

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Mulberry casts legacy character Miffy for Lunar New Year

January 16, 2023



Mulberry's latest capsule is accented by the Dutch cartoon character, who happens to be a perfect choice, considering the current Year of the Rabbit. Image credit: Mulberry/Mercis bv

By MARYBETH CONNAUGHTON

British fashion group Mulberry has released a limited-edition capsule collection featuring Miffy, a Dutch cartoon bunny beloved by millions.

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The collection, a mix of new offerings and re-imagined mainstays, arrives in colors that recall the simple palette of its main character's beloved children's books. As the tradition of Lunar New Year becomes an increasingly regular fashion calendar happening, Mulberry joins its contemporaries in celebrating the Year of the Rabbit.

"The Year of the Rabbit brings a myriad of crossover collaboration opportunities for brands," said Jessica Dai, executive director of agency services at [China Luxury Advisors](#), Los Angeles.

"From pop cultural icons like 'Tuzki' and 'My Melody,' to more traditional Chinese culture symbols like the moon rabbit [Yu Tu], and White Rabbit candy," Ms. Dai said. "It has been especially fun for us to monitor the IPs that brands have chosen to tap into this year.

"It brings me a lot of joy to see that Mulberry has utilized Miffy in this year's [Lunar New Year] capsule, which is such a beloved character in China, and certainly holds a nostalgic place for millennials like myself who grew up with Miffy imprinted on our notebooks and stationery."

New year, old classics

Dutch artist and writer Dick Bruna, who himself was born in the Year of the Rabbit in 1927, first created Miffy in 1955.

Eight years later, Mr. Bruna recreated the character in a graphic style that featured a bold black outline. This more simplistic rendering has since appeared in more than thirty children's books, two television series and a motion picture production.

The latter version of Miffy is also the one that decorates Mulberry's latest collection.



Miffy peeks from behind the flap of the collection's coral-orange silky calf passport holder. Image credit: Mulberry

At times appearing hidden, but often facing head-on in contrasting colors, Miffy appears like a comfortingly familiar childhood emblem, sporting her signature knowing wink.

As later divulged, Mr. Bruna limited Miffy's palette to basic colors including orange, red, blue, and green, on purpose as to appeal to young readers. These are the colors that primarily make up the collaboration with Mulberry.

A bevy of women's bags and small leather goods as well as a few tech accessories.

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The line of purses includes four collection-specific updates to the brand's quintessential Bayswater bag, which was first introduced by former design director Nicolas Knightly in 2003.

Here, two classic models are presented in lawn green with Miffy appearing in outline form, peeking out from behind seams on the front panel. A large tote version of Mulberry's Bayswater also appears in cornflower blue.

The capsule includes additional updates to house styles, such as the small Iris in a chalk colorway, and calf leather Billie mini and Billie mini pouches, both in Coral Orange.

Each of the Miffy books, which have sold hundreds of millions and been translated into more than 100 languages, contains just 12 pages. This collection stays similarly streamlined, at a multiple of just 24 pieces including trifold

wallets, passport holders, key fobs and a leather case with handle to hold the iPhone 13 Pro.

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Crafted with a cause the capsule was created with Mulberry's "Made to Last" ethos in mind – materializations come together with 100 percent environmentally accredited carbon-neutral leather according to the host brand.

The collection is [available for purchase](#) online and in-store at Mulberry boutique locations.

Cause to celebrate

However coincidentally, the year 2023 marks a number of anniversaries for all involved in Mulberry x Miffy. It has been 60 years since Miffy took on her current iconic design, and 20 years since the debut of the house's Bayswater bag.

Most notable, though, is its Lunar New Year label, which features the luckiest animal in the zodiac and the mascot of the moment for a number of notable house collections.

Prada-owned Miu Miu recently released their rabbit-themed capsule with a campaign that starred brand ambassador, Chinese model and actress Qiu Tian, as well as Chinese actress and singer Amber Kuo ([see story](#)).

Italian fashion house Gucci took an "Alice in Wonderland"-style approach to their capsule last month, in a campaign where models roamed a dreamlike garden carrying live rabbits ([see story](#)).

Still, as Ms. Dai explains, Mulberry's contribution stands apart.

"I like this capsule because it celebrates the occasion while maintaining an evergreen appeal," she said.

"This is what domestic brands have done so well that global brands often fall short on," she said. "In the past years, a lot of global luxury brands have landed in the trap of creating something with such a distinct New Year aesthetic that the piece is virtually unusable outside of the season.

"But Mulberry has steered away from the 'China red' cliché for a variety of rich, playful colorways."