

## MORE THAN A CORNER STORE: SPÄTIS STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL IN A CHANGING BERLIN

Found on practically every corner of Berlin, Spätis are a core part of the capital's culture. But new regulations and rising rents could be forcing their closure. Can the Späti be saved?



A typical späti with long benches and late opening hours.

Like any convenience store, the “World-connection wese” in Berlin stocks shelves with snacks, booze and magazines. Yet reflecting its uber-trendy Neukölln customers, the shop also carries vegan ice-cream, and features a wooden bench outside where customers perch for a smoke or chat, even as the wintry temperatures begin to dip.

“I wanted to do something fun”, Firat Yildiz told The Local when asked why he chose to open up the Späti 12 years ago. “We get on very well with our customers, so we’re all like a family. They’re really good to us.”

The spätis (short for spätkauf, or late-shop) don’t only offer the afterhours and Sundays that other Berlin supermarkets usually don’t, but also fulfil a fun and lively niche, which each späti offering its