

IN-STORE

Galleries Lafayette invites gang of monsters in-store for the holidays

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Exterior of Galleries Lafayette Hausmann flagship

By SARAH JONES

French department store chain Galleries Lafayette is looking to delight children of all ages with a quirky monster-themed Christmas campaign, launching Nov. 5.

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From actors frolicking around the store in costume to animated window displays, consumers will have a number of opportunities to catch sight of the cast of creatures at the retailer's flagship store on Boulevard Haussmann in Paris. For the 150,000 daily visitors expected during the holiday season, this campaign will likely amuse and inspire.

“Galleries Lafayette’s Monster Christmas is a refreshing twist to the traditional Christmas festivities that feature the conventional cast of holiday characters,” said Walter Deacon, principal at [Boston Retail Partners](#), Boston. “The unique holiday campaign featuring a lead monster, Gustave, and his band of supporting monsters is sure to break through the clutter of all the other standard holiday themes and generate interest.”

Mr. Deacon is not affiliated with Galleries Lafayette, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Galleries Lafayette](#) was unable to comment directly before press time.

Cast of characters

Supposedly the work of the mischievous creatures, the tree in the dome of the flagship store will be turned upside down for the first time. The 82-foot Christmas tree will perform a light and sound show every hour.



Rendering of Christmas tree under Galeries Lafayette dome

Animated displays in the windows along Boulevard Haussman will show Gustave and his gang of friends trying to put on a disorganized play. A shaky furry leg will be seen popping out behind a curtain before a shy creature appears on stage, visibly trembling.



Rendering of Galeries Lafayette window

In various windows, different skits will show the monsters tightrope walking or performing magic, conjuring a bevy of rabbits.



Rendering of Galerie Lafayette window

Bringing the windows to life, actors will play Gustave and his friends in-store, meeting consumers while on the escalator, checking out or in the toy department. They will meander, parade and begin games of hide-and-seek.

Gustave is loveable but awkward, while his companion Gaga is the height of femininity, with big eyelashes and dainty white gloves. Their friend Bubble has a small head, while Fronzi and Vroumi are colorful and fast, popping up where consumers least expect them.



Rendering of Galerie Lafayette window

A contemporary show will feature dancers, comedians and acrobats, bringing a different take to the monster theme. Consumers can catch the show from Nov. 6-22 on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday on the first, second and fifth floor of the central building, as well as on the street level of Lafayette Homme, the men's store.

"The Monster Christmas campaign will be a hit with children because it captivate them with its animated window displays and impromptu mini-shows throughout the store," Mr. Deacon said. "Adults will also enjoy the quirky nature of the celebration with an upside down Christmas tree and the overall creative approach to what they have come to expect in more traditional holiday festivities."

To begin the holiday shopping season, Fendi has set up a pop-up near the entrance to the store in the shape of a large box, which houses the world premiere of a Christmas capsule

collection. The edit includes Fendi's Peekaboo bags, small leather goods, footwear and jewelry, as well as limited-edition exclusive versions of the Peekaboo mini in exotic skins.



Fendi pop-up in Galeries Lafayette

Fendi's pop-up opened Oct. 13 and will run through Nov. 1.

Bringing the monsters into its culinary offerings, Galeries Lafayette tapped pastry chef Christophe Adam, who created an éclair with googly eyes.

In the toy department, consumers can select a plush monster from a collection of TY stuffed animals.

Performing community outreach, Galeries Lafayette will also be collecting new toys for Emmaus Challenge. Consumers that participate will get a voucher for a discount on a purchase, and Emmaus Challenge will help low income families celebrate the holiday.

Outside of the monster campaign, Galeries Lafayette is drawing consumers in-store with an exclusive collection of 16 little black dresses from brands such as Chloé, Marni and 3.1 Philip Lim, with a range of price points from about \$100 to about \$2,300. This festive attire will help consumers prepare for their holiday parties.



Little black dress exclusives

Quirky campaign

Galleries Lafayette typically adds a whimsical feature to its initiatives, giving it a noticeable voice.

For spring, the retailer created a multichannel campaign with graffiti artist André Saraiva to prove the retailer's quirkiness.

Mr. Saraiva's image was plastered across a billboard outside the store, and his signature tag "Mr. A" was seen across the retailer's content Web site. By choosing an artist rather than a model, Galleries Lafayette was able to show its creative flair ([see story](#)).

Centering a holiday campaign around characters can help endear a retailer to consumers.

Department store chain Saks Fifth Avenue gave visitors to its holiday windows in 2013 the opportunity to become part of the display through a new mobile site.

The windows last year told the story of the Yeti, which is rumored to live on top of the Saks Fifth Avenue building in New York making snowflakes. Saks worked in conjunction with MasterCard and The Science Project on the mobile site that allowed users to create their own Yeti name, customize a snowflake and flick it up from their phone or tablet onto screens in the display ([see story](#)).

While Galleries Lafayette's holiday campaign is likely to attract attention, it might get mixed reviews.

"Although interest will certainly be high, overall consumer response to the Galleries Lafayette Monster Christmas is likely to be mixed as you can't please everyone," Mr. Deacon said. "Most people will appreciate it as an imaginative and entertaining illustration of the Christmas spirit, but a few may feel it diminishes the tradition of Christmas or isn't appropriate given the religious nature of the holiday."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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