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International storewatch

External views of Leader Price with its welcoming entrance and ample parking.



## What the French compact discount store Leader Price brings to Italy

Competition in the crowded Italian discount food retail landscape has been amped up with the arrival last year of the Leader Price store concept from France. Owned by the Casino group of stores, the French retailer has made a deal with Italian group, Crai, to launch its typical compact-design stores in northern Italy, based around a distribution centre in Milan.

The French Leader Price group consists of 558 stores and is a well-established brand in the French market, as well as in some other Francophone areas around the world, as far as Morocco, Djibouti, Cameroon and Vanuatu. The French national colours of blue, white and red have been changed for Italy to green, white and red, to match the Italian flag.

Typically, Leader Price stores vary in size from 300m<sup>2</sup> to 1 100m<sup>2</sup>. They are economically built and stand alone with adequate parking. These are grouped into three categories for ranging purposes – 300 to 500m<sup>2</sup>, 500 to 800m<sup>2</sup> and 800 to 1100m<sup>2</sup>. The product range for the larger model consists of approximately 3 200 Sku's of which the majority will be of Italian origin and the balance imported from France.

There is a special focus on fresh produce accounting for up to 24% of sales. Eighty percent of the product range can be classified

as private or confined label.

The stores, which trade from 8.30am to 8pm daily, average four checkouts with scales and very little staff on the floor. The discount model with low overheads has worked well in France and should be able to take root in Italy where four stores were opened initially and a further 16 planned for 2018.

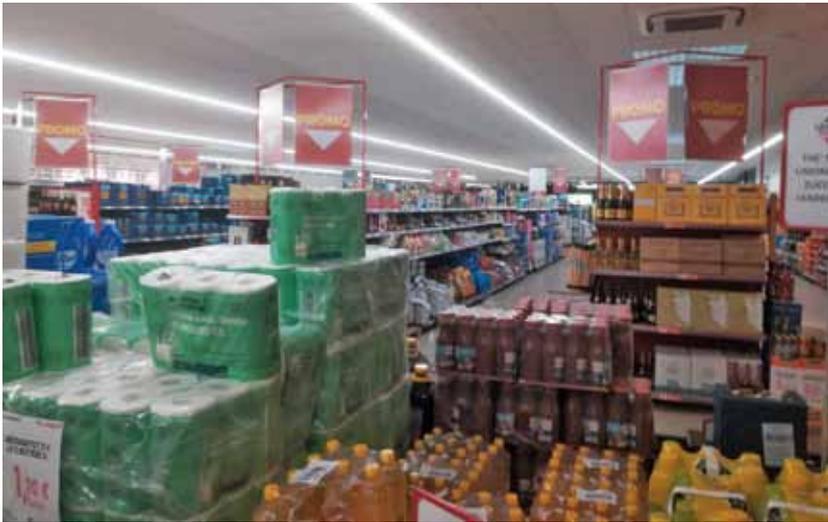
The store layout and décor are minimalist and clean and there is no clutter for the shopper. Fresh departments such as fresh meat, bakery, fish, produce and refrigerated

items are well sign-posted and the stock is pre-packed instead of being in serviced departments. Consumers can even find organic and natural products and the wine range is top-quality and well-priced.

Together with Aldi, Lidl, Penny and many others, the discount model is well established in Italy, but the intense competition is bound to produce some casualties in the future. Leader Price plans to be a survivor with the proposed opening of over 400 stores throughout the country.



The layout is clean and uncluttered and special areas such as the bakery are well sign-posted.



A bulk section is also available where shoppers can buy in case lots and/or shrink-wraps.



The Bio shelving stocks organic and natural products in low profile shelving. LED lighting is well positioned to highlight the products.



