

# ARI reopens stores at Dublin Airport with 'warm and safe' welcome



Executives including ARI CEO Ray Hernan and Paul Neeson, Director of Retail Ireland, celebrate the reopening at Dublin Airport

Aer Rianta International (ARI) reopened The Loop stores at Dublin Airport on June 29.

The stores had been closed since mid-March, when the government ordered the closure of all non-essential outlets to contain the spread of coronavirus.

ARI's stores at Cork, Muscat and Beirut will also reopen in the coming days.

In preparation for the Dublin Airport reopening, extensive consumer research was conducted in Ireland to understand customer expectations, motivations and barriers to airport shopping in a COVID-19 environment.

Findings were used to inform the customer journey, retail proposition, category, retail operation, staff training and marketing communication plans.

A wide range of measures have been taken to protect and enhance the health and safety of passengers and the ARI team. These measures have been communicated to customers online and on social media through video and written communications so that they can plan their airport shopping in advance.

The measures reflect Ireland's national COVID-19 guidelines, those issued by the European Aviation Safety Agency, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and the Duty Free World Council. They include:

- ARI strongly recommends that all passengers wear face masks or face coverings throughout their airport journey;
- Socially distanced and simplified queue management systems are in place, with floor graphics and signage visible throughout the stores;
- Cleaning processes have been enhanced including sanitizing of frequently touched products and surfaces. ARI will ask customers to request testers from team members, if they are required. It is requested that passengers limit unnecessary handling of products;
- Hand sanitizing units are located throughout the stores;
- Protective screens are in place at checkouts;
- Customers will now scan their own boarding cards at the checkout desk;
- Use of contactless payment is encouraged, with limits increased to €50 (US\$56) and the addition of Apple Pay.

Speaking about the reopening, Paul Neeson, Director of Retail Ireland, said: "Our retail teams have worked tirelessly with the wider airport teams in Dublin and Cork to prepare for today's reopening. There is genuine excitement to welcome our customers once again, but with an understanding that the warmest welcome is the safest welcome.

"All of our safety measures are in place and we have listened to customers in multiple focus groups about how they want to interact with our teams on our return. We have taken that feedback onboard and will reflect it in our engagement with customers.

"Our stores look great, and for many it will be their first opportunity to shop in our newly refurbished store in Terminal 2, Dublin."

He added: "We thank our brand partners for their ongoing support in delivering the widest range of brands in Ireland, a great experience in-store and even more value for our customers, both in-store and online."

Passengers can also choose to save time at the airport and shop online at ARI Ireland's award-winning website [www.theloop.ie](http://www.theloop.ie).

Using the Click & Collect convenience service, customers can shop online up to 90 days before they fly and collect their purchases in-store on departure or on arrival home.

ARI also has an exciting new omnichannel creative campaign to welcome customers back, heavily supported with category offers in-store and at [www.theloop.ie](http://www.theloop.ie).

Commenting on the reopening celebrations, Chief Executive Officer Ray Hernan said: "We are delighted to see our Dublin stores open again. Today's triumph, along with the reopening of Cork, Muscat and Beirut in the coming days, means we will reach a milestone in our recovery plan, with over half of our global network having resumed trading. We are making real progress. Whilst we are very focused on operational recovery and there remains much uncertainty, we are confident in our vision and our strategy for long-term growth."

Other stores currently open are at Bahrain International Airport, King Khalid International in Riyadh, Larnaca and Paphos in Cyprus and ARI's operation at Qatar.

ARI's global teams are sharing customer behavior learnings, best practices and innovative experiences across the group to enable delivery of the ultimate customer experience in this new world, the retailer said.