

Burger King opens first SA store

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US fast food franchise Burger King opened its first SA store at midday on Thursday, 9 May 2013, in the centre of Cape Town to the blare of DJs, music and no speeches.



Burger King will be competing head on with its international rival McDonalds, which has been in SA since 1995, and a plethora of locally owned fast food chains such as Nandos and Steers.

JSE-listed Grand Parade Investments (GPL) owns 8% of the Burger King franchise with the US company holding the remainder.

Grand Parade Investments chairman Hassan Adams said the Burger King stores will be company owned as it develops its distribution network and trains staff to operate in the US company culture.

"Burger King burgers are made exactly the same way around the world and we have to ensure that the quality is absolutely consistent in every new store," he said.

Burger King SA chief executive Jaye Sinclair said the company had opened a centre that will train groups of 100 people at a time on how to operate a store.

"What we are doing is creating a career path for people. We want to train them from how to cook a burger to eventually managing a store," he said.

Sinclair said anyone of any age could apply to work at Burger King.

"As long as they are 18 or older. The eldest person is 55-years," he said.

The store is located in Herengracht Square, one block away from the Cape Town International Convention Centre where the World Economic Forum on Africa is underway with various government and business heavyweights giving speeches

about Africa's economy and how to uplift the continent.

But the crowd of an estimated 2,000 people at Burger King appeared to be either totally unaware of the economic conference or expressed disregard for it.

"I don't care what they are saying there (World Economic Forum) ... at least here I stand a chance to get a burger and maybe I can get a job application," one member of the crowd said.

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