

IN-STORE

Harrods to enhance intimate experience with Salon de Parfums concept

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London department store Harrods

By JEN KING

London department store Harrods is taking a new approach to displaying the numerous fragrances it carries with a new perfumery retail concept set to debut in September.

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Harrods' new marketing strategy for fragrances, Salon de Parfums, will be housed on the department store's sixth floor rather than within the Beauty Halls as it is currently. Salon de Parfums is meant to create an intimate consumer experience due to the personal nature of purchasing a fragrance.

"The ritual of selecting and ultimately purchasing a fragrance is supremely personal," said Mia Collins, head of beauty at **Harrods**, London. "Fragrance has the ability to tap into our core, whether it be by conjuring powerful memories or elevating us to an entirely different mood.

"It can also be an overwhelming experience, with so much choice," she said. "We therefore wanted to create a serene and intimate environment for customers to take their time enjoying and learning more about scent.

"The consumer experience is at the heart of all innovation and retail developments at Harrods. Within Salon de Parfums, we actively encourage our clients to sit down, enjoy and take their time discovering the best of what fragrance has to offer, whether this be an informal consultation or an in depth interview with a view to creating your very own, unique signature scent. The experience will be unparalleled."

A connoisseur's dream

Opening on Tuesday Sept. 30, Harrods' Salon de Parfums will occupy 5,090 square feet on the sixth floor. Harrods' Salon de Parfums will include the finest and rarest scents alongside exclusive bespoke creations and services.

Currently, fragrance is interspersed among the Beauty Halls on Harrods' ground floor. By creating a destination for fragrance, scent enthusiasts are likely to visit Harrods to check out the new layout of the dedicated department.

"Our Beauty Halls will continue to offer the same award-winning fragrance selection as we have always done," Ms. Collins said. "The Salon de Parfums is our way of extending this offer and reaching for new heights in terms of experience and service proposition, to better cater to a client that is looking for the epitome of niche, haute luxe fragrances.



Computer rendering of Harrods' Salon du Parfums corridor lined with boutiques

To better create an intimate retail experience for fragrance consumers, Harrods has designed the Salon de Parfum's decor with a palette of elegant, soft greys and warm natural tones along with a tiled corridor, columns, embedded vitrines and decorative light fixtures.

Within the Salon de Parfums there will be 11 branded boutiques. Brands with dedicated areas include Bond No.9, By Kilian, Chanel, Clive Christian, Creed, Dior, Guerlain, Henry Jacques, Roja Dove, Tom Ford and Xerjoff.

In addition to the brand boutiques within the Salon de Parfums, Harrods will feature a fragrance gallery where a selection of scents for discerning consumers. This area will include world-exclusive brands, such as London-based perfumer's Thomas Kosmala's

fragrances, Dolce & Gabbana's Velvet collection and Bond No.9's Harrods collection. Harrods' fragrance gallery will be housed in an oval-shaped room with seating and a crystal chandelier.



Computer rendered of Harrods' Salon de Parfums gallery

Fragrance and focus

The London retailer has placed a special emphasis on fragrances in the past.

Harrods used multimedia content from its iPad magazine application to spur perfume enthusiasts to visit the store for its "Meet the Perfumers" experience.

Meet the Perfumers showcased a selection of well-known perfumers and exclusive workshops in Harrods Beauty Halls. This month-long event from August 22 through Sept. 19 was an ideal way for Harrods to boost in-store traffic for the release of the fall 2013 fragrances ([see story](#)).

Other retailers have looked to renovating their fragrance counter areas to give their beauty departments a fragrant overhaul. To unveil the Salon de Parfums, Harrods will likely host fragrance-centered events similar to those put on by Saks Fifth Avenue.

Saks Fifth Avenue boosted foot traffic to its New York flagship's redesigned fragrance floor through a series of fragrance-themed events intended to draw aspirational consumers.

The fragrance floor's redesign opened on Sept. 26 amid various events and giveaways that celebrated the occasion. Renovating a space can enliven a retailer's identity while accompanying events can maximize exposure for the new area ([see story](#)).

For consumers looking to approach fragrances in a new way, Harrods' Salon de Parfums will be a welcomed experience.

"Harrods has given these brands and their customers a unique environment to enjoy their shopping experience," said Dave Rodgers, a retail business development executive at [Microsoft Canada](#), Toronto. "This provides a clear distinction between these fragrances

and the more pedestrian products found in the Cosmetics department.

"When shared between 11 brands, the 5,000 square foot selling area is very intimate," he said. "This will be part of the appeal of the new boutique, conveying a sense of 'you need to be someone special to get in here.'

"The boutique will probably also feature personal shoppers who are very familiar with the likes of their exclusive clientele, this will in turn lend itself to the exclusivity of the new destination. With all of these factors in play, Harrods was quite clever in creating this unique destination."

Final Take

Jen King, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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