

IN-STORE

Moët Hennessy targets discerning travelers with branded boutique

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Moët Hennessy's Les Caves Particulières

By JEN KING

Spirits-makers under the umbrella of luxury conglomerate Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy have joined for a sensory experience in Paris' Charles de Gaulle Airport.

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For the first time, Moët Hennessy's Champagne and cognac houses will be showcased in a single boutique as travelers make their way through terminal 2E Gate K. Opened since September, the Les Caves Particulières will create a prime shopping opportunity for travelers boarding flights on their way to visit loved ones for the holiday season.

"The Les Caves Particulières boutique Champagne and cognac tasting room is a perfect fit for the Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport," said Ken Morris, principal at [Boston Retail Partners](#), Boston.

"International travelers typically have higher discretionary spending and are a good demographic match for premium Champagne and cognac target audiences," he said. "The convenient location near a duty-free airport store will also help drive additional sales for Moët Hennessy spirits.

"The exceptional location at Charles de Gaulle Airport, will reinforce the Moët Hennessy

premium brand with exposure to millions of people every year,” he said. “Tapping consumers' five senses will elevate the experience and reinforce brand awareness beyond what a typical 3 dimensional experience provides. This unique sensory experience validates and builds-upon the trend as the store as a theater.”

Mr. Morris is not affiliated with the Moët Hennessy spirits brands, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Moët Hennessy did not respond by press deadline.

Sip and shop

Les Caves Particulières, translated to mean “the special cellars,” opened on Sept. 5 to highlight excellence in French spirits as travelers board flights at the Charles de Gaulle airport. The boutique is found at Gate K within the airport’s terminal 2E, which also boasts French houses such as Cartier, Dior and Hermès, as well as department store Printemps.

Designed by architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte, Les Caves Particulières features wood and glass elements to represent the barrels and bottles that act as vessels for the Moët Hennessy maison’s Champagne and cognacs. The tasting boutique carries Moët Hennessy’s vintages and cuvées and its design works to “awaken” all five senses.

Within the store, and for the first time under one roof, Champagne-makers Moët & Chandon, Veuve Clicquot, Ruinart, Dom Pérignon and Krug are represented as well as cognac-maker Hennessy. The boutique will give the brands a platform to show off their savoir-faire to discerning travelers.



Moët Hennessy's Les Caves Particulières' exterior

Les Caves Particulières features a Hennessy “organ” that underscores the complexities of crafting cognacs while a tasting table invites consumers to discover the scent notes and tastes of the spirits offered. An on-hand oenologist will advise consumers on purchases, cellaring recommendations and general knowledge.

An audio-visual experience is also built into the boutique. For example, when a bottle of Dom Pérignon’s Vintage 2004 is picked up, the voice of the brand’s chef de caves Richard Geoffroy is heard. Similarly, if a bottle of Hennessy Privé is selected, a ballad from the

1920s plays.

For more exclusive, rare offerings, such as a Moët & Chandon Grand Vintage 1959, a Veuve Clicquot Vintage 1979 or a Dom Pérignon Cœnothèque 1971, consumers are met with complete silence.



Moët Hennessy's Les Caves Particulières' interior

To build a complete sensory experience, French maison Guerlain's master perfumer Thierry Wasser created a customized scent for the boutique that recalls the scent of vine flowers.

Of the total experience, Donatienne de Fontaines-Guillaume, managing director global travel retail at Moët Hennessy said in a statement, "This is an incomparable space that offers an exclusive selection of our finest French jewels, along with custom-tailored services. Customers have always figured at the heart of our travel retail strategy, and we wanted to welcome them in the airport by opening the doors of our maisons and sharing this extraordinary heritage."

Duty free

Airport retail locations draw consumers due to tax-exemption perks, but the locale also helps introduce brands and wares to waves of individuals from around the world.

For example, British retailer Fortnum & Mason announced its first standalone airport store within London's Heathrow Airport.

Fortnum & Mason shared with its social media followers that the new space in the airport will be housed in Terminal 5 with the opening slated for October 31. As the busiest airport in all of Europe, and the fifth busiest in the world, Heathrow is an ideal space for a brand looking to make an impression on international travelers ([see story](#)).

Similarly, Italian fashion house Gucci opened two boutiques in different terminals within the Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris to target travelers with time for shopping.

Both boutiques focus on accessories and handbags instead of ready-to-wear pieces due to the limited time travelers have to spend in duty-free shops and carry-on luggage space

limits. Having two focused boutiques may help increase brand exposure, and a lesser price point is likely to create new brand enthusiasts ([see story](#)).

Introducing this tasting boutique in time for the holidays will heighten brand awareness amid travelers.

“With greater visibility in the Paris airport and the added benefit of duty-free, the Les Caves Particulieres boutique will likely stimulate incremental sales as travelers visit friends and family during the holidays,” Mr. Morris said.

“Champagne and cognac make nice gifts for the holidays and its added visibility and availability at the airport make it a convenient, last-minute purchase,” he said. “This strategic boutique location isn't a short-term sales play but a long-term loyalty play.”

Final Take

Jen King, lead reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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