

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Christian Louboutin accents its signature red in moto-glam film

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Still from Christian Louboutin's Rouge Rutilant

By JEN KING

French footwear and accessories label Christian Louboutin is hitting the pavement with a cast of red-sole clad enfants terribles.

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For the spring/summer 2016 season, Christian Louboutin worked with Parisian creative label Pictoresq on a campaign film titled "Rouge Rutilant," or Dazzling Red in English. With red being the signature color of the brand, taking time to enforce its importance for a new collection will further consumers association between red soles and Christian Louboutin.

"There is an undeniably French element to the video," said Lauren Bates, storyteller at [Blue Moon Digital](#), Denver, CO. "It is glamorous, yet relaxed. Ambiguous, while decidedly sexy.

"Mostly, it has a rebellious element to it that speaks to adventurous millennials. Which is also very French with their devil many care attitudes," she said. "While most of the purchasing power still lies with baby boomers, many luxury retailers have embraced where the industry is headed.

"This is largely due to millennials and their purchasing and social habits. Not to mention, many (current) designer muses are millennials. It is an easy connection to make. But this short doesn't exclude anyone; it isn't solely focused on millennials. It really speaks to the adventurous nature in all of us."

Ms. Bates is not affiliated with Christian Louboutin, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Christian Louboutin](#) did not respond by press deadline.

Red rebels

Rouge Rutilant begins with a motorcyclist traveling down a windy country road. As the viewer gets a better look, they see that the driver is female and her sidecar passenger is a small dog wearing a red bandana around its neck.

While driver passes through the countryside with a look of determination, the camera pans on her metal studded handbag, furthering her tough "Rebel Without A Cause" image.

Soon the motorcyclist sees a cloud of smoke coming from a broken down car around the next bend. When closer, the camera pans to the car's driver, who is standing outside her broken down vintage MINI in striped platform pumps and clutching her handbag.

In the corner of the frame, the viewer sees that her car is red. A second vantage point shows that not only is the car red, but her nails, shirt, lips and the accents of her handbag are all the same shade of bing cherry.



Campaign still for Christian Louboutin's Rouge Rutilant

As the motorcyclist gets off her bike to help, the red soles of her loafers are seen. She then goes under the MINI's hood and tweaks its engine with a wrench as the woman looks on.

Although the viewer presumes the motorcyclist repaired the car, the next scene in Christian Louboutin's 90 second video shows the MINI's driver in the sidecar, pushing the hair from her face. Aspects of red are shown including the woman's soles and the red-hued lights of passing cars on the faces of both women.

The campaign video ends with the MINI driver standing outside the motorcycle at night, but without its driver. Before the words "to be continued" appear, the viewer catches a glimpse of her high-gloss red pumps and a small crystal-encrusted clutch.

Rouge Rutilant

On Christian Louboutin's social media accounts, the brand shared stills of the campaign video. Doing so allows interested consumers to see the pieces of the spring/summer 2016 more closely and with better detail than in the narrative.

Seeing red

For Rouge Rutilant, the color red is just as much a character in the story as the two protagonists since it is a fundamental aspect of the Christian Louboutin brand. Although it is unlikely to be intentional, the campaign's launch aligns with a trademark case brought before Switzerland's Federal Administrative Court earlier this month.

Christian Louboutin attempted to protect its red soles by registering them as a protected brand, but had been turned down by the court.

The Swiss Federal Administrative Court ruled in a statement published May 12 that the red soles are merely a decoration, rather than a brand, making them ineligible for a trademark. Christian Louboutin has been seeking sole ownership of its red soles, protecting itself legally from any copycat attempts ([see story](#)).



Christian Louboutin Homme

Other court cases have similar decided that Louboutin's red is not solely its own to claim.

In New York, Christian Louboutin brought a lawsuit against Saint Laurent, which had designed a monochromatic red shoe including a red sole. In 2012, the court threw out the case, saying that while the Louboutin trademark would remain intact, it would not prevent YSL from making its shoes, since they did not infringe upon the copyright.

The court decision surrounding the Yves Saint Laurent versus Christian Louboutin trademark case awarded each fashion house a small victory, but experts wondered if this was something that should have been started in the first place since the footwear designer ran the risk of losing its trademark all together ([see story](#)).

Given its court battles, Christian Louboutin takes its use of red as the color of its soles seriously.

"The video is named Rouge Rutilant, roughly translated is Dazzling Red," Ms. Bates said. "Which not only makes sense for the short, as there are several elements of red, but it is also a nod to the Louboutin brand narrative.

"How? The iconic red sole of their shoes. For many, when you think Christian Louboutin, you think red soles," she said. "The red elements are not the main focus of the video, much like the red soles aren't the focus of Louboutin shoes. Yet, they are an unmistakable and memorable component."