

RETAIL

Printemps homes in on interior inspiration with multilevel maison concept

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Promotional image for Printemps de la maison

By SARAH JONES

French department store chain Printemps is moving into a new dedicated home store to demonstrate Parisian art de vivre.

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Situated at its 61 Rue Caumartin building, Printemps de la maison is modeled after a Parisian apartment, with three floors showcasing products for main areas of the home. Reflecting the growing trend of retail spaces functioning as more than commercial spaces, the home store will play host to activations each weekend.

"First, the goal here is to sell more than pieces but to sell the whole apartment, the whole look," said **Gustavo Gomez**, a retail consultant based in San Diego. "There are shoppers interested in making over their home.

"For some consumers, it is not about replacing or building a personal look through individually collected pieces but of buying the whole look in one instance," he said. "Instead of hiring an interior designer, they would like to order something they like.

"Second, this doesn't hurt individual piece sales, but actually, enhances it by putting the piece in context. It's a win/win idea for Printemps.

"Third, it is experiential retail. The apartment concept lets the shopper experience what it is like to live in the space. This experience enhances the imagination and creates dream retail."

Mr. Gomez is not affiliated with **Printemps**, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. **Printemps** was reached for comment.

Open house

Of the 130 brands carried in Printemps' 8,000-square-foot home store, 80 are new to the retailer. The list includes silver maker Christofle, linens label Yves Delorme and furniture brand Vitra.

As in a home, merchandising displays products thematically. First, consumers explore a space focused on contemporary living, with lighting and furnishing designs.

Floor three is dedicated to the kitchen, with both cookware and tableware. Finally, floor four retreats to the bedroom and bathroom with linens, decor and additions such as candles.



Inside Printemps de la Maison

Personal shoppers with interior design expertise will be accessible to help guide consumers through their purchasing decisions.

For its new home store, Printemps turned to interior design firm Maison Sarah Levoine.

Taking the launch beyond the home space, the designer has taken over the atrium at Printemps' Boulevard Hausmann flagship, showcasing her aesthetic from May 16 through August 19.

Ms. Levoine wanted to recreate the feeling of being at the shore in the French beach town Cap Ferret, evoking the beachy atmosphere through a bright color palette. Additional details such as surfboards as wall decor also bring the coastal setting to life in Paris.



Sarah Levoine's Printemps atrium takeover

This ephemeral concept store includes brand partners such as Hermès, Puiforcat, Lalique and Baccarat. Bernadaud's limited-edition collaboration with artist Jeff Koons to recreate his metal balloon sculptures in porcelain will also be available.

Those who visit the concept shop-in-shop from Thursday to Sunday from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. will have a chance to sample the Cap Ferret chouquettes, or cream puffs.

Homecoming

As consumers' perspectives on the definition of a good life lean more toward well-being than accumulation, retailers are focusing on home items that blend lifestyle aspirations and experiences.

For instance, British department store chain Selfridges is giving consumers food for thought in a multichannel campaign that asks them to consider what home means to them.

"Our House" aims to address the evolving nature of the home, as technology takes time away from domestic tasks

and geopolitical and economic fluctuations make the possibility of home ownership more of a dream than a reality for many. This inviting initiative, running from March 31 to June 9, aims to be an oasis from current unrest while also looking back on Selfridges' roots ([see story](#)).

Italian fashion house Fendi similarly gave its home furnishings their own retail environment with the opening of its first Fendi Casa flagship.

The dedicated Fendi Casa boutique is located on Milan's via Montenapoleone nearby to Fendi's fashion boutique. Opened to coincide with Salone del Mobile ([see story](#)), the 4,300-square-foot store allows Fendi to showcase its brand story through a different product category ([see story](#)).

"Luxury retail has been moving in this direction for many years," Mr. Gomez said. "The idea is to sell lifestyles and not just products. The home is a natural extension of this lifestyle concept.

"Luxury brands and home good companies have always fashioned room to showcase their merchandise as groups of products, so this is a logical way for a luxury brand to go," he said. "Think of it like Ikea but much more luxurious.

"Again, this is also about experience retailing. Luxury brands should be at the forefront of this retailing, but somehow many of them are playing catch-up.

"I expect more stores to move away from selling chairs and move towards selling living rooms. There can always be a kiosk in the corner or a Web site to sell a variation of a chair that is part of the 'apartment.'"

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