

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Dior appeals to the active woman with athleisure push

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Dior enters athleisure with Vibe line. Image credit: Christian Dior

By NORA HOWE

French fashion house Christian Dior has introduced a new collection of athleisure apparel and accessories through an exploration of movement.

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In the "Dior Vibe" series, the brand showcases its range of high-impact pieces designed by Dior creative director Maria Grazia Chiuri through the eyes of several female athletes. In the latest episode, Olympic fencer Sun Yiwen discusses the importance of comfort in sport.

"True luxury is meeting people where they are and understanding your audience to recognize their needs," said Kimmie Smith, cofounder and creative director of [Athleisure Mag](#), New York. "A number of luxury brands have put their own spin on how they have adopted athleisure into their collections as it's about translating their signature designs and visual texture into these pieces.

"We have seen elements of athleisure on the red carpet in gowns, bridal design, suiting and more," she said. "Athleisure is about exhibiting a 360 lifestyle that can go in a myriad of ways within your lifestyle and creates a building block in your wardrobe."

Dior Vibe

The latest episode to be released in the series, episode five, follows Ms. Sun through a day in the life of a professional fencer.

"Ever since I was a kid, I was really into sports the 4x100 meters relay, the triple jump, softball," she says in the film. "Having a comfortable outfit is an essential part of sports it reflects my mood and my state that day."

Ms. Sun won a team silver medal and an individual bronze medal at the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. She was the individual champion at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.

While in Tokyo, she became the first Chinese fencer to win an Olympic gold medal in individual women's epee and the second Chinese woman to win a gold medal in an individual fencing event.

Sun Yiwen is an Olympic silver and bronze medalist

Throughout the episode, shots of the fencer training while sporting the new athleisure pieces from Dior's collection are met with interview clips in which Ms. Sun shares her thoughts on being a female athlete.

"There are many different ways to train coordination, flexibility, explosive strength training, speed and more," she says. "For fencing, it's a question of practicing all the drills again because we have been preparing for the games for so long we are always ready to fight.

"People probably have certain misconceptions about female athletes," she says. "But in terms of training methods and capabilities, we are very strong."

As part of the "Dior Vibe" campaign, the brand also tapped athletes Athina Koini, Briana King, Yuna Kim, Ramla Ali, Nadia Nadim, Darci Liu and Eleonora Abbagnato to test the collection.

In the fourth installment, released last week, professional soccer player Nadia Nadim shared how much soccer has prepared her for life and taught her to be confident, trust her instincts and connect with others.

In 2019, Ms. Nadim was designated a UNESCO Champion for Girls' and Women's Education.

Dior created a dedicated Spotify playlist for the new collection

Inspired by the Dior 2022 cruise collection, the Dior Vibe line combines sportswear with Dior's classic house codes. In addition to apparel and accessories, the collection includes a bottle, a set of candles, notebooks and pillows and ranges from \$95 to \$1,650.

Casualwear gets luxurious

As consumers adopted more laidback and casual styles, accelerated by the global pandemic, luxury fashion houses have pushed into the casual and streetwear space through unique collaborations and capsule collections.

Italian fashion label Emilio Pucci partnered with streetwear brand Supreme on a capsule collection featuring two archival prints.

The spring/summer 2021 collection included 14 pieces with Pucci's 1965 Tulipani print and 1970's Fantasia print. Many pieces are already sold out, demonstrating the continued appeal of collaborations between luxury labels and Supreme ([see story](#)).

Similarly, Italian fashion label Missoni partnered with Supreme in November 2021 for added exposure.

The house's signature colorful knit patterns adorned a capsule collection from Supreme, which includes bomber jackets, hoodies, polos and bucket hats. Supreme is a popular collaborator for luxury brands hoping to appeal to younger consumers that gravitate toward streetwear designs ([see story](#)).

"When it comes to selecting your looks, it's about the mood that you want to reflect," Ms. Smith said. "We see men hitting the red carpet in Tom Ford suits without a tie, unbuttoned and Christian Louboutin shoes, we see women hitting various red carpets with bralettes and crop tops, cigarette pants and capes that have stunning fabrics but are athleisure leaning."