include a new butchery and grocery offering. Services like money transfer, ticketing, airtime and data, bill payments, lottery tickets, and prepaid electricity have also been introduced to the store.

"The Pick n Pay team has given us incredible retail training and support. With the new systems and processes available to us, I can manage my stock better and no longer have to take an afternoon off to do weekly bulk shops. This will give me more time to focus on growing my business," says Armien.



Alan Winde, Western Cape minister of economic opportunities, says: “The first two spaza shops in the programme have already recorded huge successes as a result of the funding and the support they have been given and we wish Armien Adams every success in this venture. Mr Adams’ entrepreneurial spirit and his determination to make his business succeed have created 30 jobs in his community. With new product lines and services like money transfer, we hope to see his business go from strength to strength.”

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