



FJ BENJAMIN

**RAOUL EXPANDS IN THE MIDDLE EAST IN FRANCHISE DEAL WITH
THE CHALHOUB GROUP**

- *9 Raoul standalone stores to open in the Middle East by 2017*
- *3rd franchise deal this year underscores Raoul's growing popularity; expands franchise network to 37 stores in next five years*
- *The Chalhoub Group is Middle East's leading player in luxury business*

Singapore, 05 December 2013 – Raoul, Singapore's best-known international fashion label, has inked yet another franchise deal, this time in the vibrant Middle East market with the Chalhoub Group, the leading partner for luxury across the Middle East.

The franchise agreement, signed with CGR FZE, part of the Chalhoub Group, in November 2013 will see 9 standalone Raoul stores open by 2017, the first two in the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain next year.

The latest franchise, the third this year, will bring the number of stores in the Raoul's franchise network in the Middle East, China and Sri Lanka, to a total of 37 over the next five years. It underscores Raoul's rising popularity and visibility among consumers and distributors in the region.

The Chalhoub Group, with over 55 years of experience, is an expert in retail, distribution and marketing services based in Dubai. The Group has become a major player in the fashion, beauty and gift sectors regionally. The Group has a presence in 14 countries and manages over 470 retail outlets across the region.

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Douglas Benjamin, Chief Operating Officer of FJ Benjamin Holdings, said: “We are delighted to have signed up a third franchise partner this year in the Chalhoub Group, the most established distributor of luxury fashion in the Middle East.

“We are confident that with their access to talent and retail infrastructure built up over five decades, they will be able to help F J Benjamin grow the Raoul brand very quickly in one of the top 10 markets globally for luxury goods.”

Mr Patrick Chalhoub, Chief Executive Officer of Chalhoub Group, said: “We are delighted to partner with Raoul and are looking forward to support the brand develop and grow in the Middle East region where the fashion sector is in complete expansion. We are proud to offer an innovative and niche brand such as RAOUL to our customers.”

The agreement signed with FJ Benjamin is for an initial five years with an option to renew for another five, subject to compliances.

According to a recent report from Bain & Company, Dubai commands around 30% of the Middle East luxury market, and around 60% of UAE’s. It is a shopping magnet for well-heeled tourists especially from Russia, India and Africa.

The deal with the Chalhoub Group followed one with Chongqing-based Budy (Chongqing) Import & Export Trading Co in May, to open a total of 27 stores in key cities in China, including Shanghai, Beijing and Chengdu by 2017. Two months later, F J Benjamin also announced a franchise agreement with Sri Lankan-based White Lotus Fashions (Private) Ltd to open the first standalone Raoul store in Colombo in December 2013.

Raoul was created by Douglas and Odile Benjamin in 2002 to fill a niche by providing quality but affordable shirts for men. It later branched out to womenswear, accessories and leather goods, which now account for more than half of its sales. Raoul is available in the fashion capitals of Paris, Milan, London and New York in leading department and specialty stores. Leading international fashion media have identified Raoul as a label to watch.

Celebrities such as Zhang Ziyi, Rebecca Romijn, Viola Davis, Jennifer Lawrence and The Duchess of Cambridge, have been seen wearing items from the brand's collections.

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About F J Benjamin Holdings Ltd (www.fjbenjamin.com) – F J Benjamin Holdings Ltd is a leader in building brands and in developing retail and distribution networks for international luxury and lifestyle labels across Asia. Its portfolio includes fashion and lifestyle brands like Banana Republic, Catherine Deane, Celine, Gap, Givenchy, Goyard, Guess, La Senza, Raoul, Sheridan, Superdry, TOM FORD, Valextra, and timepiece brands such as Bell & Ross, Converse, Chronoswiss, Girard-Perregaux, Guess? Watches, Gc, Marc Ecko, Nautica, Rado and Victorinox Swiss Army.

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About Chalhoub Group

The Chalhoub Group is the leading partner for luxury across the Middle East since 1955. As an expert in retail, distribution and marketing services based in Dubai, the group has become a major player in the fashion, beauty and gift sectors regionally.

By blending its Middle East expertise and intimate knowledge of luxury, Chalhoub Group is building brands in the region, by offering service excellence to all its partners and a unique experience to its customers through its passionate teams.

With a growing workforce of more than 9,000 people, implemented in 14 countries, as well as the operating of over 470 retail outlets, the group's success is attributed to its most valued asset of highly skilled and dedicated teams. Professionalism and passion are what fuel the Chalhoub Group's competitive edge in today's market.

By being committed to implementing sustainable practices into their business, the Chalhoub Group has been awarded in 2013 the CSR Label from the Dubai Chamber of Commerce.

For more information, please visit <http://www.chalhoub-group.com/>
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