

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Chanel heads to the seaside for brand history lesson

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Still from Inside Chanel "Deauville." Image credit: Chanel

By SARAH JONES

French fashion label Chanel is transporting consumers to another place and time to delve into the inspiration behind its founder's trailblazing designs.

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The 22nd chapter of the brand's Inside Chanel series centers on Deauville, France, the coastal resort that influenced Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel's freeing take on fashion. Inside Chanel offers snapshots of the brand's history, explaining the origins of house codes and philosophies through film.

"This was the turning point of [Coco Chanel's] design career," said Romey Louangvilay, communications director at [ELMNTL](#), New York. "Her travels on the boat as well as the people of the community she was visiting.

"She saw the current trends and improved on them, as well as created beautiful clothes inspired by everything she saw," he said. "This point in her life is what few people know about and it's a good lesson for people to know how infamous designers started."

Mr. Louangvilay is not affiliated with Chanel, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Chanel](#) was reached for comment.

On vacation

The episode of Inside Chanel is set in Deauville in 1912, when Ms. Chanel is 29. Setting the scene, the video explains that the seaside resort offered a place for the designer to be openly seen with her lover Boy Capel.

Among the influences for Ms. Chanel at Deauville were the boats on the water, striped sailor shirts and Mr. Capel's jackets.



Inside Chanel 22 looked at Deauville. Image credit: Chanel

This time marked a turning point, as automobiles were replacing carriages and sporting culture was growing.

Contrary to the relaxed environment, the women of the Belle Epoque era were still wearing corsets and complicated hairstyles.

Ms. Chanel set out to change this. She eventually cuts her hair short, and she was inspired to give women bathing suits and clothing that they could more easily move around in.

During her time in Deauville, Ms. Chanel also accompanied Mr. Capel to equestrian activities including horse racing and polo matches. After borrowing an oversize pullover from an athlete, she supposedly decided to use jersey in her designs.

The film also discusses the opening of Ms. Chanel's boutique in Deauville. Ms. Chanel's hats and accessories found an audience with the wealthy vacationers, setting the stage for the further growth of her brand.

Deauville - Inside Chanel

Chanel's video is illustrated by archival footage from Deauville, bringing the seaside experience of Ms. Chanel to life for viewers.

Concentrating on Chanel

A recent episode of Chanel's pseudo-documentary series on the life of Ms. Chanel focuses on three verbs that the woman herself applied to every aspect of her life: conquer, master and love.

These three make up the bulk of the video's almost stream-of-consciousness style ([see story](#)).

Chanel also walked viewers through the history of the brand's relationship to the camellia flower from the perspective of the flower itself for a previous Inside Chanel video installment.

The fashion label has a long-term relationship with the beautiful scentless flower, and is painting a beautiful picture of its history for its more recent film. Inside Chanel details a variety of historic moments and chronicles Chanel's past, supporting a stronger relationship with fans ([see story](#)).

"This communicates the brand's history and where it came from," [ELMNTL](#)'s Mr. Louangvilay said. "It shows the evolution of how the brand started and why it's still one of the most popular fashion houses today.

"While Chanel is an established heritage brand, there are still younger people who may not be familiar with the brand," he said. "This video was good way to re-introduce the brand to a new set of consumers and to remind existing loyal fans the legacy of Chanel. This also provided a great brand story for newer consumers to learn about the brand."