

RETAIL

Saks Fifth Avenue reopens all 40 stores in North America with New York flagship's return to business

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Saks Fifth Avenue New York main floor with hand sanitizer station at left. Image courtesy of Saks Fifth Avenue

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Department store chain Saks Fifth Avenue has reopened its New York flagship, completing its phased approach to resuming operations in the United States and Canada after a brutal government-imposed lockdown to curb the COVID-19 coronavirus' spread.

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The Saks store on Fifth Avenue is one of New York's prime retail store attractions, along with Macy's and Bloomingdale's, both of which cater to a broader market. The Saks Fifth Avenue store reopened with a modified layout and changed protocols for staff and shopper health and safety.

"The reopening of our New York flagship store is a pivotal milestone for Saks Fifth Avenue and another opportunity for us to set the standard for delivering a safe, easy and personalized shopping experience," said Marc Metrick, president of Saks Fifth Avenue, in a statement.

With this move, all 40 Saks stores in the U.S. and Canada are now open for business. So are many Nordstrom and Neiman Marcus stores, all competitors to Saks and grappling with the same loss of in-store business and modified shop layouts.



Saks Fifth Avenue New York main floor with health and safety guidelines. Image courtesy of Saks Fifth Avenue

Fashion measures

Founded in 1924, **Saks** is part of Toronto-based HBC, which also owns discounter Saks Off 5th and the Hudson's Bay department store chain. The retailer stocks leading luxury and fashion labels, with apparel, footwear, accessories and cosmetics.

The New York-based Saks used the downtime during lockdown to add a number of safety measures.

In particular, the flagship will have regular cleaning and sanitization of high-touch areas such as fitting rooms and point-of-sale areas, as well as ultraviolet handrail cleaners on all 22 escalators located throughout the store.



Saks Fifth Avenue New York main floor escalators. Image courtesy of Saks Fifth Avenue

Among the new social distancing measures are limiting the use of elevators to seniors and shoppers with health issues and display signage on escalators to ensure spacing between users.

Store associates will have to wear face coverings at all times and undergo daily health screening. Similarly, shoppers will have to wear face masks or coverings when visiting Saks, keeping in mind current New York state regulations.



Saks Fifth Avenue New York client services desk. Image courtesy of Saks Fifth Avenue

Saks is also offering many contactless offerings such as pre-opening and after-hours private appointments with dressing rooms prepped with picked-out merchandise, as well as shopping via video conferencing and accompanying style advisor.

Appointments can be made on [Saks.com](https://www.saks.com).



Fendi looks sold by Saks. On location in Greater Palm Springs, California. Image credit: Fendi, Saks Fifth Avenue

In addition, the invitation-only Saks at Home service lets customers try pieces at home. They are charged only for what they keep and can return the rest to Saks.

The retailer will continue to offer its sidewalk services with contactless pickup, returns and purchases at the New York store's 49th Street entrance closer to Madison Avenue.

The retailer will also continue to offer personal shopping services through the men's and women's Fifth Avenue Clubs. The flagship store now has a dedicated centralized desk located on the main floor for processing returns.

A new service launched recently offers same-day delivery to the Hamptons, the tony New York resort enclave where many of the city's affluent have relocated to their second homes to ride out the COVID-19 pandemic. Customers can work with their style advisor to place an order via email or on the phone.



Saks Fifth Avenue flagship store in New York across from Rockefeller Center. Image courtesy of Saks Fifth Avenue

THE NEW YORK store hours have been reduced to what has now become standard in the metropolitan area: Monday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Sunday, from noon to 6 p.m.

To further reduce the friction in transactions, Saks recently adjusted its return policy. Any purchase made after Feb. 15 can be returned to Saks stores within 30 days of reopening.

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