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■ **Kildare Village:** attracting over 2.5 million per annum

Le Pain Quotidien for Kildare Village

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The global restaurant and bakery chain Le Pain Quotidien is to step up competition in the Irish food market by opening up a number of new outlets in the coming months. The first store will be at Kildare Village and it will be quickly followed by another at a prominent south Dublin location.

Le Pain Quotidien will trade out of 480sq m (5,166sq ft) over two floors alongside about 35 new shops planned for the luxury outlet centre in Kildare. The €50 million 5,544sq m (60,000sq ft) expansion will significantly increase the number of high-end fashion stores in the Village to around 100. It will also create 400 new jobs, bringing the overall employment to 1,000.

Locals have been pleasantly surprised how the Village has become a unique retail tourism destination, attracting over 2.5 million guests per annum with significant growth in long haul travellers from China, the Middle East and the US.

Le Pain Quotidien has more than 250 outlets across 19 countries with a presence in New York, Mexico City and Paris. The upmarket café and bakery, known for its communal tables and sourdough bread, was founded 25 years ago by the Belgian food entrepreneur Alain Coumont. In London it has 25 sites, its newest in the prosperous Fulham area where it is expanding beyond the typical breakfast and lunch menus to offer new dinner options alongside evening entertainment.

The fashion giant Armani is taking a large chunk of the new

space in the Village, 380sq m (4,090sq ft) to display a wide range of fashion goods for women and men.

Another arrival is Under Armour which last year overtook Adidas as the second biggest sports brand in the US behind Nike.

Also testing the Irish market for the first time is Kipling, the Belgian fashion traders specialising in bags, watches and accessories.

The new line-up will also include the US-based Fossil Group which designs and manufactures clothing and accessories, primarily watches and jewellery.

Other new names in the Village will be Musto which specialises in clothing for sailing, equestrian and outdoor sports; Swarovski, the Austrian producer of jewellery and sparkling crystals; Aquascutum,

the UK-based luxury clothing manufacturer; Folli Follie, the Greek jeweller; Lily O'Brien, the Irish chocolate manufacturer; Watch Station, the watch designer; Napapijri, the European casualwear manufacturer; Falke, who specialise in socks and hosiery products; and Timberland, the footwear manufacturer.

It is estimated that around 60 per cent of the existing traders opened their first stand alone stores in Kildare Village and most of them went on to repeat the exercise in other towns and cities. Base rents in Kildare generally work out at around €861 per sq m (€80 per sq ft) with a top up payment of 12.5 per cent on the overall turnover. Innovative services at the Village include Hands-free Shopping, style consultancy, Shopping Express®, and Valet Parking.