

THE CONRAN SHOP

The Conran Shop launches in South Korea

On Tuesday 14 November, in the heart of Gangnam, Seoul, in what was once a multi-storey car park, The Conran Shop will unveil its 12th global location – a new milestone in its mission to curate and champion iconic design around the world.



Render of The Conran Shop, South Korea. Courtesy of The Conran Shop.

The new South Korea emporium is spread over two sprawling storeys in a standalone space connected to Gangnam's Lotte Department Store, rivalling The Conran Shop's London Chelsea flagship in terms of size, with 24,000 square feet of retail space. Joining an existing portfolio of stores that include London, Paris, Kyoto, Fukuoka, Nagoya and Tokyo, the new location introduces Korea's rapidly evolving lifestyle market to The Conran Shop's fundamental vision of the modern, curated home – while giving the global retailer a direct, on-the-ground connection to one of the world's most exciting emerging design scenes.

“Korean design tends to have simplicity and harmony with nature that very much suits our aesthetic. There is a level of creative energy in Korea right now that reminds me of Japan 20 years ago. The market is growing exponentially in importance and sophistication across many areas, including tech, fashion, music, architecture and design. Along with that comes an understanding and demand for sophisticated design around furniture and living that is currently

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untapped. The time is right for us to partner with Korea – we’re looking forward to ideas flowing both ways.”

– Hugh Wahla, CEO, Conran Retail and Brands

Designed jointly by the creative team at The Conran Shop in partnership with architecture and interior design studio, Conran & Partners, the first floor houses an unrivalled collection of lifestyle products, with a white, bright and minimal laboratory-like aesthetic. Reached by an enclosed escalator dressed in Conran’s signature ultramarine blue, the darker and more richly textured second floor is devoted to furniture, lighting and textile products – as well as The Conran Shop’s library. The contrast between the two floors will create a yin and yang-like balance of different but complementary retail environments, appealing both to Seoul’s affluent and discerning audience of global design aficionados and the city’s growing demographic of dynamic young creatives.



Render of The Conran Shop, South Korea. Courtesy of The Conran Shop.

On the ground floor is The Conran Shop’s café, Orby (Sir Terence Conran’s middle name), which is designed with timeless, unassuming elegance and furnished with a selection of classic Carl Hansen chairs. As is the case in The Conran Shop’s London and Paris stores, blank walls act as ever-changing canvases that bring fresh ideas and energy to the store throughout the year. For its opening, the Gangnam store will feature four patterned murals based on the Conran Shop’s instantly recognisable packaging design, as well as a 17-metre mural on the ground floor created by the

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British illustrator and designer John Booth and unveiled at the official opening on 14 November.

“The design challenge was to evoke a Britishness with the space – an international rather than a local environment – with Korean design and craft represented through the ever-changing product offer. Built with a modern chic aesthetic while retaining Sir Terence Conran’s signature design philosophy, it will be a retail environment for the modern age – and the best Conran Shop in the world.”

– Stephen Briars, Creative Director, The Conran Shop

The Conran Shop’s global outlook translates from the store’s design to the products on its shelves. Responding to The Conran Shop’s pronounced affinity with the world of contemporary Korean design, with its emphasis on natural order and continuity and its reverence for fine craftsmanship, the initial product range will be a distinctly international edit, featuring products carefully selected to accommodate the needs and tastes of the Korean market. This 'localised globalism' is manifest, for example, in the focus on material and texture in the furniture collections; in an emphasis on wood and ceramics in kitchen and dining; in a wide range of highly textural throws and embroidered cushions in the store’s textile offering; and in a strong selection of local bath and beauty suppliers.



Render of The Conran Shop, South Korea. Courtesy of The Conran Shop.

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The Conran Shop in Korea will sustain the brand's reputation for representing the most influential designers of the past two centuries, from Alvar Alto to Eero Saarinen, alongside future collectibles sourced from around the world – and including The Conran Shop's own creations and collaborations. In Seoul, visitors to the new store will be met by Conran exclusives by the likes of Knoll and Carl Hansen, as well as a giant Hans Wegner CH07 Shell Chair from Carl Hansen.

In addition to his mural, Booth will present a range of products exclusively for the launch. This will include 20 of Artek's Stool 60s by Alvar Alto hand-painted with Booth's signature designs, the iconic Face vase, the Giovanni rug for Floor Story, Begg blankets, and a store-exclusive edition of his flower vase. As the new Conran Shop becomes entrenched within the Seoul design scene, the collection will evolve to showcase more local design, which will in turn filter back through the business, enabling The Conran Shop's European audience to discover some of the most creative, life-enhancing design coming from Korea today.

"This is an exciting time for us to become a part of the Korean design scene. Korea is fast becoming a hub of style and design and has already developed an exciting retail landscape full of fresh concepts and innovative brands. An ever-growing stable of Korean designers is already influencing today's popular culture, infiltrating the world of fashion, music and beauty in an incredibly positive and energetic way."

– Henrietta Klug, Buying and Merchandising Director, The Conran Shop

The Korea opening follows the recent expansion of The Conran Shop at Selfridges this September, which saw the brand's Oxford Street concession expand to become the largest in the department store's homeware offering. Now spanning 365m², the freshly designed, lab-like space has enabled The Conran Shop to bring an edit of iconic furniture and lighting to Selfridges for the very first time. The extension gives room to showcase both 20th-century masterpieces and future collectables from the likes of Knoll, Vitra, Carl Hansen, and a host of other international design-led brands.

The Conran Shop in Seoul opens on Tuesday 14 November at Lotte Department Store. South Korea, Seoul, 1F Lotte, Gangnam-gu, Dogok-ro, 401.

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Notes to editors

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About The Conran Shop

Founded by Sir Terence Conran in 1973, The Conran Shop has established itself as one of the leading lifestyle retailers in the world, offering an eclectic, hand-selected collection of gifts, furniture, lighting and personal accessories from some of the world's most respected designers and emerging talents. With its unique heritage, dedication to providing an unbeatable shopping experience and its carefully curated products, including vintage and modern designs, expert interior advice and personal services, The Conran Shop is the go-to destination for any type of gift or interiors inspiration. The Conran Shop currently has 11 stores across the world – three in London, two in Paris and six in Japan – with the forthcoming opening in Seoul, South Korea on 14 November 2019.

conranshop.com
[@theconranshopofficial](https://www.instagram.com/theconranshopofficial)

About Conran and Partners

Conran and Partners have been improving the built environment by producing thoughtful architecture and interior design for more than 30 years. Based in London, Brighton and Hong Kong they have a wealth of local, national and international experience. Their design skills have been endorsed by over fifty design awards and commendations, including Civic Trust Awards and RIBA Awards for work in sensitive contexts.

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