

COMMERCE

Brands embrace denim to round out consumers' closets

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Bloomingdale's denim

By SARAH JONES

As consumers become increasingly comfortable investing in denim, luxury brands are looking to win their business with upscale jeans.

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Luxury Daily

Tom Ford recently launched a denim line for men, and labels including Valentino and Berluti enable male consumers to visit their stores to have custom jeans made to measure. What was once considered a utilitarian item is now looked to for a fashion statement, and brands that might not typically be associated with jeans are getting on board.

"Denim has elevated from a common man staple to one that is the very basis within our wardrobe," said Kimmie Smith, co-founder/creative director of [Accessory2](#), New York.

"The fact that there is a focus on cut, washes, premium and more makes it an intricate apparel category that allows brands to place their signature fingerprint within the premium and luxury tiers."

Denim adoption

Tom Ford launched a denim line for men in March, which is available solely in-store at locations in New York, Chicago, Beverly Hills, CA, Dallas and Las Vegas, NV.

In an email to consumers, the brand explains that its denim is “sourced from the finest looms in the world, crafted in heritage American factories.” Other details intended to add to their luxury appeal are engraved buttons and rivets and a front fly construction specific to the brand.

On Tom Ford’s Web site, consumers can hover over TF icons transposed on a close-up image of one of the brand’s jeans to see details of the stitching and design.



Screenshot of Tom Ford denim page

The brand’s namesake designer explains in a quote that jeans need to make the wearer look “slimmer and sexier,” and that he took a long time perfecting the fit.

In September, Valentino launched a made-to-measure denim service at its Saint Honoré, Paris and Fifth Avenue, New York boutiques. The brand shared a 30-second video detailing the entire process of crafting one of the pants, from washing the fabric to measuring, cutting and stitching together the finished garment, illustrating the many different options available along the way.

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/CF9bjF-KAJk>

Valentino Denim Made to Measure

At Berluti, consumers can meet with a tailor or shoemaker to have any garment custom-made to their measurements and tastes, whether denim or a formal tuxedo. Allowing consumers to dictate a head-to-toe customized look offers the opportunity for unique ensembles, and may help to instill loyalty ([see story](#)).

Within the past month, a number of retailers have pushed their own denim offerings.

Mr Porter dedicated the entire March 12 issue of its online publication The Journal to the material, with articles about caring for jeans, wearing them to the office and outfit inspiration from celebrities who “wear it well.”

*The Look***MR NICK ZANO**

The actor tries out a few denim looks as he talks about what it's like to play Ms Kelly Brook's love interest in *One Big Happy*

*The Tutorial***HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOUR JEANS**

Denim aficionado Mr Michael Williams of *A Continuous Lean* offers a definitive care guide, busting a few myths in the process

*The Gear***THE RETURN OF THE MUSCLE CAR**

In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to horsepower

*The Dress Code***JEANS IN THE OFFICE**

In the first of a series on sartorial problem-solving, we show you how to wear denim at work

Screenshot of Mr Porter The Journal

Sister site Net-A-Porter shared its own denim inspiration, telling its shoppers in an email how to wear it “round the clock” by incorporating dresses, skirts and jackets in the fabric, and mixing them with the right accessories.

style solutions: ROUND-THE-CLOCK DENIM

Denim is redefined this season, offering more than jeans. The closet chameleon appeared on the runway in every guise. Work it into your style repertoire for work, weekend and even your next event.

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the statement piece

The denim dress has graduated thanks to nipped-in silhouettes, elevated embroidery and next-level fabrics. Lace-up sandals and sleek, understated accessories give this staple just the right amount of polish.

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Email from Net-A-Porter

Bloomingdale's highlighted some of its customers' favorite brands in an email for its "The Denim Refresh," sharing comments from real shoppers along with images of pants, sharing their insights about fit and look.

**BOOT
TO
BELL**



Email from Bloomingdale's

Barneys New York chose to highlight denim brand Re/Done, whose “denim artists” repurpose worn vintage Levis into new pairs, retailing for around \$265. The Los Angeles-based label has developed a cult following of models such as Erin Wasson and Gigi Hadid.



Erin Wasson for Re/Done

Right before New York Fashion Week in September, Barneys also clued its audience in to its exclusive in-store launch of Alexander Wang's denim line.

Lane Crawford is drawing consumers to its IFC Mall store with a denim showcase in-store. Online, consumers can browse some of the brands available, including McQ Alexander McQueen, Acne Studios and Rag & Bone.

Embedded Video: [//instagram.com/p/0SeVB-Q3ZO/embed/](https://www.instagram.com/p/0SeVB-Q3ZO/embed/)

Instagram post from Lane Crawford

At Harrods' biannual made-to-measure event, which this time falls March 20-22, Brioni will be offering made-to-order denim along with its classic tailored items ([see story](#)).

Expansion mode

Similarly to denim, a number of retailers have invested in activewear, as consumers look to them for more of their apparel purchases.

Online retailer Net-A-Porter recently launched its Net-A-Sporter activewear offerings with an email and social campaign.

Prior to the launch of Net-A-Sporter, the retailer carried activewear from a number of designers, but this saw an expansion of merchandise, representing more sports and activities. Through this, Net-A-Porter serves as a more well-rounded clothing destination, allowing its consumers to turn to the retailer for fashion-forward gear ([see story](#)).

Getting consumers to trade up for this type of item requires education about quality and design within marketing and retail.

"It's all about fabrication and education in sourcing if goods," Ms. Smith said. "Ensuring that there are limited edition components and swing collections that tie into a larger story within the brand allows luxury to be covered.

"By focusing on denim as another luxury component it allows a total lifestyle enhancement," she said. "A luxury brand's blazer can now be worn casually with a high end denim and showcase the versatility and multigenerational aspect if the line."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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