



VIA Outlets reports encouraging brand sales and footfall figures as European portfolio reopens post Covid-19

15 June, 2020 – VIA Outlets – Europe’s fastest growing owner-operator of premium fashion outlet destinations – has, as of today, with Freeport Lisboa Fashion Outlet being the last one in line, reopened all closed and semi-closed centres in its eleven-strong portfolio. While the company was advised to temporarily close the majority of its outlets by local authorities in March and April in the wake of Covid-19, three were able to remain open throughout.

Trading performance after reopening has been encouraging across both brand sales and, where there are no government-imposed caps on visitors, footfall. In most centres, sales per visitor (SPV) increased considerably versus the same period last year. This is explained by an increased demand for shopping after an extended period of not being able to visit physical stores, and a commitment amongst shoppers to travel to safe retail destinations where social distancing is more straightforward.

VIA Outlets developed its protocol for safe shopping in accordance with the latest advice from local governments and health authorities to ensure the safety and wellbeing of guests and staff. Alongside measures to encourage social distancing, the protocol includes actions such as reinforced hygiene and sanitary advice for guests, the addition of sanitising stations throughout the centres and inside stores, systems for crowd and queue management and increased frequency of cleaning of public areas.

Otto Ambagtsheer, Chief Executive Officer, commented: “After what has been a difficult time for the entire industry, we are finally seeing the light at the end of the tunnel and it feels great to have every one of our centres open and trading again. We look forward to making up for lost time and are delighted to see that the appetite for physical, outlet shopping in a safe environment is stronger than ever – and with both sales and footfall figures surpassing last year’s numbers in several centres, it is a clear sign that shoppers have truly missed the experience of visiting our centres and the brands in our portfolio.”



Following this extended period of lockdown across Europe, many retailers have large amounts of excess stock. VIA Outlets is actively working with its brand partners to find solutions for stock management including offering additional space in centres where they have a presence, either on a temporary or permanent basis, or pop-up stores in new centres, which also gives retailers the opportunity to trial their offer in new markets.

VIA Outlets was instructed to close eight of its eleven centres in March as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, but was able to reopen some centres from the end of April, starting with with Zweibrücken Fashion Outlet near Frankfurt, Fashion Arena Prague Outlet, Wrocław Fashion Outlet in Poland and Landquart Fashion Outlet in Switzerland. The two centres located in Spain – Sevilla Fashion Outlet and Mallorca Fashion Outlet – reopened on 25 May and Vila Do Conde Porto Fashion Outlet, the first of the Portuguese centres, a week later. As the last centre to reopen, Freeport Lisboa Fashion Outlet is open for trading as of today. Batavia Stad Fashion Outlet near Amsterdam, Oslo Fashion Outlet and Hede Fashion Outlet in Gothenburg remained open throughout this period.

Ends
