

IN-STORE

Guerlain shares art, practice of perfumery at dedicated boutique

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Bottles of Guerlain's La Petite Robe Noire

By JEN KING

French beauty brand Guerlain is driving fans of its perfumes to a dedicated storefront on Paris' Rue Saint-Honor.

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Established in 1828, Guerlain made its name in the art of perfumery, and recently shuttered its historic boutique at Place Vendme to make way for the new storefront, which is dedicated entirely to its fragrance offerings. Guerlain's new address at 392 Saint-Honor puts the boutique in high-end company, with a number of other brands gravitating to the street from elsewhere in Paris.

"Many factors will contribute to the financial success or failure of a dedicated shop (location, rent, sales), but many of these can also have a branding function," said Gustavo Gomez, director of research and methodology at [Envirosell](#), New York. "A good location can be a very effective billboard' for the brand.

"As a consumer, there is something to be said about engaging in a specific category at a time," he said. "The experience can be more personable and educational. I would guess that this boutique is an olfactory experience.

"This is not something you can get at a department store. I would guess that Guerlain is offering something unique in this store than in any of its other retail locations. It should create a sense of exclusivity so that it becomes a destination for brand loyals and new customers alike."

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

[Guerlain](#) was unable to comment directly before press deadline.

At the heart

Wholly dedicated to perfume, the Saint-Honor storefront allows consumers to explore Guerlain's history in the category as well as learn about its wide offerings through hands-on and digital touchpoints.

As a storied luxury house, incorporating digital touch points within a retail space will assist Guerlain in appearing as modern to consumers unfamiliar with its wares and DNA.

Since the space is located just a "stone's throw" from its historic boutique, frequent consumers who visit often will not be inconvenienced due to the move. For those new to the brand, Guerlain's incorporation of digital touchpoints will aid in its welcome and introduction.

One of the informative decorations found in the boutique is a digitalized perfume organ.

Perfume organs are essential to perfume creation, and in this instance, Guerlain developed a digital application to verbalize emotions. Consumers are welcome to create a personal olfactory profile from Guerlain's library of nearly 100 fragrances, classified into 14 different fetish commodities.

guerlain.Boutique Saint Honore_News



Rendering of Guerlain's perfume shop on Rue Saint-Honor

The store also includes a "perfume cellar" that reflects light and maintains an ideal temperature of 33.8 degree Fahrenheit to preserve Guerlain's fragrances as if they were fine wine.

In a nod to brand founder Jacques Guerlain's "art and practice" of visiting with clients to gain an understanding of personalized tastes, the Guerlain shop on Saint-Honor offers the consumer bespoke options to create the perfume of her wishes.

Consumers can select bottle colors, neck nodes and tissue paper to share in the creative experience with Guerlain's perfumers. While visiting the Saint-Honor store, consumers can choose a Bee bottle in either white or gold, colors created specifically for the dedicated fragrance shop.

Next, the consumer can fill her bottle with one of Guerlain's 18 fragrances found in its perfume fountain at the store. Personalization continues to include a choice of tapes such as grosgrain, satin, wide and narrow and neck nodes including necktie, bowtie or twisted knot. Consumers can also elect to engrave a name on the bottle or embroider initials on the tape.

Guerlain's Bee bottle is often the subject of interpretation. For instance, Guerlain kicked off the new year with "intensity" and an explosion of colors.

For its collaboration with artist JonOne, Guerlain selected three of its cornerstone fragrances: Shalimar, which celebrated its 90th anniversary in 2015, La Petite Robe Noire and Rose Barbare. Rather than the corresponding bottle that goes with each of the three fragrances, Guerlain selected the classic crystal decanter with engraved bees, known as the Bee bottle, a design dating back to 1853 ([see story](#))



Honored to be on Saint-Honor

High-streets around the globe have been going under a transition period, as retail stretches such as Place Vendôme and Fifth Avenue in New York, begin to verge on becoming too mass market for exclusive luxury brands. This change has resulted in brands moving to quieter high-streets such as Rue Saint-Honor and Madison Avenue.

In terms of Rue Saint-Honor, U.S. fashion label Marc Jacobs is reconfiguring its Parisian retail strategy with a new storefront on the street.

According to Women's Wear Daily, the label will join the Rue Saint-Honor "juggernaut" after signing a lease to open the boutique in spring 2016. The new location will shutter Marc Jacobs' three storefronts nearby to take the place of a Dior Parfums pop-up shop at 36 Rue Saint-Honor ([see story](#)).

Also, British fashion label Alexander McQueen opened its first store in Paris on Saint-Honor, giving the brand a space to directly connect with consumers in the French capital.

McQueen has been showing its runway collections in Paris for years, and counts the city as one of its top markets, but until now, its retail footprint has been limited to wholesale placements in Galeries Lafayette, Printemps and Le Bon Marché, according to WWD. Owning the experience that consumers have while shopping enables a brand to elevate interaction and service ([see story](#)).

"[A] retail location is based on the company you keep," Mr. Gomez said. "Rue Saint-Honor with its boutiques and museums is a good location. It will get the high-end boutique crowd and the tourist crowd."

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