
WHSmith launches new store format under Smith's Kitchen brand



WHSmith, the global travel retailer, has today launched Smith's Kitchen – a brand-new store format from its UK Travel business.

Offering a wide selection of delicious dine in and takeaway choices for customers, Smith's Kitchen is the first own-brand café format opened by the retailer, and the latest major food and drink launch this year, as WHSmith expands its offer for customers and partners.

The first Smith's Kitchen officially opened today in Princess Anne Hospital, Southampton, with a 26 seat, 495 sq ft café. The café menu has been designed for hospital customers including NHS staff, patients and visitors, and includes must-haves such as delicious coffee sourced from a local roastery, and hot breakfast choices, including patisserie freshly baked in-store.

Alongside the café, Smith's Kitchen also offers the recently launched Smith's Family Kitchen food range comprising more than 30 quality products from sandwiches to salads to baguettes and wraps. Developed based on feedback from over one thousand customers, the Smith's Family Kitchen range has performed ahead of expectations, with over 420,000 of the bestselling BLT sandwich sold since launch earlier this year.

Andrew Harrison, UK Travel Managing Director, WHSmith commented: "Whether it's in a hospital or on their journeys, customers tell us that quality food and drink options are what they prioritise most in the different locations we serve. That's why we have been doubling down on our food ranges and formats to ensure our customers don't need to compromise on quality or value, as demonstrated today with the launch of Smith's Kitchen. With the opening of our first ever own-brand café coming hot on the heels of our newly launched own-brand food range, this shows the pace of innovation across our business and commitment to delivering quality experiences and products at WHSmith for our customers and partners."



UK Travel is the largest division in WHSmith operating 590 stores across the UK in airports, hospitals and railway stations. With passenger numbers increasing, the business is focused on becoming a one-stop-shop for travel essentials. Food to go and meal deals are one of the key reasons customers shop with WHSmith, with over 11 million meal deals made from over 900,000 product combinations sold by the retailer each year. The Smith's Kitchen opening in Princess Anne Hospital is the first time WHSmith's own-brand store and food to go range has been brought together under one roof, with plans for the combined offer to roll out across more travel locations in the UK in the near future.

WHSmith's hospital offer is one of the fastest growing areas of its UK Travel business, operating over 140 stores and franchises in hospitals across the UK, with four new locations opened in the past eight weeks alone. The retailer has outlined that it sees opportunities ahead for at least one of its formats to extend into up to a further 200 hospitals.

Matthew Hine commercial and enterprise development manager, University Hospital Southampton commented: "UHS is delighted to have secured a long-standing partnership with WHSmith and is proud to welcome Smith's Kitchen to our Princess Anne Hospital site where the team will be providing a new café and retail offer that can be enjoyed by patients, staff and visitors."

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About WHSmith

WHSmith is a leading global retailer in news, books and convenience for the world's travelling customer. With more than 1,700 stores across more than 30 countries worldwide, WHSmith offer customers a wide range of books, newspapers & magazines, travel and digital accessories and food and drink. The Company has a growing international business with over 600 stores primarily across the world's leading airports. In November 2018, WHSmith acquired InMotion, a leading global technology retailer in US airports, now operating over 120 stores, including stores in the UK, Spain and Australia. In December 2019, WHSmith acquired Marshall Retail Group, a leading and fast-growing US travel retailer with over 170 stores.