

RETAIL

Galleries Lafayette rethinks luxury retail with Champs-lyses store

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Galleries Lafayette's store on the Champs-Élysées is opening this week. Image credit: Galleries Lafayette

By STAFF REPORTS

French department store chain Galleries Lafayette is aiming to make shopping more entertaining, intimate and curated at its soon-to-open Champs-lyses flagship in Paris.

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Opening to the public on March 28, the almost 70,000-square-foot store relies on a combination of technology, service and experiences to meet the demand for retail that goes beyond what ecommerce can offer. This latest store concept reflects Galleries Lafayette's move towards more omnichannel retail, enabling it to test new ideas.

"Our company is currently undergoing an in-depth transformation designed to make it an omnichannel retail leader, a French fashion specialist and an international beacon," said Nicolas Houz, CEO of Galleries Lafayette and BHV Marais, in a statement. "The inauguration of Galleries Lafayette Champs-lyses is a fundamental step towards fulfilling the goal we have set ourselves.

"This new store concept will be a retail laboratory' and transform our brand's relationship with its customers, partners and employees," he said. "In this respect, it is a response to emerging new consumer and collaboration practices. It is open to all the ideas that are transforming the world."

New concept

Galleries Lafayette's store is situated at 60 Champs-lyses in an Art Deco building. Architect Bjarke Ingels and his eponymous firm redesigned the space, creating a store that allows for a flow of movement for shoppers, facilitating wandering and discovery.

The ground floor is home to beauty and event spaces, which will host pop-ups and other happenings. Up a level is trend-driven fashion, including spaces for drops and see-now, buy-now merchandise, while luxury labels occupy the third floor.

From March 28 to April 21, Chanel will be celebrating the store's opening with a special event and assortment.

Encouraging dwelling, the basement contains the first food court in Paris that is open seven days a week, and the third floor will house a 50-seat restaurant.

Throughout the building, Mr. Ingels played with transparency, with elements such as glass showcases opening up the space with natural light and visibility. This marks the architect's first retail project.

Decorating the store's atrium is a commissioned work from artist group Superflex. The light installation is positioned at 15 feet, bringing shoppers' attention to the expected sea level height in the next century.

Differentiating the store with its own branding, Galeries Lafayette tapped M/M Paris to develop a special logo. The resulting brand identity is based on a pair of dice, and will be used on everything from shopping bags to the store's faade.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

Nouveau concept, nouveaux codes, @galerieslafayettechampselysees ouvrent leurs portes au 60 avenue des Champs-Elyses, le 28 mars. . . . #staytuned #galerieslafayettechampselysees #galerieslafayette #champselysees #Paris

A post shared by Galeries Lafayette (@galerieslafayette) on Mar 24, 2019 at 7:11am PDT

Instagram post from Galeries Lafayette

The merchandise selection is focused on curation. Galeries Lafayette appointed Clara Cornet to oversee the visual identity and merchandise selection at its upcoming Champs-lyses location in Paris, drawing on her experience working for concept stores Opening Ceremony and The Webster ([see story](#)).

Responding to the digital changes in retail, Galeries Lafayette also took a new approach to training the frontline staff for its upcoming Champs-lyses flagship.

The 300 sales advisors, who are called "personal stylists," underwent a program developed by the Galeries Lafayette Academy and IFM to help them deliver an omnichannel, client-centric shopping experience to visitors ([see story](#)).

Personal stylists will be aided by a mobile application and in-store technology, including smart hangers. Through the hangers, consumers can request their size and have it waiting for them in a fitting room.

"In a world where ecommerce is growing at breakneck speed, where customers consume according to their needs using their own chosen distribution channels, where brands are developing increasingly powerful concepts all over the world, our challenge is to offer a 360-degree narrative that's both inspiring and different and presented in a store that's a trend-setter and knows what its customers want," said Nadia Dhouib, director of Galeries Lafayette Champs-lyses, in a statement.

As Galeries Lafayette moves into its new address, it is giving back to its new street by supporting the refurbishment of the Rond-Point des Champs-lyses fountains.

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