

Cascais Kitchen, the new disrupting wave of food courts



CascaShopping



3846 parking spaces



Cascais, Portugal



Market Intelligence, Development Services & Property Management



73,365 m²



Food courts; consumer experience; design concept.



198 shops

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- In **CascaShopping**, an adjacent area of the food court was underutilized and underperforming with some outdated restaurants.
- After MyCourt study, developed by Market Intelligence department, the Development Services team has decided to implement a pilot solution in this area of the shopping centre, a new concept, a new design and a new way to enjoy and spend time in a food court area.
- Inspired in traditional markets, **Cascais Kitchen** is a new and inspiring place, marked by its singularity and dynamic approach, responding to the new consumer trends identified by MyCourt research.

SOLUTION

- Development Services team implemented an innovative and disruptive food court space with a casual atmosphere for families and friends to meet, eat and have pleasant and entertaining time.
- Intimate and cosy, **Cascais Kitchen** is also marked by its diversity and versatility using different elements, materials and settings allowing this multifunctional space to blend work, relaxation and different food concepts.

KEY NUMBERS

350
seats

↑ 3%
visitor's traffic

↑ 16%
food court spending
per visitor

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CASCAIS
Kitchen

CascaiShopping



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Abstract

The link between shopping and eating is stronger than ever and the trend toward eating out and for novel culinary experiences is a significant growth opportunity for Sonae Sierra, its tenants, investors, visitors and consumers.

Keen to tap into this growing market and to be at the forefront of new retail concepts, Sonae Sierra's Development Services team developed a bold blueprint for the next generation of food courts. The concept, inspired by the latest food trends and its growing potential, emerged from "My Court" study carried out by the Market Intelligence team of experts.

From concept to completion, Sonae Sierra transformed a low performance section of CascaiShopping into an exciting new food hall festooned with a diverse mix of highly original eateries and interiors. Unique and ever-changing, Cascais Kitchen has become the 'go to' place within the centre for people to gather, discover new cuisine, explore food demonstrations, or simply to relax and hang out.

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The success of **Cascais Kitchen**, with its positive effect on the consumer experience, publicity, visitor traffic and food revenues, underscores the concept's potential to add real value to shopping centre owners, as well as tenants and consumers.

By pioneering new and unique concepts like this, the Development Services team has laid the groundwork and developed the know-how needed to successfully revolutionise food halls. This willingness to innovate and experiment is just one of the many reasons why Sonae Sierra is a partner of choice in retail real estate.

Introduction

Food is more fashionable than ever. Consumer spending on eating out is sky-rocketing, even in mature markets, and is anticipated to grow for the foreseeable future. Across Europe, food and beverage retailers typically account for 15% of the total GLA of shopping centres, and are likely to reach at least 20% by 2025¹.

This represents a huge growth opportunity for our investors and our clients. Research shows that customers who eat during a shopping trip make 25% more transactions; spend 12% more and stay 35 minutes longer in a shopping centre compared to shoppers who don't dine². Other studies show that for many consumers the food offer is a key consideration when deciding where to shop³, and far more people now visit shopping centres purely to eat or drink⁴. Additionally, according to "MyCourt" study, 66% of people that visit our shopping centres also visit the food court; and the Food and Beverage area represent 22,3% above overall shopping centre sales €/m², which reinforces the growing potential of this areas.

Keen to explore the new trends and evolution of food and beverage, Sonae Sierra's Market Intelligence team carried out research of its own, the "MyCourt" study. This study has come to the realization that it's in the combination between people and tenants that lies an opportunity: A new space, where people and brands get together, attracted by different

reasons to do so. This approach will increase share of time, share of wallet and share of heart, making the food court a new anchor and the heart of the shopping centre.

Armed with this research, Sonae Sierra brought to live the next generation of food courts, bringing the traditional food court in tune with current trends.

Background

Cascais Shopping was the first major shopping centre in Portugal, and the first developed by Sonae Sierra in 1991. With around 73.000 m² of gross leasable area, the centre has seen several expansions and renovations throughout its life.

Food has always been a strong component of the centre's mix where around 40% of visitors use the existing food court. Despite this, a small area adjacent to the food court was one of the most underutilised spots in the centre. Home to a couple of ailing, out-dated restaurants, this was the perfect location to pilot a new food and beverage offer, and implement Sonae Sierra's pioneering vision and design.



Cascais Kitchen entry

¹ ICSC, 2017. The Successful Integration of Food & Beverage Within Retail Real Estate

² Coniq (2017). Importance of F&B to Malls in the Spotlight

³ CBRE (2015). Food & Beverage in a Shopping Center

⁴ ECE (2016). Destination Food - Food & Beverages in Shopping Centers

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Challenge

Besides generating a constant flow of visitors and sales to a quiet corner of the centre, this project needed to strengthen and differentiate the food and beverage offer, enrich the customer experience and increase the destination's appeal and profitability.

This was no ordinary renovation. It involved transforming a plain, featureless space into a distinctive and multiuse new venue accommodating dynamic eateries, settings and experiences including cooking shows and events.

Although 'market-come-restaurant' concepts such as Eataly were gaining momentum, formats like this were still new, especially in a shopping centre setting, and Sonae Sierra's willingness to innovate and think out of the box was vitally important.

Solution

Given the growing appetite for new food and dining experiences worldwide and inspired by "MyCourt" key findings and ideas, the Development services team was able to design and implement the concept of the food courts of the future.

Cascais Kitchen was the pilot project for the next generation food court concept, inspired by traditional food markets in Germany, The Netherlands and Austria while creating a truly compelling example of a multi-functional space which successfully blends work, relaxation, entertainment and world food.

Unlike big food halls, Cascais Kitchen is designed to make what is, in fact a large space feel intimate and cosy. Avoiding formality while adding diversity and versatility, the new space incorporates a variety of elements and materials, allowing for different zones and a choice of settings.

Upending convention at every turn, instead of the ubiquitous and uniform seating arrangements typical of traditional food courts, Sonae Sierra chose a mix of bench-style seating, bar tables and rustic dining tables which add a touch of individuality and a casual atmosphere.

But it is the fusion of this unique, innovative design together with the new and exciting retail offers that really set this space apart from other food courts. The remodelled and reconfigured area allows for an exciting and dynamic mix of much smaller artisanal stalls, counters and eateries who can road test new taste sensations, trends and even cooking demonstrations on real customers. And with Sonae Sierra's successful leasing strategy the entire scheme was pre-let to sought-after vendors long before the construction was even complete.



Cascais Kitchen



Cascais Kitchen before and after the conversion

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Conclusion

Offering consumers, a truly immersive and engaging experience, **Cascais Kitchen** is a setting for cookery workshops, shows and other events. And as a meeting place, a dining venue and a food market all wrapped into one unique space, it offers the consumer a genuinely different experience.

The new food market includes eight different food stalls where people can sample new fare from local food legends and unique cuisines from all over the world. With more than 350 seats and a dedicated children's area, **Cascais Kitchen** offers an attractive and inviting casual dining venue for families and friends to meet, eat, and linger.

The project has proven to be successful, positively affecting visitor traffic (up 3%) and food court spending (up around 16% per visitor) when compared to the previous period. But even more exciting, it has generated fantastic publicity and has bolstered the centre's reputation as not only a wonderful place to shop but as a fabulous dining and leisure destination, too.

The success of **Cascais Kitchen** demonstrates how innovative concepts that harness new trends can help to differentiate shopping centres and retail destinations. This new concept of food court is already being rolled out by Sonae Sierra at other assets and projects to deliver value for visitors, tenants and asset owners alike.

Integrated solutions

