

RETAIL

Harvey Nichols refines beauty department due to category innovation, excitement

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Promotional image for Harvey Nichols' newly renovated beauty department

By JEN KING

British department store chain Harvey Nichols has introduced a modern grooming parlor at its Knightsbridge, London flagship to highlight the category's must-haves.

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The ground floor of the Harvey Nichols flagship, which houses beauty, fragrance and accessories, recently underwent a 10-month renovation. The completed transformation of the department was recently unveiled alongside a retail concept that emphasizes innovative services, breaking away from the traditional model of beauty counter selling.

"The opening of our new beauty space is part of an ambitious master plan for Harvey Nichols and follows the successful launch of our new Menswear Destination," said Daniela Rinaldi, group commercial director at **Harvey Nichols**, London. "Significant investment has been made to create a pioneering and unrivaled new beauty destination in London.

"Unconventional and experimental design has been used to create a luxurious environment that moves away from the traditional branded shop fits to a more cohesive, boutique feel which is a game changer for us as a business and will create a real ease of journey for the customer," she said.

"The Beauty Lounge is all about the customer experience, and we are inviting customers to enjoy our exceptional services and impartial, complimentary advice from our Beauty Concierge team, who are able to advise on both skincare and makeup needs, taking into account all of our brands and what might suit the customer. This is the first dedicated service of its kind."

First impressions

Part of Harvey Nichols' larger redevelopment plan for its flagship, the newly refurbished beauty department moves away from the traditional retail concept of a space populated with branded counters.

Instead, the 13,000-square-foot space is designed to resemble a sophisticated and elegant boutique, appropriate for the discerning consumers of Harvey Nichols and the high-end and premium brands it carries.

The space was designed by architects Virgile + Partners who have merged digital imagery with marble and concrete to nurture ease and creativity.



Harvey Nichols' Beauty Lounge

Speaking of the project in a statement, Carlos Virgile, director at Virgile + Partners, said, "The brief was to create an alternative to tradition. A space with less visual noise, focusing on balance, refinement and most importantly, fluidity. In one glimpse the new floor encompasses everything Harvey Nichols should be about: style, energy, creativity and service."

The first phase of the beauty department's unveiling includes the Harvey Nichols' Beauty Lounge. The space features the first dedicated Beauty Concierge in the United Kingdom, offering consumers complimentary advice across brands and beauty services in-store.

Consumers can stop by Harvey Nichols to undergo express beauty treatments such as hair styling, manicures and pedicures, eyebrow shaping, lash extensions and skincare regimens. The space will also offer a rotating edit of new services in its state-of-the-art beauty rooms.

Similarly, a dedicated pop-up space will showcase a series of innovative brand installations and immersive experiences and launches from new brands.



Harvey Nichols' Beauty Lounge nail bar

Overall, the revamped department offers consumers more than 130 brands from the sector's best niche and global beauty names. Beauty brands new to the department include Chanel, Chantecaille, Dior and Hourglass.

In September, the beauty department will introduce a dedicated fragrance space. Once opened, the space will carry more than 50 of the industry's finest niche, bespoke and global fragrance offerings.

Come November, the final phase of the ground floor will be reopened. This last area will display an edit of international accessories, fine jewelry and eyewear.

To promote the Harvey Nichols' Beauty Lounge, the retailer held a social contest that asked consumers to tweet their best beauty remedies for when a pick-me-up is needed. Consumers were asked to use the hashtag #HairOfTheDog and included a cheeky video of a model and her dog, in front of a wind machine, making it hard to tell whose mane is whose. The winner and a friend received complimentary beauty services.

Also, Harvey Nichols invited its consumers July 21 to explore the beauty department through behind-the-scenes content shared to its Snapchat account.

At your service

As an accessible entry-point for aspirational consumers, many of the industry's leading retailers have revamped their beauty and fragrance departments, often placing weight on services and interaction.

In 2014 for example, London department store Harrods took a new approach to displaying the numerous fragrances it carries with a new perfumery retail concept.

Harrods' marketing strategy for fragrances, Salon de Parfums, is housed on the department store's sixth floor rather than within the Beauty Halls had been before. Salon de Parfums is meant to create an intimate consumer experience due to the personal nature of purchasing a fragrance ([see story](#)).

Also, British department store Fortnum & Mason created 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 offers 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](#)).

"Luxury beauty is a category that continues to perform strongly for Harvey Nichols well ahead of market growth for the past three years," Ms. Rinaldi said. "The opening of our ground floor flagship space follows huge success for the brand across U.K. stores, particularly at our dedicated beauty retail space Beyond Beauty in Liverpool.

"Our buy is reflective of this confidence in the market as well as the innovation and excitement in the beauty category," she said. "We have the best edit of established and niche brands, both new and existing, which is what we are known for and why our customers shop with Harvey Nichols."

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