

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Christian Louboutin proclaims its Italian appreciation in menswear film

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Christian Louboutin, Les Napolitains, fall/winter 2016

By JEN KING

French footwear label Christian Louboutin has brought the "boys of summer" to Naples to pay homage to the Italian city's legacy of artisanship.

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Although Christian Louboutin is a brand of French origin, its shoes are crafted in Italy, making its appreciation for Italian culture and craftsmanship deep rooted. Christian Louboutin's Les Napolitains, part social video exploring Naples and the nearby coast, part editorial content, shows off its men's footwear for fall/winter 2016-17, and gives a sneak peek of the spring/summer 2017 season ahead.

"Although Christian Louboutin is a French brand, France and Italy are commonly associated with premium and luxury quality and experiences," said Romey Louangvilay, chief curator and director of digital marketing at [Curate Directive](#), New York. "The brand is all about hand crafted luxury, and filming the video in Italy only complements the brand further by highlighting and zoning in on the quality message of its product.

"Brands often forget to highlight a location as part of a campaign, when the locale is a key element to establishing a storyline and affective campaign," he said. "The location sets the mood, establishes the tone and provides more context to the brand position.

"Christian Louboutin seamlessly connected Naples, which is commonly associated with artisanal, hand craft designs and products, to its brand ethos."

Mr. Louangvilay is not affiliated with [Christian Louboutin](#), but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Christian Louboutin](#) was unable to respond by press deadline.

A visit to Naples

Christian Louboutin's "Boys of Summer" video for the Les Napolitains campaign was shot by Brooklyn-based photographer Loug Delcy of Dapper Lou. Mr. Delcy was joined by influencers Rocky Casale, Joe Kenneth Museau, Kerri Dowridge, Daniel Timothy Randall and award-winning mixologist Nicolas Battafarano for the effort.

The 80-second video begins with land and cityscape shots of Naples and the Amalfi Coast, before four men are seen walking from under an archway on the street below.



Still from Christian Louboutin's Boys of Summer film, part of the Les Napolitains campaign

Paired with up beat jazz instrumentals, Christian Louboutin juxtaposed images of Naples and the surrounding area with the four men as they walk through the city, meeting others as they traverse the small, cobblestone streets.

While the group of men converse, walk the town and lounge on a docked boat, the video focuses on a number of Christian Louboutin styles. The shoes featured range from the avant-garde to more casual day shoes and formal styles.

Throughout the film, viewers are given a glimpse of Naples' personality by showing clothes hung out to dry, graffiti, elderly fishermen in small wooden boats, as well as speedboats exploring the coastline.

Likewise, the personalities of the featured men are apparent as they laugh, dance and explore Naples.

Christian Louboutin's Boys of Summer

Describing the effort further, the brand explains in accompanying copy that it has "unabashed personal style taking the lead." Also, "the men of Les Napolitains are empowered by a legacy of artisanship and precision detailing evident on both elegant, reinvented classics and colorful, fashion-forward styles."

The footwear label, looking to establish a sense of place and transparency, filmed the campaign in Naples due to its brand ties to the area. Christian Louboutin footwear is Made in Italy by a small, family-owned factory by artisans with "skill, dedication and love of the craft."

Brand codes

If not sense of place, Christian Louboutin finds inspiration in its brand signifiers such as its signature red soles.

To promote its spring/summer 2016 women's collection, Christian Louboutin hit the pavement with a cast of red-sole clad enfants terribles.

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 ([see story](#)).

The brand's notoriety has also been translated into additional product categories.

Last year for example, Christian Louboutin launched lipsticks and nail polishes.

The packaging of both the nail polish and lipstick tubes resemble the high heels that have brought the brand fame. Unlike a traditional lipstick tube, Rouge Louboutin, for instance, comes to a point at the end as if it were the heel of a stiletto, with the cap resembling the embellishments often added to the brand's footwear ([see story](#)).

For Les Napolitains and Boys of Summer, Christian Louboutin ties together brand imagery to create a sense of lifestyle.

"All of the video's elements communicate a specific lifestyle story to its viewers," Mr. Louangvilay said. "With the backdrop being set in Naples, viewers have the anticipation it will focus on an artisanal aspect of the brand, while the influencers in the campaign essentially become the eyes and ears for the viewers, experiencing the location.

"The influencers live the lifestyle that many Christian Louboutin customers live or aspire to live, while the city adds

that context to put everything together in a visual package," he said.

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