

# PARASHOP

## A POPULAR PLAYER

*Parashop has led France's unique parapharmacie market since the 1990s. Annemarie Kruse explains how*

**Parashop is the biggest chain in the French parapharmacie market.** This retail channel is unique to the French market, and it is also an increasingly important retail channel for personal care, especially for dermocosmetics, aromatherapy and organic cosmetics, since, unlike other European countries (Germany, Austria or the UK), France does not have a drugstore channel.

Every small town has at least one standalone parapharmacie and several of France's big supermarket retailers – like Leclerc and Auchan – have parapharmacie retail areas attached to their stores. Besides these chains the parapharmacie market is very fragmented; with many independent stores and smaller chains. In terms of outlets, Parashop is the largest 'para' chain in France.

### Leading the sector

The first Parashop was opened in 1993 in Orléans by brothers Christophe and Olivier Barnoin and the history of the retail chain reflects the development of the parapharmacie market as a distribution channel. The actual term 'parapharmacie' is said to have been coined in the early 1980s by Michel-Edouard Leclerc of the eponymous retail group. The actual parapharmacie channel began to develop in the early 1990s, making Parashop one of the leaders in a new and exciting retail sector.

Over the next years the Parashop chain expanded, first in provincial France, then into the greater Paris area. In 1995, Swiss retail group Maus Frères bought a majority stake in Parashop and stepped up the pace of its store openings. Today, Parashop operates 71 stores in France and four in Italy.

Parashop outlets tend to be located in shopping centres and busy commercial areas with a high footfall and customer frequency. The stores have an average retail area of 190sqm and over the last few years, around 40 Parashop outlets have been renovated and upgraded. With well-lit shelves, a tidy and clean interior design and well-trained skin care advisors, Parashop stores offer a comfortable and sophisticated shopping environment.

**Dermocosmetic grandes marques such as Vichy are the mainstay of Parashop's brand selection**



### Fact file: Parashop

**Founded** 1993

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**Website** parashop.com



Parashop sells around 6,000 products across some 220 beauty and personal care brands. French parapharmacies do not sell mainstream beauty such as L'Oréal Paris, Garnier or Nivea; the focus lies strictly on dermocosmetic brands, thermal and phytotherapy beauty and herbal cosmetics. The line-up includes all the classic French dermocosmetic *grandes marques*: L'Oréal's Vichy, Roger Gallet, La Roche-Posay, Biotherm and Sanoflore; Pierre Fabre's Avène, Ducray, René Furterer, Elancyl, Galénic, Klorane and A-Derma; and French brands Bioderma, Uriage, Novexpert, Lierac and Phyto.

On the more natural side of the portfolio is Nuxe, Cattier and Caudalie from France and Weleda from Germany; other big dermocosmetic brands retailed by Parashop include Biotherm (L'Oréal) and Eucerin (Beiersdorf). The line-up also includes some unusual international brands such as Japanese skin care brand DHC and Herborist from China (an exclusive Parashop brand). Parashop also sells colour cosmetics from many of the dermocosmetic brands, plus make-up from US-based Physicians Formula and 2B Colours from Belgium.

In 2007, Parashop stepped up its expansion by launching several own label ranges, including the 33-sku skin and body care range Être Bien, followed in early 2012 by personal care line Préparation Parashop and later that year By Parashop, a range of bath and body gift sets. Over the past decade, Parashop has also increased its exclusive brand selection from six in 2010 to 31 in 2016. These include organic niche brand Akane from France, hair care range Biosilk from the US and Canadian skin care brand IDC.

### A selective future

Over the past few years Parashop has started to focus more on beauty retail: several recently opened outlets are slanting strongly towards a selective retail experience, with wooden floors, aromatherapy corners and further exclusive brands.

For a while, Parashop also considered a cooperation with French perfumery Beauty Success – although ultimately Beauty Success teamed up with the Tanguy chain of parapharmacies. Nevertheless, it is likely that Parashop will continue to angle its retail approach towards a niche perfumery concept. And although Parashop is not the cheapest 'para' retailer in France, the company's focus on exclusive brands and an upmarket shopping experience has made it one of the country's more popular parapharmacie chains.