

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Gucci tops Lyst Index as normalcy slowly returns

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Serena Williams and James Corden for Gucci Beloved. Image courtesy of Gucci

By SARAH RAMIREZ

For the fourth consecutive quarter, Italy's Gucci has topped the Lyst Index of fashion's hottest brands as consumers return to dressing up amid easing restrictions and more event opportunities.

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French fashion label Dior climbed one spot to land in second, while sportswear brand Nike slipped to third and Louis Vuitton climbed three spots for fourth place. According to the global fashion shopping platform, Gen Z consumers are becoming more influential as interest grew for gender-fluid fashion and trends such as "mermaidcore."

"Ecommerce remains a bright spot for fashion, with the pandemic continuing to accelerate digital growth," said Peter Henderson, corporate communications director at [Lyst](#), London.

"The quarter's hottest brands have all honed their strategies for reaching and engaging shoppers anytime and anywhere," he said. "Among consumers, there's a distinct shift in mood, with items associated with going out and travel rising again."

The [Lyst Index for the second quarter of 2021](#) is based on global Lyst and Google search data, conversion rates and sales, as well as brand and product social media mentions and engagement statistics worldwide over a three-month period.

Staying power

During the second quarter, Gucci drove interest by teaming with Balenciaga for its Aria collection, celebrating the house's centennial.

The brand also collaborated with gaming platform Roblox for an interactive virtual exhibit that replicated Gucci Garden Archetypes. Users were able to explore the immersive space through avatars as well as purchase exclusive, limited-edition digital items ([see story](#)).



A Roblox avatar exploring the digitized Gucci Gardens Archetypes exhibit. Image credit: Gucci/Roblox

Notable moments for Dior included showing its cruise 2022 collection in Athens. One highlight for Louis Vuitton was tapping K-pop group BTS as brand ambassadors.

Italian fashion label Prada climbed one spot for fifth place. This spring, the brand opened several Prada Outdoor pop-up shops and in-store installations to engage with shoppers ([see story](#)).

Also in the top 10, Balenciaga and Moncler, luxury fashion labels that appeal to streetwear sensibilities, slipped two spots each, while Bottega Veneta and Saint Laurent held steady. Italian fashion label Versace broke into the top 10 after moving up one spot.

In the latter half of the list, Fendi, Alexander McQueen and Balmain also saw modest gains. Burberry, Loewe and Givenchy stayed stagnant while Valentino fell to the 15th spot.

Also appearing in the Lyst Index top 20 were Off-White, Jacquemus and Rick Owens.

Reflecting consumers' desire to travel as COVID-19 vaccinations climb in key markets, Lyst recorded triple-digit increases in searches for dresses, sunglasses and beachwear at 371 percent, 198 percent and 196 percent, respectively.

Aesthetics and trends discussed on social media platforms such as TikTok by Gen Z consumers have also proved popular.



La Medusa handbag in true blue, a luxury interpretation of mermaidcore. Image credit: Versace

One such trend is "mermaidcore," exemplified by pastel shades and aquatic motifs such as shells and starfish. Gen Z's influence was apparent, with Marine Serre Fuseaux Moonfish leggings and Versace's Trsor de la Mer swimsuit appearing on the Q2 Index for hottest women's products.

Younger consumers are also more drawn to gender-fluid fashion, with related searches rising by 46 percent during the quarter. Fendi's Baguette bag and Thom Browne's pleated skirt both appeared on the hottest men's products list.

Gen Z influence

Beyond fashion, Gen Z consumers are also influential when it comes to the beauty industry.

As a cohort, Gen Z is reimagining and challenging beauty norms, prioritizing personal values, self-care and authenticity when it comes to purchasing behavior.

Skincare has become a widely accepted signifier of personal wellbeing for Gen Z, per the Gen Z State of Beauty report. Three-quarters of respondents claimed to have purchased a skincare product in the last three months, and a third of respondents claim to not wear makeup, focusing solely on skincare with an average of 3 products as part of their regular skincare regimen ([see story](#)).

The COVID-19 pandemic has also had a massive impact on how beauty brands take their products to market, especially in how they leverage influencers.

Last year, influencer marketing platform Traackr found that TikTok saw a 164 percent increase in sponsored beauty posts and a 481 percent increase in engagement.

Reportedly, TikTok is the only platform to have seen substantial growth in the beauty category while the number of sponsored posts is decreasing on other platforms ([see story](#)).

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