

# NEW SUPERMARKET DESIGN



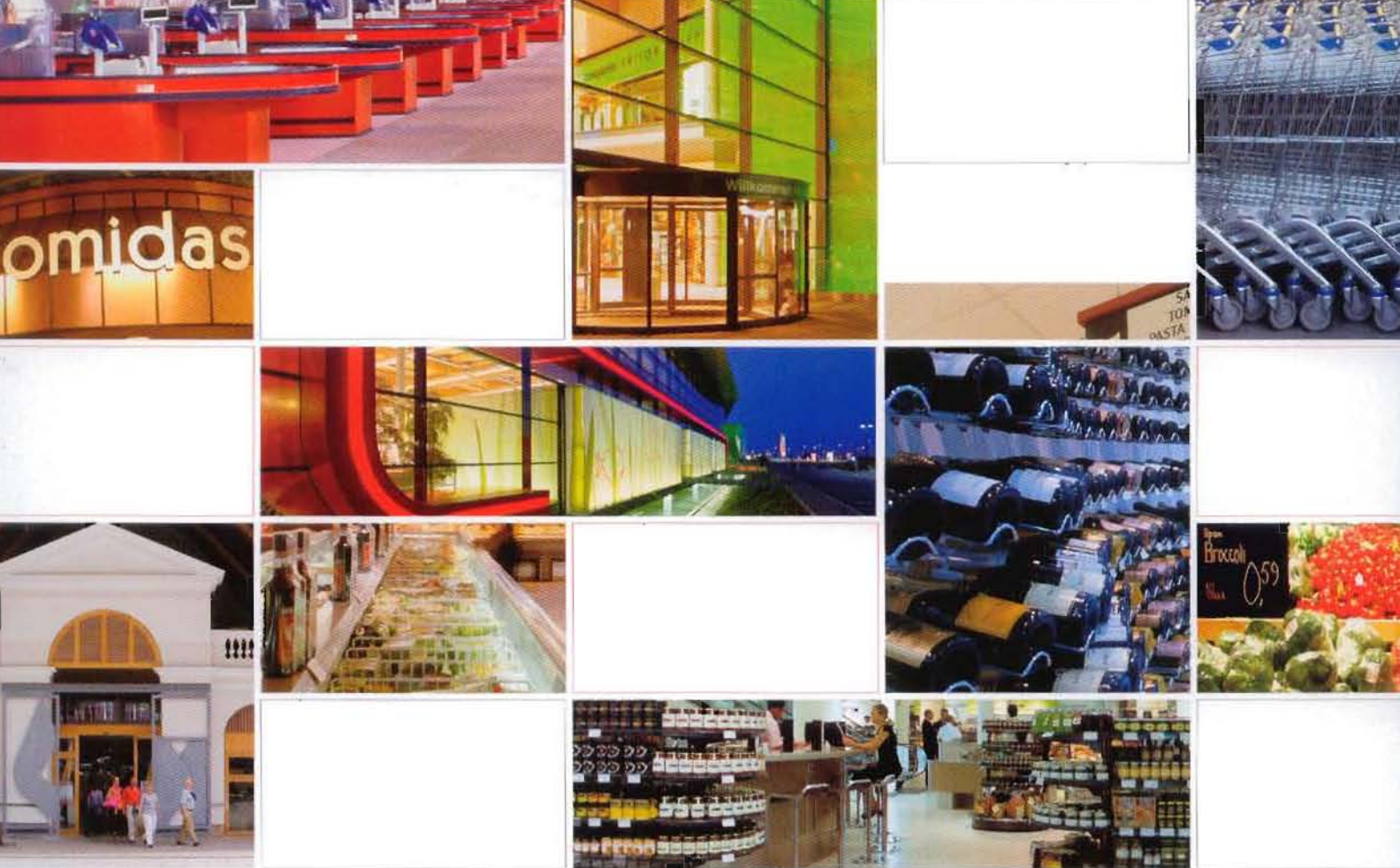
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# Introduction

The supermarket we choose for our weekly shopping is perhaps closer to the supermarket of the future than is first apparent. The fact that the Austrian chain MPreis can advertise itself as "The Seriously Sexy Supermarket," a slogan more appropriate for a chain of stores selling high-quality lingerie or even state-of-the-art MP3 players, is proof that the tastes and demands of today's consumer are different from those of even our own parents. The change is obviously for the better, since progress, like time, moves in only one direction: forward. The old, traditional supermarkets—windowless, neutral spaces separated from the outside by parking lots and cold (literally, since the low temperatures force customers to move quickly through the aisles in less time)—are being ditched in favor of newer, more comfortable designs.

Contemporary supermarkets are no longer merely impersonal spaces that display food and cleaning products on miles of shelving lit by deliberately inhuman lighting. While supermarket architecture in urban centers, with certain notable exceptions (some of which are featured in this book), has succumbed to a uniform and conservative inertia, stores located in smaller towns have been the perfect testing ground for architects around the world to carry out their most daring experiments in modern commercial architecture.