

IN-STORE

Chanel strengthens ties to Hôtel Ritz Paris with branded spa

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Chanel CC Cream

By JEN KING

French fashion house Chanel is furthering its foray into skincare with the brand's first spa to be housed in the newly renovated Hôtel Ritz Paris.

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Luxury Daily

The Ritz Paris hotel closed in 2012 to undergo extensive renovations which are scheduled to be completed by year's end. Located in Paris' 1st arrondissement overlooking the border of the Place Vendôme, the hotel and fashion house's heritages are linked through Chanel's namesake founder, Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel, making the partnership attractive for the brand's enthusiasts.

"Having its first Chanel spa located in an iconic luxury hotel makes sense because it will attract affluent hotel guests who seek innovative and luxurious experiences found nowhere else," said Tiffany Dowd, founder and president of [Luxe Social Media](#), Boston. "Coco Chanel lived at the hotel for decades, and it's a nod to the hotel's legendary resident.

"As the first Chanel spa, it will attract a lot of attention from those who want to be the first to indulge in a completely Chanel spa experience," she said.

Ms. Dowd is not affiliated with Chanel or the Ritz Paris, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Chanel and the Ritz Paris were unable to comment directly.

A second home

For more than 30 years, Ms. Chanel called the Ritz Paris home, living in one of its suites until her death in 1971.

The 1,670-square-foot guest room has been rebranded since Ms. Chanel's death as the Coco Chanel Suite. Consisting of two bedrooms and a living area, the Ritz Paris has updated the suite as part of the property's total renovation.

In a statement Chanel explained that, "the story linking Chanel and the Ritz Paris would not be complete without the opening of a new Coco Chanel suite inspired by the one she originally occupied and by the decor she loved so much."

Since Ms. Chanel's death, the Ritz Paris has preserved the unique atmosphere the designer created in the suite by incorporating her own furniture into the room such as a beige suede settee with quilted cushions and a folding screen made from lacquered Coromandel.



Photo montage of the Coco Chanel Suite on the Ritz Paris' Web site

Chanel is continuing its association with the Ritz Paris through a new venture into skincare treatments through an in-house spa. Scheduled to open when the hotel's renovations are completed, the "Chanel au Ritz Paris" will offer guests and spa enthusiasts a beauty destination dedicated to the brand's skincare offerings.

Using Chanel's skincare products Chanel au Ritz Paris will "provide women with a unique sensorial and customized experience." A spa setting is a good testing ground for consumers who may be more familiar with Chanel's fragrances, and will present an opportunity for guests to sample the brand's skincare offerings without a commitment to purchase.

Chanel has promoted its skincare ranges through a number of digital initiatives, but the

category is not as popular as the brand's fragrances and cosmetics. The spa, especially due to the historic relevance and one-off nature, will likely drive brand enthusiasts to the Ritz Paris for a new branded experience.

As for the Ritz Paris, the buzz surround the first Chanel spa is sure to increase bookings and interest in the property as it prepares for its reopening. [Women's Wear Daily](#) is already wondering if the "towels [will] be quilted" and "the treatment tables upholstered in the same supple lamb leather as its iconic chain-handled bags?"

When the Ritz Paris reopens later this year—the property's largest renovation project in its 117-year history—the hotel will boast refurbished guest rooms and suites, updated restaurants, bars and leisure areas, in addition to the Chanel au Ritz Paris spa. Also, the hotel will house the Ritz Escoffier cooking school and the property's gardens.



Facade of the Ritz Paris, prior to the renovations

Double exposure

Spas are attractive to many consumers, both aspirational and established, due to the experiential nature of being pampered in a luxurious and sophisticated atmosphere.

For example, Estée Lauder Cos.' Crème de la Mer partnered with Le Spa at the Park Hyatt Paris-Vendôme to show off its expertise in skin and beauty care to the hotel's affluent guests.

La Mer's skincare products are used during spa treatments at Le Spa and allow for increased exposure among guests unfamiliar with the brand. Although many affluent travelers frequent spas while on vacation, using a well-known product with a highly-regarded formula may help indecisive guests book an appointment ([see story](#)).

In the retail space, spas have also become a focus as of late.

For instance, British department store Fortnum & Mason is creating a tranquil retreat for consumers by opening a holistic spa for relaxation and rejuvenation as an addition to its new second floor beauty department.

The Bamford Haybarn spa will offer consumers a peaceful haven from the busy streets of London, as well as a chance to experiment with the latest beauty treatments Fortnum & Mason has to offer. Creating a unique space for consumers to interact with products outside of the retail environment can forge a stronger, lasting connection than more traditional forms of advertising ([see story](#)).

For Chanel, the exposure the Chanel au Ritz Paris spa may lead to return visits for treatments and purchases after the initial product introduction.

"If guests are pleased with the results of their Chanel treatments, they will no doubt be interested in purchasing products creating a newfound loyalty to Chanel skincare," Ms. Dowd said.

Final Take

Jen King, lead reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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