

IN-STORE

## Fortnum & Mason ups Halloween initiatives as holiday gains traction in the UK

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*Halloween marzipans sold at Fortnum & Mason*

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By JEN KING

British department store Fortnum & Mason is preparing to “delight and fright” consumers of all ages this Halloween with themed events and seasonal gift items.

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**Luxury Daily**

Fortnum & Mason divided the scheduled events between programs geared for adults and those ideal for children to ensure the retailer offers something for everyone. For children, attending a holiday event at a retailer, regardless of the occasion, will likely become a positive memory associated with the department store thus establishing loyalty at a young age.

"Hosting a children's event has many different functions for retailers like Fortnum & Mason," said Gustavo Gomez, director of research and methodology at [Envirosell](#), New York. "For starters, it brings the whole family into the store. Once customers are in the store the opportunity is there to pick up last minute items or to be enticed by that hard to resist impulse purchase. It is a win-win for the customer and the retailer.

"Second, free events, especially family events create a positive feeling for customers.

That feeling will last beyond the event," he said. "The connection between a positive feeling and a retail brand is priceless. It is what brands strive for.

"Third, it is never too early to create brand loyalty. A continuing positive experience at a young age can create future loyal customers."

Mr. Gomez is not affiliated with Fortnum & Mason, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

**Fortnum & Mason** was unable to respond by press deadline.

Trick or treat

Using its social accounts, Fortnum & Mason shared its upcoming calendar of Halloween-themed events for children of all ages. The post was accompanied by a photo of a carved pumpkin with a bumble bee, one of Fortnum's symbols, on the tip of the jack-o-lantern's nose.



*Fortnum & Mason's Halloween events posting on Facebook*

A click-through on the provided link lands on the retailer's listing of Halloween events occurring between Oct. 28 to Nov. 1. The first two calendar events are geared toward adult consumers.

Fortnum & Mason's first Halloween event took place on the evening of Oct. 28 in the First

Floor Demonstration Kitchen. During this event consumers learned how to make the “scariest supper dishes” that included the “flesh” of pumpkins.

Participants learned how to prepare pumpkin and ricotta ravioli with cavolo nero and sage nut butter. During the cooking lesson, the retailer’s executive chef passed around hors d’oeuvres including a small scoop of pumpkin ice cream.

The free event presented guests with recipe cards for the dishes sampled with the shopping list printed on the reverse side. For shopping ease and immediacy, all items for the dishes can be purchased within Fortnum & Mason on the Lower Ground Floor.

A second adult-only event is planned for Oct. 30. Fortnum & Mason’s Tequila Masterclass - Day of the Dead will take consumers on a journey through the “fascinating and complex world of tequila” as taught by Gabriela Moncada Peña of Jose Cuervo.

During the class, hosted in Fortnum’s Crypt, Ms. Moncada Peña will explain different styles and productions of tequila while offering tips on how to drink and use the spirit in cocktails. Tequilas will be available for tasting throughout the event with a cocktail served at the class’s completion.

The Day of the Dead celebration is a ticketed event costing \$48. Participants will receive a 10 percent discount off tequilas purchased the day of.

Fortnum & Mason also developed two events for children. On Halloween eve Oct. 31, Fortnum will host the annual Hallowe’en Pumpkin Carving Competition in the Demonstration Kitchen.



### *Jack-o-Lanterns at Fortnum & Mason*

Children up to age 10 are invited to submit their carved pumpkin for judging with the winner being awarded a "Crate of Splendid Sweets."

For additional Halloween fun, Fortnum’s Food Market will be converted to a Hallowe’en-themed Artisan Food Market. The retailer explains that consumers can expect “things hot, things spicy, things wriggly and things chewy” in addition to jelly worms, chocolate skulls and “all things hideous rendered delicious by oodles of chocolate and sugar.”

On Halloween and the following afternoon, consumers are also invited to The Tricks & Treats Food Market where Fortnum & Mason will present seasonal food stuffs from its regional purveyors. During the hours of noon, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. consumers can attend demonstrations to prepare and cook seasonal dishes.

Basketful of surprises

For Halloween, Fortnum & Mason also created a limited-edition “Wicked Wicker” gift hamper filled with “spine-tingling surprises.” The hamper includes treats such as Catacombs chocolate bars, a Dracula gingerbread cookie, gummy brains and artisanal marshmallows.



*Wicked Wicker Halloween hamper by Fortnum & Mason*

Fortnum & Mason looks to its hampers to celebrate all types of occasions while recognizing its heritage.

For instance, the British department store promoted its holiday hampers both on social media and on its ecommerce site to provide a glimpse into its heritage.

While other stores pointed consumers to gift guides featuring a wide range of products, Fortnum & Mason differentiated itself by focusing on its hampers, publicizing its offerings on social media. Through social media, Fortnum shared the history of its hampers in a more personal way to create brand loyalty ([see story](#)).

In addition to looking inward, Fortnum & Mason has also used its gift basket hampers to expand awareness of the retailer to new markets.

Chinese department store Lane Crawford is giving British retailer Fortnum & Mason the opportunity to transition into the market and spread awareness among global travelers.

Lane Crawford will expand its lifestyle selections with foods, beverages and gifts from Fortnum & Mason through the latter retailer’s hampers. The collaboration of two well known department stores is uncommon and speaks to Fortnum’s desire to gain awareness in China ([see story](#)).

Offering gift items such as hampers and hosting seasonal events may help Fortnum & Mason continue its successes as a destination retailer regardless of the holiday.

"Providing gift items gives customers another reason to visit a retailer," Mr. Gomez said. "These are usually once-a-year, limited availability items that can be very appealing to those customers that celebrate the holiday.

"With the increasing popularity of Halloween in the U.K. in the last few years, it is yet

another reason for a customer to come into the store," he said. "Fortnum & Mason would be wise to take advantage of this event to position themselves as a holiday destination.

"Some reports estimate that the U.K.'s 2015 holiday season will increase by almost 18 percent. And it will be a competitive one for sure. Fortnum & Mason are sure to be seeing this Halloween event as more than a chance to sell Halloween items. They have their eye on a much larger one down the road."

Final Take

*Jen King, lead reporter on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/RkwpS0A8ZcQ](http://www.youtube.com/embed/RkwpS0A8ZcQ)

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