

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

Guerlain captures spring scents in handcrafted collaboration

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Guerlain's Exceptional Creations bottles are handcrafted collectibles. Image credit: Guerlain

By SARAH RAMIREZ

French beauty label Guerlain is celebrating spring's rituals of renewal with limited-edition releases in collaboration with a Parisian paper and textile artist.

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The maison tapped designer Lucie Toure to craft two intricate bottle designs as part of its longtime **Exceptional Creations project**. Through the limited releases, Guerlain pays tribute to artisanship as well as the fleeting beauty of flowers.

Paper blooms

On several occasions since 2013, Guerlain has collaborated with French jewelers and artisans, as well as crystal maker Baccarat and glassmaker Pochet du Courval, on exclusive releases that look to the brand's heritage or natural settings for inspiration.

Often made-to-order, the Exceptional Creations have a limited run with as few as five bottles available. The fragrances are often inspired by Guerlain's archives, spanning eau de parfum, eau de cologne and eau de toilette.

Paper and textile designer Lucie Toure opened her workshop in 2018

For the 2021 millième eau de toilette, Ms. Toure adorned Guerlain's iconic bee bottle with elegant paper flowers. The two vintage formulas were inspired by muguet, or Lily of the valley, and sakuras, or cherry blossoms both of which bloom in the spring.

Ms. Toure handcrafts each paper flower using textile and jewelry finishing techniques, creating a delicate bouquet that trails over the bottles' shoulders. The white Lily of the valley blooms serve as an accent to the fragrance's green shade, while the pink and white cherry blossoms are further embellished with flicks of gold as well as glass and crystal beads.

More than 20,000 cherry blossoms were handmade and assembled, while the Muguet release required almost 70,000 miniature flowers. Guerlain made available 2,466 Cherry Blossom bottles and 4,500 Muguet pieces each numbered and priced at \$590.



A closeup of the handmade cherry blossoms. Each has three layers of paper petals. Image credit: Guerlain

Ms. Toure's meticulous process is showcased in two short films by Guerlain. In her native French, the artist discusses her career and how her passion for flowers and nature inspired her Guerlain creations.

"I spent six years working in embroidery and textile printing, where I developed the skills required to work with luxury brands," Ms. Toure says in the newest vignette. "To me, the maison Guerlain is an icon of luxury fragrance and French savoir-faire."

Beyond the bottle

As much as natural resources such as flowers are part of the Guerlain ethos, so is craftsmanship. The theme is often present in Guerlain campaigns.

In 2019, the perfumer revealed how its iconic Bee bottle is created, in an effort to introduce a new generation of consumers to its proud heritage.

A short film details the process and inspiration behind the unique perfume bottles. Each is embossed with 69 glass bumblebees tipped with gold paint by hand, since the insect is a traditional symbol of the French monarchy ([see story](#)).

Last year, the brand launched an Instagram series "Private Talk" featuring master perfumer Thierry Wasser. In the videos, he explains his vision for perfume, as well as the skills needed to create a perfume and sources of inspiration ([see story](#)).