

Global convenience retail franchise Circle K coming to SA

Convenience retail brand Circle K is expanding to South Africa, with the first store set to open in Gauteng this October.



Source: Circle K

Millat Convenience, a subsidiary of the Millat Group, has entered into a Master Licence Agreement with the Alimentation Couche-Tard Inc. subsidiary that will bring Circle K to South Africa. This agreement grants Millat the right to open and operate Circle K franchises throughout the country as the exclusive licensee.

Established in 1951 in Texas, USA, Circle K was acquired in 2003 by Couche-Tard, a prominent convenience store operator headquartered in Laval, Canada. With Circle K as its global brand, Couche-Tard's network today consists of nearly 14,100 locations across 24 countries and territories, including approximately 1,900 franchise locations in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Oceania.



Hakki Aldulene (Circle K franchise business consultant), Hamza Farooqui (Millat Group CEO) and Jeff Calvillo (Circle K head of operations,

Circle K offers fresh food, hot and cold beverages and other convenience products, as well as fuel, car wash and, in a growing number of locations, electric vehicle charging.

Laying the groundwork for entry

Hamza Farooqui, CEO of Millat Group, said his company has worked extensively over the past year to lay the foundation for Circle K's introduction to the South Africa market: "This deal shows Millat's strength in bringing willing international brands into South Africa to invest, creating job opportunities and economic growth."

"Bringing Circle K to South Africa aligns with our concept of introducing customer-centric brands, experiences, and compelling food service offerings. This further speaks to our strategy to play within the leisure, hospitality, food service and convenience segments."

Farooqui added: "As a brand, Circle K is an acknowledged leader in the convenience retail sector, and this deal will allow for disruption in this space as we are a company with extensive expertise in every facet of convenience and retail. We are currently engaging oil majors and property management companies in South Africa to ensure that we have a strong base to begin Circle K's presence in the coming weeks."



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Pat Fitzpatrick, vice president of global franchise for Circle K, said South Africa presents Circle K with compelling opportunities for growth as the brand continues to expand in markets around the world: "We are always exploring opportunities to bring Circle K to new customers with franchise partners who understand how to build brands in their markets."

"Millat Group understands the South African consumer, has a strong track record of building retail, hospitality and food service brands in that country and has exciting plans for the Circle K brand. We are very pleased to be working with them to bring to life our mission to make our customers' lives a little easier every day."