

When Food Meets Fashion

A market-style gourmet food hall debuts in Switzerland's upscale Jelmoli department store.

By John Ryan, European Editor

High-end fashion has been having something of an extended moment in Europe for the last few years as hordes of designers and brands open new stores. Alongside this has been the inexorable rise of gourmet food, as those who want to look good seek stores that will enable them to buy fashion and demand the best that money can buy for the table as well.



Top Sleek, highly polished eat-over counters invite shoppers to take a break from perusing the upscale food and wine selections at the Jelmoni food hall.

Above Strategic visual merchandising is key to conveying value for the store's offerings, with a focus on lifestyle.

A prime example of this is Zurich's Jelmoni. Founded in 1833, the city's largest premium department store is located in the heart of one of the world's most expensive cities. It recently opened a 21,530-square-foot food space that has both the look and feel of a market hall, which in this region of central Europe is a standard feature in department stores.

Bernhard Heiden, creative director at Interstore, the Zurich-based consultancy that worked on the project, says, "We were asked to create a vibrant, living food environment, which would also reflect the DNA of the department store. It was important that it should really become a Jelmoni Food Market in terms of design and having a link to rest of the store."

This has been achieved through the upscale look and feel of the food hall and in keeping with the rest of the store. Heiden adds: "The second point was to create a market – an architectural concept that would have a place for different companies, specialists in each food segment."



The wine and spirits department provides customers a bright, open and inviting space to relax and socialize.

Practically, this mandate translated to a food hall of clearly defined product areas, just like any grocery store. LEDs mimic daylight, according to Heiden, and allow for highlighted promotional areas. They're also used in the chilling units, ensuring focus on the product, not the equipment that houses it.

The design was undertaken in stages, with Heiden and team consulting with food specialists who lobbied to be part of the new space. Overall

control of the design process remained in Jelmoni and Interstore's hands, however. Finally, the store was "art directed" by Interstore. The outcome is a substantial shop-in-shop that is as big as many stand-alone supermarkets.

Among other things, the new market features the "Käse Humidor" – a cheese humidor, Switzerland's first – cooling cases which look like tables but where the 'tech' part of the operation is concealed, with



multiple places for shoppers to eat. In addition to eat-over casual dining counters there are the Market Grill restaurant; Nippon Food, featuring sushi and sashimi; a frozen yogurt station; as well as a wine department from Swiss brand Mövenpick.

Heiden reports that the food hall is performing ahead of expectations, and Jelmoli should now focus on fostering an impression of product abundance, displaying more stock and supported by savvy visual merchandising. Meanwhile, high fashion and food is a beguiling combination that looks set to continue to be flavor of the month, year and probably years to come. ▴

PROJECT SUPPLIERS

RETAILER

Jelmoli, Zurich

DESIGN

Interstore Design, Zurich

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Schweitzer Group, Naturns, Italy

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