

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

# Versace boosts Barocco print for holidays with K-pop star Hyunjin

November 10, 2023



*The selection is decorated with a signature motif that was born in 1991 for the year's runway collection. Image courtesy of Versace*

---

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

Italian fashion label Versace is bringing the brand family together for the festive season.

The house's 2023 holiday campaign stars Korean singer Hwang Hyunjin, known professionally as Hyunjin, making it the K-pop star's first official feature with the luxury label since being appointed to an ambassador post in July 2023. Opting for opulence, the visuals advertise new Athena tote bags decorated with Versace's signature Barocco print, which can be found across the fresh range of other luxury accessories, tailored pieces and evening wear.

"I think this campaign speaks to the core Versace consumer: sexy, colorful and uniquely Versace," said Vincent Krsulich, CEO of [Martini Media](#), New York.

"The natural marriage between Hyunjin and Versace should excite the brand's loyal champions," Mr. Krsulich said. "It is those champions who will help the brands continue to grow, perhaps with a more diverse Gen Z clientele.

"Plus, Hyunjin looks fabulous in the campaign and wears everything so well."

Mr. Krsulich is not affiliated with Versace, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

## **Festive framing**

Mr. Hyunjin, American model Amelia Gray, French-Tunisian model Hedi Ben Tekaya and British model Sacha Quenby all showcase the seasonal selection.

*Hyunjin for the Versace 2023 holiday collection*

Captured by Italian photographer Angelo Pennetta and British videographer Rosie Marks, the group of young talents introduces the new Athena bags to the world.

Though luxurious in nature, thanks to a functional design, the totes work as everyday companions to their owners, with Versace highlighting the accessories' "contemporary and chic appeal as a functional daywear style."

Just as the collection's ready-to-wear, jackets, denim, eveningwear and gifting items are, Versace's Barocco print, born in 1991, brings the purses to life.

The motif combines lavishness and the use of curving natural forms. Having dominated the world of architecture, oil painting and other high art forms throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, this era of ornateness is expressed clearly in the holiday collection, enhanced by floral shapes and intricate detailing.



*The Athena tote is lined in a GOTS-certified cotton canvas, comes in a variety of sizes and features a detachable shoulder strap. Image courtesy of Versace*

Thanks to the practical pieces upon which Barocco is found, the offer aims to bring opulence to the everyday, playing a central role in a "celebration full of Versace attitude, elegance and fun."

When applied to the Athena bags, the Versace staple print is seen in a new context. This carries the potential to reinvigorate customer enthusiasm for a vintage print, leveraging a heritage pattern's ability to heighten excitement once more.

The collection is otherwise adorned in pastel neutrals and complementary tone-on-tone shades.



*The K-pop star and his co-stars of the campaign dance around a Christmas tree, allowing their youthful spirit to shine in the heritage brand's clothing. Image courtesy of Versace*

Dancing and interacting with classic symbols of the holiday season such as decked-out Christmas trees, presents and mistletoe, the models dare to bring a contemporary feel to the classical themes found in the collection.

With Mr. Hyunjin's inclusion, there is even a hint of modern pop culture.

"Hyunjin just looks Versace, making the campaign very authentic," said Mr. Krsulich.

"He is a perfect Versace match," he said. "This is probably the most natural marriage that I have seen in some time."

### Youthful appeal

Mr. Hyunjin, a member of the Korean boyband Stray Kids, is only 23 years old.

This makes him a primary selling point that could help Versace tap into his massive fan base, namely his fellow Gen Zers who listen to his music. It is their generation that also happens to be a major customer base in luxury, their spending in the category increasing yearly ([see story](#)).

Many of these consumers enjoy K-pop music, the reality helping to bring this year's storm of ambassador appointments sourced from the industry, including Mr. Hyunjin's ([see story](#)), into perspective.



*The young star adds a freshness to signature styles. Image courtesy of Versace*

French fashion houses Louis Vuitton ([see story](#)) and Dior ([see story](#)) join Versace, the latter going so far as to name an entire K-pop band as representatives.

Some of those coming from K-pop have brought about major title changes for the brand with which they joined. Italian fashion house Ferragamo's addition, South Korean rapper Lee Je-no, is the label's first-ever male global ambassador ([see story](#)).

Though Versace is not alone in its embrace of these singers and performers, its marketing decision to include a K-pop talent extends beyond the campaign's target audience, the selection of the talent in and of itself embodying the brand's values, bridging the gap between a product line with throwback appeal, and one of the most on-trend music genres of today.

"Hyunjin was named a brand ambassador this summer," said Mr. Krsulich.

"There were probably a dozen reasons why, but most notably, he was a fan of the brand to start, is a true fashion icon and is one of the most interesting international stars out there," he said. "He is graceful and powerful the perfect fit for Versace."