

Written by Johan Nylander

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STOCKHOLM: Sweden's strong economic performance and high purchasing power has made it an attractive location for international retail brands. A number of which have made the move to Stockholm.

Well-known brands such as Apple, Prada, Zara Home, Habitat, Michael Kors, Sephora, Stella McCartney and Picard have set up stores in Stockholm recently. Clothing retailer River Island plans to open one next year. In addition to that, US coffee giant Starbucks recently announced plans to expand in Stockholm and open its second café in the Swedish capital.

Karin Strassburg, business development manager of the retail sector at Stockholm Business Region Development, said there are a number of reasons retailers are choosing to open stores in Stockholm.

"Stockholmers are seen as trendy and early adopters," Strassburg said. "We also have a strong economy and strong purchasing power compared to other European countries. The city of Stockholm is also expanding with more and more people moving in."

To meet the growing demand for shops, a number of malls and shopping centers have been built, refurbished or expanded in recent years.

Last year, Apple confirmed it was opening its biggest Apple Store in the Nordic region – and the first in Sweden – at the shopping center [Täby Centrum](#) in Stockholm, where the French cosmetic brand Sephora also opened its first shop in Sweden.

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Retail sales in the capital are expected record new levels, according to industry statistics. Total sales this coming Christmas are expected to hit 66 billion Swedish kronor (7,4 billion Euro) up 1.5 percent compared to the same period last year, with fashion and groceries leading the race.

Low interest rates and high level of savings have helped make Swedish households cash rich, and signs of economic recovery in the Euro zone and the US make consumers more willing to spend, according to the HUI report. The recently released study "[GfK Purchasing Power Europe 2013/2014](#)" ranked Sweden at fifth place with a per-capita purchasing power of 21,640 euro.

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