

HOME FURNISHINGS

French silversmith Christofle undertakes its most radical makeover yet

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Little for everyone: Christofle mood party tray as part of its Art of Versatility approach. Image credit: Christofle

By MICKEY ALAM KHAN

French silversmith Christofle has undergone a root-and-branch makeover, ditching its Art of Sharing positioning for an Art of Living approach to its newly expanded line of products.

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The repositioning comes a year and a half after McKinsey veteran Nathalie Remy took over as CEO with the mandate to make Christofle relevant to younger affluent consumers and discerning corporate customers.

"It's a hundred percent growth strategy we're going after," Ms. Remy said.

Founded in 1830 by Charles Christofle, the brand is currently owned by Dubai-based Chalhoub Group.



Christofle tableware. Image credit: Christofle

Art and science

The new strategy is simple. Make **Christofle** a strong, desirable luxury brand with a consumer-centric model, supported by an effective omnichannel commercial network and reliable operations.

Top of the to-do list was the brand mission: Reinventing conviviality of today and tomorrow by turning the "Art of Sharing" into a true "Art of Living."

"We're not only a creator of products, but a creator of conviviality," Ms. Remy said.

A new visual identity was key to convey the new identity. The logo was changed from a more classic running script to an all-caps, sturdier Christofle typeface.

CHRISTOFLE

PARIS

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Christofle's new typeface. Image credit: Christofle

The brand color was also changed to "peacock green," which is a mix of petrol blue and dark green.

Warm and elegant, this shade of green is a cultural reminder of the role that green has played in Christofle's history.

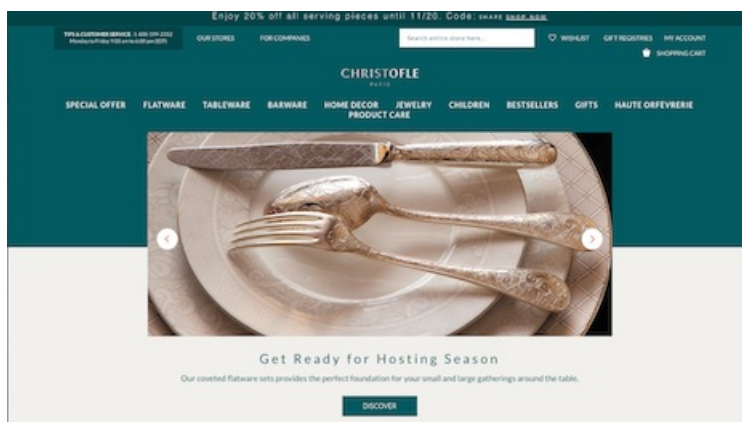
As the company puts it, this contemporary version is both seductive and noble, reflecting the brand's luxurious nature and offering hints of warmth or cold to complement Christofle's material of choice, silver.

The coat of arms received a similar contemporizing touch. The revised updated visual emphasized the brand's emblematic C, enhanced by the symbols of scales to connote fairness and stars that stand for quality.

A simplified version of the drapes held open on each side of the coat of arms reaffirms the brand's openness and willingness to engage with the world.

The royalty-evoking crown that tops the coat of arms has been given a softer look to make it seem friendlier. The year 1830 sits above the crown to signify the brand's long history.

The biggest change, however, is in the product assortment.



Christofle's homepage. Image credit: Christofle

Skewing right

Christofle has created five product universes: dining, bar, home decoration, jewelry and personal accessories, and children. All of these categories are linked to consumer moments.

"We want to move from the 18th-century dining room into the American kitchen," Ms. Remy said of the focus of her most important market.

To that end, Christofle is nothing if not ambitious. It is introducing 4,500 products across the five categories.

In dining, it has expanded to kitchen accessories, chef knives, cutting boards and new flatware.

The barware will boast more modern designs across its cocktails, wine and Champagne lines.

The home decoration range is being reconfigured around gifts such as picture frame, lighting, candles, indoor gardening items, pots and fragrances.

Jewelry gets a similar update, with the first line for men including rings and cufflinks in addition to bracelets and pendants for women. Writing accessories will complement.

Children's products are a special area of focus, with a calculation of lifetime value by getting them young.

"We want to remain the king of baby showers starting with the silver spoon," Ms. Remy said. "We want to help celebrate and keep the memories and go through the life of the child.

"We are a sustainable alternative to any children's gifting," she said.



Christofle's line of children's products. Image credit: Christofle

Christofle's workshop employed 170 people last year across 12,000 square meters, with craftsmen and women working on sterling silver and silver metal cutlery.

Some of the expanded line of products will be made elsewhere, according to Christofle. But the vendors have been chosen with care and a nod to the brand's heritage and practice.

"People have to understand that everything that we do is handmade," Ms. Remy said.

Distribution has been given a hard look.

The omnichannel commercial model includes wholesale, retail and franchise, ecommerce, hospitality and business-to-business.

Christofle's retail network of 53 company stores worldwide will play a key role in conveying its new look. So will ecommerce at Christofle.com and its social media pages.



Note the old logo on the Christofle flagship store in Paris, now changed to the new look, of course. Image credit: Christofle

MS. REMY KNOWS she has her work cut out transforming a heritage brand.

"We have the complexity of the big brands, but not the scale," she said.

Created to be shared: Christofle's new positioning

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