

A new megastore opens in Lisbon: a historical building in the cultural heart of the city houses Benetton's apparel lines and Fabrica's multimedia projects
BENETTON IN LISBON

UNITED COLORS
OF BENETTON.

Lisbon, 18th December 2001. Following in Pessoa's poetic footsteps, Benetton opens a new megastore in Lisbon on Chiado hill the city's ancient cultural and commercial district. With almost 2,000m² the store occupies five floors of a magnificent building in Rua Garret on the corner of the famous Praça de Chiado, formerly the site of the Ramiro Leao store which for years was one of the Portuguese capital's most popular retail outlets for textiles and fabrics. As a tribute to the area's cultural history, the building houses not only the full range of United Colors of Benetton collections but also the second location of *Fabrica Features*, a space devoted to creativity and communication. It is part of a network (following Bologna) reaching out from the Treviso headquarters of Fabrica (Benetton's communication research centre) around the world, creating a meeting place where different cultures and traditions may meet and mix.

The building's facade has been fully restored to its former splendour and the building itself houses a number of important works of art that have been carefully restored and left in place, such as the beautiful lift, thought to be the oldest in Europe, and a number of paintings by celebrated Portuguese artist Joao Vaz.

The bright, luminous interior, dominated by white to highlight the clothes' chromatic variety, houses United Colors of Benetton's collections for women, men and accessories. The ground floor is given over to women's collections, while the first floor is divided between women's collections and accessories. Denim lines are on the second floor, and the increasingly comprehensive range of the men's collection is to be found on the third floor. The fifth floor and the roof space are reserved for future developments and showrooms, respectively.

The fourth floor, the venue for *Fabrica Features*, is a multiethnic, multimedia and multipurpose cultural space administered in collaboration with *Experimenta*, the biennial design show whose experience is very close both to *Fabrica's* character and ideas and to the most exciting new cultural developments in Lisbon.

Fabrica Features is divided into two areas. One area will be the venue for a vast programme of events (exhibitions, concerts, video projections, artistic performances, lectures, personal shows, workshops) aimed at drawing people together. The agenda opens with *Editorials*, a retrospective of pictures produced by *Fabrica* for Italy's major publications; a review of visual opinions, an acute commentary on news or general topics, which trace a picture of our recent history.

Fabrica Features' second area will host the various cultural "products" that characterise modern life. Alongside Fabrica's artistic output this area will also display cds, books, videos, design objects and clothing from around the world, creating a modern art gallery. This gallery, however, is not intended to be merely the object of contemplation but an installation that can actually be used and enjoyed by visitors.

The opening of the Lisbon megastore comes under the development programme that is creating a vast network of the Benetton image in leading shopping streets of the world's capitals. The megastores, including those directly-managed, are the Group's response to an increasingly competitive market where customers already have everything they need and have to be tempted by design, atmosphere and by the quality of in-store customer services, satisfying even their unspoken or unconscious desires. A new Group-owned megastore - occupying over 2,000 m² over three floors - will be opened in Portugal at the beginning of 2002, in Oporto. New stores will also open in other major cities around the world including Moscow, Osaka, New York, Madrid and Barcelona.

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High-resolution images are available in the section:

Image Gallery – Stores – Portugal – Lisbon