



CÉSAR RANGEL

The complex of La Roca del Valles faces a new stage after the remodelling and expansion carried out

La Roca Village expands with 18 new stores

Retail complex
La Roca Village invests €50 million in new boutiques dedicated to national and international brands, plus an 850-space car park

PALOMA ARENÓS
La Roca del Vallès

A complete sensory experience that's so much more than shopping. That's what La Roca Village has in store following a revamp of its southern section. Operating company Value Retail Spain has invested €50 million (plus a further €7 million in indirect investment) in 18 new boutiques, ready to showcase some of the most covetable national and international brands. There's also a brand-new underground car park with space for 850 vehicles, swathed in greenery and designed to let natural light flood in – all part of a commitment to sustainable urban development. The project has been built to achieve BREEAM Excellent Certification, an international standard developed by British organisation BRE Global, which measures the environmental sustainability of buildings. As part of these efforts, features such as solar panels, rainwater harvesting, electric vehicle charging points and drip irrigation systems have been installed.

Michael Goldenberg, Managing Director of Value Retail Spain, is delighted to be sharing "some good news at such a difficult time": between successive rounds of restrictions, La Roca Village remained shuttered for a total of 184 days over the course of 2020 and early 2021. "We're not a shopping centre. With all our safety measures and exhaustive testing, it's hard to understand why we are not treated like any other open-air shopping street. It is like a village here," argues Goldenberg, against the backdrop of an ongoing local lockdown.

The investment in La Roca Village represents "a clear vote of confidence in Catalonia's economic future. Top international



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Missoni opens its first store in Catalonia at La Roca Village

labels like Missoni – making its début in the Catalan market – and Brunello Cucinelli are launching new boutiques despite current challenges, while others, such as Moncler and Rituals, are set to double their retail space. Clearly, they have every faith that Barcelona and Catalonia will soon bounce back as world-class tourist destinations," Goldenberg says. The comprehensive remodel will create more than 170 new jobs on top of the existing 1,800. "It's a perfect example of our commitment to the region. We're looking to the future, just as we have done since we opened 23 years ago," he concludes. Wandering around its newest section, we spot a square studded with palm trees that acts as a focal point, while also providing access to the underground car park. A contemporary take on Barcelona's Pati dels Tarongers, it's already been nicknamed "the secret garden." The car park has been designed for maximum sunlight and fresh air, creating a sense of continuity between upper and lower levels. An expansive, open-air plaza runs its entire length, while five exterior central

courtyards establish a visual connection with each level. Architecture studio L35 took inspiration from "the classic Catalan repertoire, drawing on artisanal techniques to create a contemporary reimagining of wrought iron features, mosaics and natural stone, all crafted by skilled Catalan specialists," explains Elena Foguet, Business Director at Value Retail Spain. She highlights the emotional experience that La Roca Village seeks to offer its premium customers, with image consultants on hand and opportunities for "virtual shopping: a new, more personalised way to shop that has been very well received."

The Village is committed to taking exceptional care of brands as well as visitors: the new Brands & Partners Event Space, for example, offers a 260 m2 venue with capacity for one hundred-odd guests, ideal for social and cultural events or brand presentations. The Village has also added a brand incubator space, which aims to help both established and up-and-coming brands to develop their business strategies and grow.