

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Moynat reimagines lost Russian leather for contemporary collection

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Moynat leather; image by Jerome Bryon

By STAFF REPORTS

French accessories house Moynat is reviving a material largely forgotten by the fashion industry for the last century.

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Russian leather was prevalent in leather goods production for 300 years, due to its renowned traits such as durability and a smoky aroma. After the Bolshevik Revolution began at the beginning of the 1900s, this leather practically disappeared from use, but Moynat is reinventing the material for today in a collection due out next year.

Research and reinvention

Russian leather's "mythical" properties came from its unique tanning process, which was kept a secret. Produced from the 17th century through to the early 20th century, the material became popular in Western Europe in the 1700s.

Around 1922, during the Russian Revolution, this leather disappeared.

Moynat worked with Tanneries Roux, a fellow holding of its parent company LVMH, to rediscover the formula used by Russian tanneries for the leather. They then updated this approach, calling the result "Imperial Calfskin."



Moynat's leather; image by Jerome Bryon

This exclusive leather will be used in a collection by Moynat creative director Ramesh Nair slated for 2017.

Moynat's choice to bring back Russian leather reflects its own resurgence, which has been steady over the past few years. The house went dark in the 1970s, reemerging when LVMH CEO Bernard Arnault bought the rights to the brand in 2010 ([see story](#)).

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