

RETAIL

Saks opens trend-centric townhouse during NYFW

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Saks is launching a pop-up during New York Fashion Week. Image credit: Saks

By SARAH JONES

Department store chain Saks Fifth Avenue is extending its retail footprint in New York during Fashion Week with an experiential pop-up.

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For four days, the Saks It List Townhouse will translate the magalog editorial feature to a physical display in Greenwich Village. As the fashion crowd descends on New York for fashion week, this townhouse will enable Saks to engage style-conscious consumers.

"The Saks It List is a curated edit of the best trends seen on the runway, so we couldn't think of a better time to bring it to life than during New York Fashion Week," said Emily Essner, senior vice president of marketing and digital at [Saks Fifth Avenue](#), New York.

"We wanted to use the It List to create a one-of-a-kind experience for our customers where they could be immersed in the trends, but also shop them," she said.

"Saks is a New York icon and the eyes of the world are on the city this week. We look forward to creating an interactive destination for our customers and building awareness around the Saks It List."

Welcome home

The townhouse, presented in partnership with American Express and *Harper's Bazaar*, will bring six fall runway trends to life. The trends encapsulated range from "Wild Wild West" to "Mad for Plaid."

Curated by Saks, the townhouse's environment is aimed at being social media friendly, prompting visitors to snap selfies. Included within various rooms are ball pits, a lit up ping pong table and fake snow.



Visitors can pose for photo opps in ball pits

The townhouse's lower level includes a space that has been covered wall-to-wall with a collage of fashion photography and the repeated quote "Fearless fashion starts at Saks."



The townhouse is designed to be Instagrammable

Items displayed throughout the space from brands including Burberry, Dolce & Gabbana Givenchy will be available for purchase on-site.

Creating an extension of the experience for *Harper's Bazaar* readers, the It List themes are also featured in an advertorial within the magazine's September issue.

"American Express, Saks and *Harper's Bazaar* worked closely to create each immersive, experiential and shoppable room within the townhouse," said Christopher Cracchiolo, vice president of global membership rewards and loyalty benefits at [American Express](#), New York. "We know that Platinum Card Members want one-of-a-kind experiences, so

we designed the space to truly bring the latest fashion trends to life in a social-media friendly and also shoppable way.

"Saks has been an American Express Membership Rewards partner for more than 20 years and are a top luxury retailer of choice for our Consumer Platinum Card Members," he said.



The townhouse brings trends such as Western-inspired garb to life

American Express cardholders will get perks such as expedited entry to the townhouse and access to an exclusive event with designer Jeremy Scott and *Harper's Bazaar* editor Glenda Bailey.

American Express customers who use their platinum card at the townhouse will be able to use the Shop Saks with Platinum benefit. Launched earlier this summer, this allows cardholders to get up to \$100 in statement credits for purchases made at Saks Fifth Avenue.

Saks First cardholders will also be given faster entry to the townhouse.

Located at 80 Washington St., the townhouse is open to the public from Sept. 7 through 10.

Experiential retail

Experiences are an increasingly important aspect of retail. Taking this to heart, a number of brands have launched spaces that offer a different take on retail.

Retailer MatchesFashion is leaning into fashion's trend towards experiential marketing, blending retail, digital and content together in a new concept.

MatchesFashion's 5 Carlos Place is the online retailer's newly opened physical house that will act as what it is calling a "creative broadcasting space." The idea will see a multitude of cultural events as well as digital initiatives, following other innovators in retail ([see story](#)).

Beyond the pop-up, Saks is offering New Yorkers a front row seat to fashion at its flagship store.

The retailer is giving a boost to the visibility of U.S. fashion brands with an "Americana" window display.

High-fashion tends to be dominated by European brands from the major fashion groups such as LVMH and Kering. Ahead of New York Fashion Week, Saks is hoping to give American fashion brands a much-needed boost at its Fifth Avenue location by putting U.S. brands front and center in its window displays ([see story](#)).

"The It List is so important to us it's the embodiment of service for our customer, highlighting the must-have trends of the season," Ms. Essner said. "Although a new iteration of the It List is featured in the Saks book every fall and spring, we took this opportunity with American Express and Harper's Bazaar to debut it in an innovative, experiential and shareable way."