

IN-STORE

Galleries Lafayette simplifies retail experience with new wine section

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La Cave in Galleries Lafayette

By KAYSORIN

French department store Galleries Lafayette is providing a dedicated place for consumers to purchase wine with the introduction of its La Cave section.

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La Cave will give consumers the opportunity to browse a wide selection of wines from around the world, all from the comfort of the first floor of Galleries Lafayette. Creating unique retail spaces that allow consumers to focus on a particular product can help increase conversions and become a destination for shoppers.

"When you walk into the first floor of Lafayette Gourmet, you'll see that the retailer has taken a page from many of the recent efforts that we've seen at Harrods," said Dave Rodgerson, a retail business development executive at [Microsoft Canada](#), Toronto. "Their launch of La Cave is very much along the lines of a pop-up shop.

"In reality though, the physical manifestation has a much more permanent feel to it, not unlike a store within a store."

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

Galeries Lafayette was unable to respond by press deadline.

In vino veritas

Located on the easily accessible first floor of Galeries Lafayette, La Cave will occupy 4,800 square feet of space fully dedicated to alcoholic beverages. The selection will include wines from some of the most renowned vineyards in the world, in addition to smaller labels consumers may not be familiar with.



La Cave will be located on the first floor of Galeries Lafayette

Experienced sommeliers will be available to help consumers select the perfect wine for any occasion. They will offer services in English, French, Chinese, Spanish and Portuguese, ensuring that many consumers are able to communicate with the team.

"It's not just a selection of premier wines and spirits, it's also a white glove service to guide and counsel the shopper on any questions that they may have about the product and help to grow the consumer's level of expertise," Mr. Rodgerson said. "This is quite rare in today's retail scene where there are many examples of customers who come into the retailer with far more knowledge than that of the staff of the store through their research on the Internet.

"This type of relationship helps to build even higher levels of loyalty on behalf of the customer."



La Cave will offer many different kinds of wine from around the world

In addition to purchasing in store, consumers will have the ability to have their purchases delivered anywhere in France or Europe. La Cave will provide secure packaging for bottles traveling to distant locations, so consumers do not have to worry about travel damage.

Providing a positive retail experience is one of the best strategies a brand can have when trying to increase conversion. It is essential to make large stores easy to navigate and help consumers find the products they are looking for.



The department store offers a wide selection of products

Having dedicated sections for specific items is a great way to minimize confusion within the store. La Cave will allow consumers who have come to Galeries Lafayette specifically to purchase wine to avoid walking through other departments in the store.

Ideally, La Cave will also bring in new consumers looking for a store that offers a large selection of wines. It is likely that La Cave will become a destination for wine in Paris.



Galeries Lafayette is a popular destination for Parisian shoppers

I get around

Galeries Lafayette regularly works to make the retail experience easier and more enjoyable for its consumers. For example, the French department store is responding to the growing convergence of style and workout gear with the opening of a new dedicated space for activewear in its Paris flagship.

The 4,300 square-foot section carries sporting apparel from 13 brands such as Adidas by Stella McCartney, Nike, Billabong and Roxy and also serves as a central place for consumers to get advice about activity and wellness. To launch the new department, Galeries Lafayette is hosting a number of workout classes taught by the brands involved to get consumers moving ([see story](#)).

While having dedicated sections is an excellent way to simplify shopping, Galeries Lafayette went even further by using technology to help its consumers navigate the store. The French department store chain helped consumers plan their shopping excursions with a new mobile application.

Through the app, consumers can map out an itinerary before traveling to the chain's 10-story flagship Paris store on Boulevard Haussmann. As a main tourist destination in Paris, this app helps visitors to Galeries Lafayette find what they are looking for within the large department store, acting as an extension of the customer service team ([see story](#)).

Making the retail experience positive is an important element of connecting with consumers. La Cave will also appeal to a different demographic.

"The appeal to the senses of 'foodies' is a smart move by Galleries Lafayette," Mr. Rodgeron said. "It's a growing segment with plenty of disposable income.

"I'm curious to see how long it will be before Lafayette or another upscale retailer do the same thing for the cigar audience."

Final Take

Kay Sorin, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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