

RETAIL

London luxury goes on botanical safari

May 23, 2017



Hackett London's Chelsea in Bloom display for 2017

By STAFF REPORTS

Giorgio Armani and Smythson are among the retailers showcasing their green thumb in honor of the Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show.

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Feting the annual gardening affair in London, Cadogan Estates has launched its 12th annual Chelsea in Bloom event, with retailers, hotels and restaurants transforming their facades into botanical creations. Associated with the RHS, this event acts as an extension of the show, allowing luxury brands to get in on the action within their own boutiques.

Flora and fauna

Chelsea in Bloom encourages creativity, with an expert panel judging the submissions and bestowing awards on the top designs. In addition, consumers are able to voice their own opinion, voting via the event's Web site to crown a People's Champion.

Up from May 22-27, the theme for this year's garden-inspired creations is Floral Safari.

Taking the memo, Brunello Cucinelli has constructed a savannah outside its store, with a snake slithering across the doorway.

Armani's Sloane Street store windows have been taken over by a group of monkeys. Crafted in Pennisetum grass, the animals sway as if in nature. Also referencing the fauna that exist on safari, Hugo Boss mixed orchids and greenery with zebra print.

Smythson worked with florist Amanda Willgrave to create two life-size giraffes. These creatures stand on either side of the store entrance, which has been embellished with an acacia tree.



Smythson's display for Chelsea in Bloom 2017

Along with the creations outside of the boutiques, a number of brands are also hosting thematic experiences inside. For instance, Kiehl's will be teaching visitors how to craft terrariums or hand-tied bouquets, while Penhaligon's will be offering gifts with purchase.

The Chelsea Flower Show is also drawing luxury participation. Fortnum & Mason has resumed its relationship with the show, acting as official Champagne partner.

Expecting about 165,000 visitors, the Chelsea Flower Show sold out weeks before the event.

The show has been a popular partner for luxury retail over the years.

In 2015, Harrods brought its involvement in the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in-stores through a host of initiatives throughout May.

For the first time in the retailer's history it had a concept garden at the annual flower show May 19-23 that uses the art of perfume as a main theme. To celebrate the retailer's first, along with the gardens and the start of summer, Harrods has developed a storewide campaign called "Pop-up Flowers" ([see story](#)).

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