

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Gucci invests in updated fan favorites for fall/winter 2023

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On film and across photo frames, Italian model Vittoria Ceretti lends her likeness to the house's latest ready-to-wear styles. Image courtesy of Gucci

By AMIRAH KEATON

Italian fashion label Gucci is building on a blueprint that began in 1953, a handbag released half a century later now receiving another run in the spotlight.

Rooted in archival references, the label's fall/winter 2023 collection comes alive in a campaign captured by British photographer David Sims. An iterative accessory the brand's new **Gucci Horsebit Chain bag** takes precedence this season, as French luxury conglomerate Kering attempts to recover earnings at its highest-grossing house.

"The Gucci Horsebit icon goes back to 1955, much further than Tom Ford or even Alessandro Michele who reinterpreted it in 2019," said Pamela Danziger, president of **Unity Marketing**, Stevens, PA.

"While Gucci did quite well under the leadership of Michele and CEO Marco Bizzari, they pushed the envelope a bit far from the brand's legacy roots," Ms. Danziger said. "This new interpretation of the Gucci Horsebit Chain bag is in keeping with the quiet luxury trend that more brands are discovering in their archives."

Ms. Danziger is not affiliated with Gucci, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Handbag hardware

On film and across frames, models Vittoria Ceretti, Aboubakar Konte and Brando Erba lend their collective likeness to the house's latest ready-to-wear styles.

Carrying director credits, Mr. Sims' stills and moving images complement a set that draws from the team's most recent fashion week presentation in February.

Whether an immediately apparent or imminent discovery, the assortment also happens to offer audiences a high dose of Tom Ford-era charm, the work of Gucci's former creative director providing a well of inspiration to today's design team, as evidenced by their delivery.

British photographer David Sims captures Gucci's new collection

What is more, the house continues to recontextualize a classic, the hardware having centered many of the maison's

accessories since its adaptation in 1953.

The horse bit, introduced to the luxury name by the eldest son of founder Guccio Gucci, 33-year company chairman Aldo Gucci, homages the leather goods producer's early days manufacturing fine saddles and equestrian products.

Though the motif was first applied to a purse in the 1950s ([see story](#)), the original Horsebit Chain handbag premiered two decades ago, debuting as a member of Mr. Ford's fall/winter 2003 collection.

Beyond campaign visuals, the collection's premise seems fairly simple, as Gucci looks to garner sales with styles reminiscent of an era in which, with a new steward at its helm, the house's standing was saved.

The business of design

Following his tenure as Gucci's artistic lead from 1990 to 2004, Mr. Ford departed to found what would become his very own empire in due time ([see story](#)), leaving the company's bottom lines leaps and bounds beyond where he found them.

In fact, unlike the story of the house's heritage, the state of business upon Mr. Ford's start left much to be desired.



Worn on the shoulder, as a clutch or carried by hand, the Gucci Horsebit Chain bag launches in padded leather, shearling, crystal and contrast-leather varieties. Image courtesy of Gucci

At the start of the last century's last decade, after a period marred by over-licensing, the magnate would manage to spike sales to new heights in just a few years' time.

Considering Gucci's last few quarterly reports ([see story](#)) recent rounds of executive shake-ups ([see story](#)) are presumed to be initiating a companywide reboot of sorts Mr. Ford's performance offers a history lesson that extends beyond the sartorial department.

As current creative director Sabato De Sarno ([see story](#)) prepares to show his first official collection for Gucci at Milan Fashion Week this month, one can only wish his future be defined by a similar bout of success.

"The fact that Gucci dipped into its archive to resurrect an icon doesn't signify that the brand has lost its creative edge," [Unity Marketing](#)'s Ms. Danziger said.

"Rather it's a sign that the brand is looking back to the great history and heritage of the Gucci brand to bring it forward."

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