

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Christian Louboutin adds touch of glamour to Cuban olympians' attire

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Christian Louboutin x SportyHenri.com for the Cuban Olympic team

By STAFF REPORTS

Online concept store Sporty Henri and French footwear label Christian Louboutin have teamed to dress the Cuban national team for the upcoming Olympic Games in Brazil.

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The outfit created for the Cuban Olympians is meant to be worn by the athletes during formal occasions such as the closing ceremony of the games. The Cuban athletes worked directly with the footwear label and online retailer to shape and finalize the collection.

Ready... set... Rio

Christian Louboutin and Sporty Henri, which specializes in menswear, have created outfits for more than 100 Cuban athletes. Sporty Henri was established by former French handball player Henri Tai.

Cuba's best athletes will wear a clothing concept designed at a Parisian atelier. The outfit includes sharply tailored jackets in red for men and beige for women. The jacket is paired with either trousers or shorts and a skirt option for women.

A Cuban flag will be carried in the jacket's breast pocket and a five-point star, an emblem of luck, will be displayed on the back.



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The outfit is worn with a high-top sneaker or the Naza Star loafer for men designed by Christian Louboutin. Both shoe styles are made of calf leather to appeal to the lightness of gymnast Manrique Larduet Bicet and Mijain Lopez Nunez, a wrestler with a 16 foot size.

Female athletes will wear a kitten heel sandal to add a "touch of glamour."

Each athlete attended custom fittings to ensure the final look properly expresses Cuban chic and style, but without compromising ease and comfort for the Olympians.

"It's that elegance and fluidity of movement of someone who is so in control of their body that fascinates me," said Christian Louboutin in a brand statement.

"At the Olympics, it feels like these athletes put on performance gear and simultaneously turn into these superheroes that defy gravity, that defy time, that defy all rules of physics," he said. "We designed the celebratory outfit for the moment they turn back into humans, still in the glory moment, still in their light but heading back to the real world.

"We really want them to continue feeling amazing in their skin while looking astonishing."

Olympic athlete dressing gives brands a chance to show national pride.

At the last summer games in 2012, for example, lifestyle label Ralph Lauren created the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Closing Ceremony parade uniforms and village wear for the summer's games in a move to maintain brand affinity and position itself as a thought leader during one of the most-watched events every four years.

A brand that is known for its preppy, athletic-inspired collections, Ralph Lauren's designs featured all-white uniforms with touches of red and navy for its U.S. uniforms ([see story](#)).

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