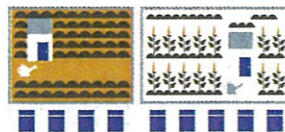




**Thinking above the box**  
BrightFarms in New York is working with supermarkets to design and build farms on rooftops. Growing locally cuts transport costs and pollution.



## WAITROSE UK

**A supermarket that's profiting from the bankers without forgetting the mummies**

Early this autumn the British supermarket chain known most for its yummy mummy-ness launched an innovative new store in Canary Wharf – the haven of bankers, hardly the most trolley-friendly of folk. This Waitrose flagship, 6,900 sq m of some of London's most expensive real estate, is also proving to be a housewives' favourite and Waitrose's most profitable store.

The new "Waitrose Food, Fashion & Home" is a £15m (£17m) refit of a branch that first opened in 2002. Corporate HQs nearby include Barclays. The footfall at Waitrose is not only

high, but premium, hence the £700 bottles of Chateau Lafite Rothschild in the wine section and the oyster bar. Unusually, men make up 51 per cent of the customer base at this branch and an average lunchtime sees 4,000 customers in the peak period, the vast majority in collar and cuffs. The front area is therefore designed in an arc along which customers travel seamlessly from sandwiches to takeaway curries to drinks to self-service checkout, making a time-efficient visit for the BLT-buying banker.

Upstairs, on the floors devoted to homeware and fashion, the merchandise is skewed to the Canary Wharf consumer. There's plenty of sportswear – there's a huge gym next door – and a big push on gifts, including leaving treats and anniversary prezies aimed at the absent-minded husband. Crucially, Waitrose hasn't alienated the local consumer base, including residents. "The more people that engage with us," says Diana Hunter, Waitrose's director of store development, "the happier I am." — TM  
[waitrose.com](http://waitrose.com)

**MONOCLE COMMENT:** *While the British often complain about the spread of the supermarket chains, everyone seems to be happy when a Waitrose opens. And it's a company that treats its staff well too.*

### Why it works:

#### A place to linger

A wine bar with corkage fee, espresso bar and cosy café upstairs allow you to stay long after you've got your groceries.

#### Join the fast lane

Those wanting to grab a quick sandwich can do so almost entirely separately from those doing their weekly shop.

#### Signage

As good as any airport, navigating around the store is straightforward.

#### Customising

The store is tailor-made to the exact needs of the local clientele.

#### Knowing the formula

It still provides what Waitrose is known for – top-quality food.



## SCHWEITZER Italy

**The past master at designing the physical (and psychological) structures of food retail**

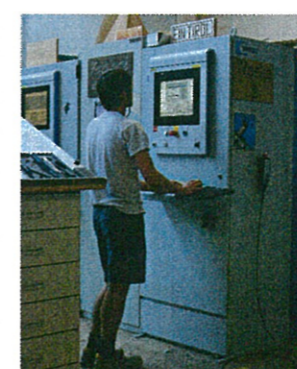
Lined with apple orchards and farms perched above in verdant Alpine meadows, Venosta Valley in Italy's South Tyrol is a world away from suburban big-box supermarkets and city convenience stores that are the final destination for the area's produce. Yet nestled on the valley floor in the sleepy town of Naturno sits the headquarters of one of the most influential players in food retailing. Only its name is one you'll never see while browsing the aisles for groceries. And that's exactly the point.

"In our field, it's the products that need to be the hero," says Bernhard Schweitzer, owner of Schweitzer Project, a family business started by his grandfather in 1927 that specialised in selling refrigerators and meat counters to local butchers and delis. Impressed with their functionality, merchants soon started asking for shelving and other displays.

In 1987, Bernhard's father took things a step further by setting up Interstore Design, a consultancy that works with supermarkets to design and build retail interiors. Today, the company's expertise in improving traffic flow in stores, along with its well-made shop furniture, graphic design and lighting solutions, has propelled its annual revenues above €100m. Its client portfolio is an enviable list of brands ranging from Switzerland's Migros to upmarket British chain Waitrose.

Much of the company's success stems from its ability to lay out a floor plan for the public that keeps people relaxed and in a buying mood. Taking a blank piece of paper, Schweitzer quickly sketches a floor plan similar to a newly opened sales point they designed for Waitrose in London's Canary Wharf (page 91). In place of a standard grid, his team came up with a loop layout that replicates a racetrack so shoppers move through the aisles in a snakelike course that gives them a chance to better see items stocked along the perimeter walls. "We created diverse loops for people to choose. Nowadays, nobody wants to be forced through a maze like at IKEA."

For a new 6,000 sq m hypermarket on the outskirts of Düsseldorf for German supermarket chain Edeka (see Zurheide, page 92), walls were coloured-coded and highlighted with simple suggestive titles such as "taste", "sniff", "smell". Food preparation, including staff making fresh pasta, was presented up front at the counter next to the deli and food stations (sushi bar, grill) were interspersed to allow customers to try food or wine on the spot. The final result was remarkable according to Schweitzer. "People came from up to 60km away to try it. Some clients spent up to three hours shopping." — IC  
[schweitzerproject.com](http://schweitzerproject.com)



## ZURHEIDE Germany

**A supermarket where Kobe beef and gourmet dining have added to a winning formula**

Located in and around Essen since 1997, Edeka Frischecenter Zurheide has made a splash in Germany's supermarket world with oversized destination supermarkets run by the Zurheide family (father Heinz, along with sons Rüdiger and Marco, control the business under the German supermarket franchise Edeka).

In seven locations scattered throughout the traditionally industrial Ruhr region, the Zurheide stores offer shoppers an impressive mix: low-price staples such as house-brand milk are just as important as high-end gourmet fare like Kobe beef. And every corner of the store seems made for comfort and convenience. The Zurheide Feine Kost branch in Düsseldorf, which opened in 2009, won the designation of German Supermarket of the Year in 2011.

Some of the ideas – such as the in-house bistros and an island layout – are definitely borrowed, but Zurheide's remix is unique in a country still dominated by cramped, unattractive discount supermarket chains. "Germany has a very conservative business culture, but German food entrepreneurs are finally catching on that when it comes to food, if you give people what they want, they'll pay for it," says business journalist Andrew Bulkeley. "And feinkost – delicatessen fare – is part of German culture. Upscale supermarkets like Zurheide are starting to get some of the market share back from that."

"We looked all over the world to see how we'd develop this supermarket," says Rüdiger Zurheide. "We thought of how people want to shop now and where they'd shop in 10 years." — KB  
[frischecenter-zurheide.de](http://frischecenter-zurheide.de)