

Pizza giant set to make a crust out of Avion Centre development.

The latest brand to commit to retail space in Avion Centre is take-away giant Pizza Hut.

Part of Yum! Restaurants International (YRI), Pizza Hut has snapped up 90sqm of retail space in Gladstone's newest combination retail and medical facility, Avion Centre, which already boasts national retail brands SPAR, Liquorland and Network Video.

Co-Director of Merranda Pty Ltd (the development company behind Avion Centre), Mark Dindas, says that Pizza Hut was an ideal addition to the carefully selected Avion Centre retail tenant mix.

"We have been very careful in selecting and approaching the 'right mix' of businesses for the Centre, to ensure that each store benefits the others. Ideally, we hope that customers will come to Avion Centre for a DVD and then pop next door to SPAR or Pizza Hut for a bite to eat and then over to Liquorland for a bottle of wine all in the same visit. It just makes Avion Centre a truly convenient place to shop for locals in the area."

Pizza Hut's 90sqm store within the new Avion Centre will offer Pizza, new Tusacani pasta and tasty side items all hot-n-fast for pick up, delivery and eat-in-store. Pizza Hut invites expressions of interest from motivated entrepreneurs to be a part of the growth of both the historically successful Pizza Hut chain and the up-and-coming Avion Centre development by becoming Gladstone's Pizza Hut Franchisee. This great opportunity includes full training and support from departmental experts willing to help you drive your business, as well as the category dominating buying power of Yum! Restaurants International (YRI), offering substantial savings over the long term. Interested parties should apply online at www.pizzahut.com.au or call Craig Wiles 02 9930 3274.

Gladstone locals will be queuing up for more than just the usual 'two large Hawaiian, large Pepsi and garlic bread combo', with the very successful addition of the new Tuscani Pasta range to the existing Pizza Hut menu.

According to Pizza Hut CEO, Albert Baladi, the move towards a pizza and pasta mix marks a new era for the fast-food chain and the beginning of the brand's goal to regain market leadership.

"Pizza Hut has always been all about pizza and our much loved pizzas will remain on the menu. However we are the first national pizza chain to offer restaurant quality pasta at very affordable prices. We want to be as famous for our pasta as we are for pizza," Baladi said.

"2009 will be Pizza Hut's biggest marketing push this decade. With the addition of Tuscani Pastas, we aim to significantly increase our share of the pizza category," added Baladi.

And despite the harsh economic conditions, Pizza Hut's Marketing Director Angela Richards says the company is confident that the menu additions and other marketing initiatives will help attract both new and existing customers.

"We are mindful of the downturn, but in terms of retail spending, consumers at the moment are still buying from Pizza Hut – we've had the best start to a year we've had in seven years. It has become an affordable treat for them. Our customers' money has shifted from eating out to more affordable treats. We'll still continue to be part of their options to choose from. For right now, we can play a part during this value-conscious time."

With limited retail spaces left in Avion Centre, interested parties are invited to inspect the plan and obtain leasing details urgently. Contact Mark Dindas from Merranda on (07) 3217 4199 or visit www.merranda.com.au.