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SUNRIDGE SUPERSPAR, SUNRIDGE VILLAGE SHOPPING CENTRE, KRAGGA KAMMA, PORT ELIZABETH

New GM at Baywest Mall

South African expatriate Troy Zuncel has returned to the country to head up Port Elizabeth's R2-billion Baywest Mall in April.

After more than a decade of international retail experience in Dubai, Zuncel is taking the reins from outgoing GM Sonja de Necker. The latter will be taking up a fresh retail

challenge in Lagos, Nigeria, at the end of February.

The Eastern Cape retail sector is set to benefit from key global insights through Zuncel, who has spent the last five years with the Al Futtaim Group in Dubai, occupying various GM roles within their retail division.

"My vision is to deliver a world-class shopping mall that is relevant and fully integrated with the communities and customers that surround it," Zuncel said.

Recently he headed up the Group's fashion division, which comprises international brands Guess, Esprit, F&F and Ted Baker (Europe), as well as Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The division currently is made up of over 90 stores in nine countries.

Zuncel cites working with the world's second biggest retailer, Tesco, to launch F&F across the Middle East as one of his career highlights to date.

"My team and I took the brand from a signed franchise agreement to 14 stores across four countries in less than a year," he said.

After starting out as a sales manager for a Stuttafords store in his hometown of Durban, Zuncel quickly proved his ability, rising through the ranks to become regional manager for Africa within five years.

He then moved to Dubai as retail operations manager for Home Centre before joining the Landmark Group as GM for its Babyshop business in the United Arab Emirates.

"My international perspective has given me a global perspective on the retail industry, which will enable me to share some of the world's best practices with Baywest Mall customers," said Zuncel.

The 44-year-old said another exciting aspect of his role will be helping to achieve the long-term vision for the Baywest City's mixed-use development that will be anchored on the success of the mall.

"The fact that Baywest is so new is exciting. I

Troy Zuncel
to take over
the reins at
Baywest Mall
in April



will have an opportunity to build on the solid foundations that exist today."

One of the biggest challenges facing shopping malls worldwide is the unification of bricks-and-mortar and online retail.

"Leading shopping malls around the Middle East are on their way to becoming true e-commerce participants, through increasingly sophisticated websites, onsite digital interfaces with consumers and mobile communication to shoppers within the mall and beyond its boundaries."

This, Zuncel said, is a real opportunity and he is delighted Baywest is positioning itself as a mall that is technologically advanced in the country.

Shoppers can already download and use the Baywest Mall app, which uses an integrated software platform and specialised beacon technology to locate special offers and sales specifically tailored to their interests as they move through the mall.

Zuncel, 44, was born and raised in KwaZulu-Natal and attended Kearsney College in Botha's Hill, said he looked forward to rejoin his family in Jeffreys Bay and Paradise Beach.



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