

IN-STORE

## C&A tries on luxury with Brazil flagship redesign

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By RACHEL LAMB

Northern European retailer C&A stepped up its game with the launch of a super-luxurious flagship at the Iguatemi mall in Sao Paulo, Brazil, drawing eyes to its sleek new look from major luxury brands.

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When asked by the mall to elevate its appearance to conform to the likes of its upscale neighbors, C&A redesigned its entire store. It now attracts much more affluent consumers who come to the mall and shop at the location alongside international brands.

“What we had to do is to reimagine the brand experience in a retail section to attract a more affluent customer,” said Jay Highland, vice president of brand and marketing at [Chute Gerdeman](#), Columbus, OH, the firm that designed the new store.

“[C&A] is very apt at knowing what it is their Brazilian customers want, and it transformed the way that people see the brand,” he said. “We worked on expressing the brand through materials and experiences that speak to the luxury shopper.”

**C&A** is a Northern European company with markets in Asia, India, Europe and Mexico.

Luxe flux

The Iguatemi shopping center is the most prestigious in Brazil with marketers such as Louis Vuitton, Prada and Tiffany & Co.

C&A transformed not only the materials in the store, but the way that consumers felt when they walked inside.



### *The entryway*

“From the entryway to the journey that customers take through the store is different,” Mr. Highland said. “Lighting and material finishes are a huge part of the design solution.”

Customized chandeliers and crystal reflection played a role in the lighting change.

There is a cut-glass wall that has warm and hot, sexy colors that overlap in an undulating wave, per Mr. Highland.

Materials in the store contrast between high-gloss and matte finishing while the floors are a melted gold tile.

“The whole thing has Brazilian spirits, which is a warm and happy effervescence,” Mr. Highland said.

To celebrate the opening, C&A held an event that featured a fashion show with Victoria's Secret models walking down the store's giant staircase.



*Staircase in the store*

Lines for the event were reportedly around the block, and the store almost ran out of product, per Mr. Highland.

BRICs and mortar

Brazil, along with the other members of the BRIC – Brazil, Russia, India, China – markets are blossoming as of late.

C&A markets its products to the customers of the location. For instance, its inventory in its Brazil store is completely different than its stores in Shanghai.

The remodel of the Iguatemi mall location was designed especially for Brazilian female shoppers, and it has transformed the way that consumers think of the brand.

For instance, the redesigned C&A store has collaborated with local Brazilian designers as well as an exclusive line with Stella McCartney.

The new store will surely place C&A in the eyes of other designers as well as serve as a launching pad for new initiatives with luxury brands, per Mr. Highland.

As the luxury world continues to look at Brazil, it is likely that it will keep an eye on C&A as well.

“This store is where you have a singular brand experience,” Mr. Highland said. “For C&A and for Brazil, it gives them a fashion address.

“It gives them street credit in the fashion world and shows that they are a very serious player in the industry,” he said.

Final Take

*Rachel Lamb is associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York*

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