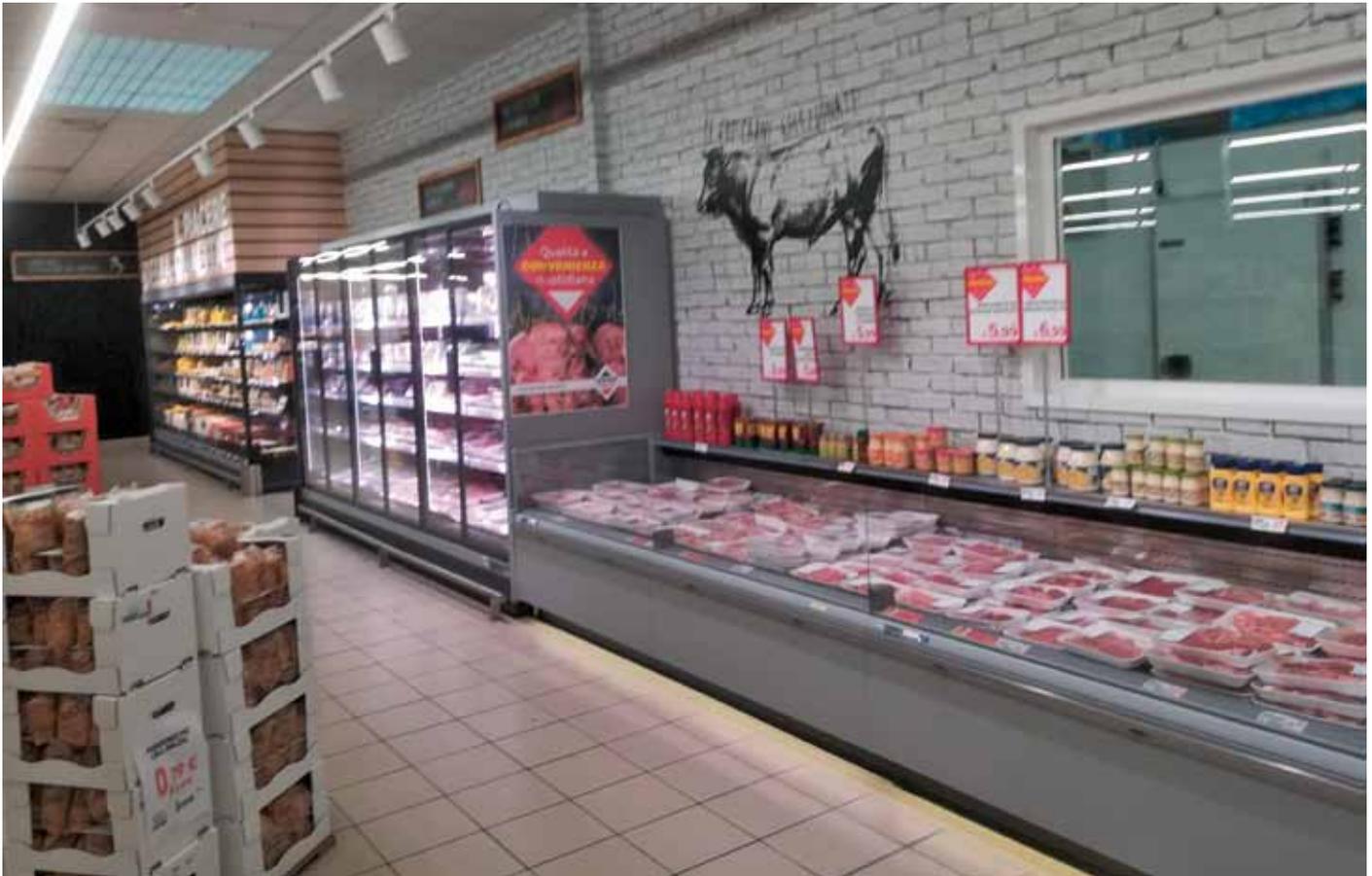
The wine section named "Our tradition in a bottle" stocks a complete range of quality wines suited to the Italian palate.



The prepacked fish section is small but adequately covers the needs of the clientele.



Posters advertise the store specials.



Energy efficient refrigeration is a hallmark of the store and all fresh areas are stocked with pre-packed products for self-service selection.

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