

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Balenciaga extends New York reach to uptown crowd

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Balenciaga's Madison Avenue store is designed to resemble a production facility. Image courtesy of Balenciaga

By STAFF REPORTS

Kering-owned label Balenciaga is bringing its new store concept to New York's Upper East Side with the opening of a new Madison Avenue boutique.

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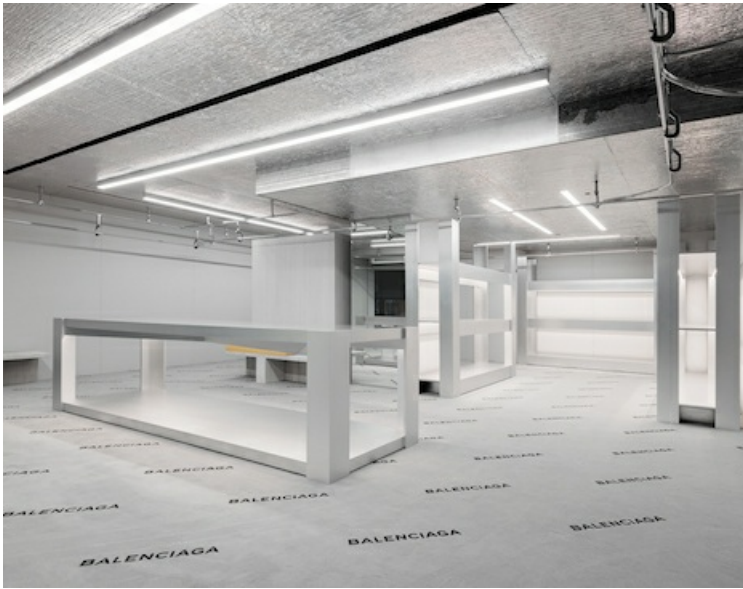
The 1,800-square-foot store at 840 Madison reflects creative director Demna Gvasalia's minimalist, industrial approach to the house. Prior to this opening, Balenciaga's store presence in New York was concentrated downtown, making this additional point of sale an opportunity to expand its reach.

New look

Along with the Madison store, Balenciaga has a flagship in New York's SoHo neighborhood, which carries both men's and women's wear. These two stores were the first to open after former creative director Alexander Wang took the helm.

Now, Mr. Gvasalia is putting his stamp on Balenciaga. Following in the footsteps of the remodel of Balenciaga's Paris flagship that debuted in March, the store mimics the feel of a production facility.

Clothing is displayed on fixtures that resemble conveyor belts. These hang from aluminum foil tubes attached to the ceiling.



Inside Balenciaga's Madison Avenue store. Image courtesy of Balenciaga

Other factory-style touches include aluminum tables, leather-covered benches, concrete and glass. Changing rooms are partitioned by silicon curtains for added effect.

Enlivening the industrial space, Balenciaga included a logo carpet that premiered at its fall/winter 2016 women's wear show. The label also commissioned statues from American Artist Marc Jenkins, whose work depicts surreal human forms.

In the near future, Balenciaga will also open a new store on Paris' Avenue Montaigne this fall, which will also follow the same industrial concept.

Balenciaga also took an extremely minimalist approach for its recently redesigned Web site.

The label's new digital flagship features no imagery on the homepage, opting for "directness and clarity" over romanticism. Balenciaga's simplified approach puts the focus on ecommerce over branding, with menus that lead to collection viewing rather than content ([see story](#)).

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