

# A Fine Taste for Pastry

**Paul Lafayet creates authentic French flavours for Hong Kong with targeted plans to expand into the other mainland cities from the GBA.**



“ We leverage the robust infrastructure and efficient transportation networks in the GBA to deliver baked goods from our central kitchen in Hong Kong to around the region. This saves on our need to establish additional kitchens while also ensuring quality control. ”

**Toni Younes**  
**Founder & CEO**  
**Paul Lafayet**

Hong Kong-based French fine patisserie Paul Lafayet was founded in 2009 by the Younes family to introduce high-quality French pastries to an increasingly cosmopolitan region with a taste for a gourmet experience. Its artisanal products, freshly-made daily, have gained a faithful following, in particular its best-selling crème brûlée and macarons.

Founder and CEO Toni Younes and his son, Co-Founder and Business Development Manager Christophe Younes, are highly involved in the daily operations of Paul Lafayet. Both are committed to maintaining the exacting standards of the chain's quality, balancing demand for the brand in Hong Kong and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA) with careful expansion that emphasises Paul Lafayet's exclusivity rather than mass production.

## Hong Kong and GBA-focused from Day One

The Younes family had travelled extensively between Europe and Asia in the 1990s and recognised the opportunities booming Hong Kong offered. At the time, Hong Kong was also the first stop for anyone seeking to do business in the Mainland. As both the local and Mainland markets developed a taste for the refined, cafes sprouted up all over the city and coffee culture flourished. But, says Mr Toni Younes, “at that time, a fine patisserie in Hong Kong was limited to a few 5-star hotels. Most people can't afford these places. I saw a gap in the market and told myself to shift the business from 5-star and make it more accessible to the public.”

From Day One, they wanted to make a chain for locals and Chinese people. Paul Lafayet's flagship store opened in January 2010 at the K11 Art Mall in Tsim Sha Tsui. They now

have nine boutiques in Hong Kong and four in the Mainland cities of Shenzhen and Shanghai. Paul Lafayet plans to open 10-15 more boutiques in the GBA, including Macau, Shenzhen and Guangzhou, as part of its China expansion plan once the border is opened.

The perishable nature of baked goods means that it is vital for the products to reach their destinations quickly. Paul Lafayet leverages the robust infrastructure and efficient transportation networks in the GBA to deliver baked goods from their central kitchen in Hong Kong around the region. This saves their need to establish additional kitchens while also ensuring quality control. Adds Mr Toni Younes, “We can deliver directly from Hong Kong to Shenzhen and Macau because it is just one hour from here. This is a key advantage because we are based in Hong Kong.”

## Changing tastes create opportunity for authenticity

Currently, the company has 120 staff, of which 86 are in Hong Kong and 34 are based in the Mainland. This includes two French chefs in its central kitchen to share the French know-how with the local team and ensure the authenticity of its pastries. As baking expertise is the lifeblood of its operations, Paul Lafayet shuttles its French chefs and teams between Hong Kong and the Mainland for regular training.

In its earliest days, InvestHK introduced Paul Lafayet to landlords in Hong Kong to facilitate the establishment of its first boutique. InvestHK additionally connected the company with different partners in the city who organised events that provided exposure to the Paul Lafayet brand alongside established luxury names.

Building on the solid relationships Paul Lafayet has established with shopping malls since then, the brand is now poised to expand from Hong Kong to the GBA and beyond.

An increasing shift to quality lifestyle and rising incomes create immense opportunities in Hong Kong, the GBA and the rest of the Mainland for unique and exclusive gourmet experiences. Mr Toni Younes considered the Chinese consumers are always looking for new experiences and the best quality. It is the largest market for luxury brands, as proven by the success of many of our French contemporaries. We are confident Paul Lafayet has what Chinese consumers look for and it is our passion to create sweet moments with French patisserie for the world.

## Paul Lafayet

- Paul Lafayet currently has nine boutiques in Hong Kong and four in the Mainland cities of Shenzhen and Shanghai, employing around 120 staff across the three cities
- The Hong Kong-based French patisserie plans to open up to 100 shops in the Mainland in coming years, in particular eyeing cosmopolitan cities in the GBA like Macau, Shenzhen and Guangzhou

 [paullafayet.com](http://paullafayet.com)