

RETAIL

La Samaritaine brings Parisian shoppers 'tête-à-tête' with Venice

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The store is highlighting the similarities its home city of Paris has with another luxury mecca, Venice. Image credit: La Samaritaine

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

LVMH-owned department store La Samaritaine, operated by DFS Group, is partnering with Fondaco Dei Tedeschi, likewise run by the high-end travel retailer, in Venice.

Fully leaning into the immersive wave taking over the sector, the France-based business is bringing its Parisian shoppers "tête-à-tête" with Venice. Through April 23, La Samaritaine is rolling out in-store and digital programming featuring the Italian city's famed traditions, art and architecture, and, in so doing, enters these two European luxury capitals into a rich dialogue that uplifts the store's experiential client philosophy.

To Venice

As part of the spring campaign, the two DFS-operated entities are engaging in a slew of activities that celebrate their unique cities.

Common ground is found between the two cultures, with a playful 45-second video picturing a Parisian and a Venetian talking about their beloved locales. Speaking in their native languages, they end up broadly voicing similar opinions about the European sites, both emphasizing romance, beauty and food.

La Samaritaine brings together Paris and Venice over pastries and coffee

As they offer their monologues separately, but simultaneously, similar phrases are even used in unison, such as "c'est la ville" in French and "e la citt" in Italian.

Pastries and coffee also appear on both of their tables, made in the respective traditional manner of their home countries.

The nations share many similarities, each having arguably just as strong a hold on luxury. Fashion is a particularly huge industry in both France and Italy, boasting cities designated by many as design meccas.

Giants such as Valentino, Prada and Gucci call the latter home, while Louis Vuitton, Chanel and Dior are based in the former. It would be difficult for many to pick which of these is the most powerful in the sector, each touting storied heritage, savoir-faire and high apparel.



The retailer has curated specifically Italian and French collections for the campaign. Image credit: La Samaritaine

La Samaritaine has celebrated Paris's fashion scene in the past ([see story](#)), asserting itself as a top retailer in a place that has become famous for elegance. The industry continues to be a point of importance, and is a focal point of the campaign, with La Samaritaine curating French and Italian labels for targeted shopping.

Now, a Venetian touch is applied through the partnership with Fondaco Dei Tedeschi. Those in-store can now find iconic buildings and districts referenced throughout the department store, creating a miniature version of the city.

The Grand Canal among them, the homaged sites are likely very familiar to most customers. It is for this reason that, in the past, luxury houses have turned to these spots for their conservation and historic preservation efforts ([see story](#)), armed with the knowledge that even international audiences would be invested.

For the season, La Samaritaine is rolling out installations by those who specialize in techniques local to the two highlighted cities. Artist Irene Cattaneo, who has created vibrant, blown-glass clouds in true Venetian fashion, is among them.



Traditional Venetian blown glass is now seen throughout the store. Image credit: La Samaritaine

Those interested in photography can browse The Anonymous Project. Put together by film director Lee Shulman, a collection of images dating between the 1950s and 1970s provides an intimate look into the lives of those who lived in Paris and the Italian locale during the time period.

Events in-store include language lessons for all levels, film and literature lectures focused on the cities, gnocchi workshops, gondola-themed photo shoots, Carnevale costume fittings and scavenger hunts those who find all three clues will be entered into a drawing for a Paris and Venice trip for two.

More information about the happenings can be found [here](#).

Retailtainment revs up

La Samaritaine has long been a champion of immersive shopping experiences.

Many are calling this practice "retailtainment," such as operator DFS ([see story](#)). Like the Paris department store, it recently

centered culture in a multifaceted, in-store campaign ([see story](#)).



Focusing on in-person customer engagement rather than just digital business is proving successful. Image credit: La Samaritaine

Luxury, like all industries, is facing challenging sociopolitical factors, with the latest earnings series reflecting the tricky landscape.

However, brands have long been struggling to attract customers to in-person touchpoints. Since the COVID-19 lockdowns began, the physical store has become a critical place for business.

Though it is an investment to upkeep, returns can be quite rewarding.

More and more, consumers are reporting a desire for more chances to engage with brands in the real world. This means that bricks-and-mortar shops have to be suitable for engagement and community-building, all while holding shoppers' attention.

La Samaritaine has undergone renovations in the past to lean into this ([see story](#)). Per this latest campaign, it seems that the retailer is continuing to prioritize its retailtainment strategies and physical footprint.

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