

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Balenciaga races against time with Rodeo Bag

August 5, 2024



American media personality Kim Kardashian joins fellow actresses and ambassadors for *The Characters Campaign*. Image credit: Balenciaga

By AMIRAH KEATON

Almost a year to the day after making history with its inaugural brand ambassador appointments, French fashion house Balenciaga is back with a brief marketing update.

Each themselves under contract with the company, three world-famous names are helping push a product with legacy potential. The actresses American media personality Kim Kardashian, French performer Isabelle Hupert and British talent Naomi Watts promote Balenciaga's Rodeo Bag in *The Characters Campaign*.

Ambassadors raise Rodeo Bag

Balenciaga's ambassador trio sports small, medium and large versions of the Rodeo Bag in a portrait series shot by London-based photographer Nadav Kander released July 18, 2024.

Some are confrontational. Ms. Kardashian and Ms. Hupert, for instance, stare directly into the camera, the latter gripping the purse by its bottom, the way one would a clutch, and the former allowing the matte calfskin accessory to hang from her forearm in a manner that evokes ease.



Shot by London-based photographer Nadav Kander, actresses Kim Kardashian, Isabelle Hupert and Naomi Watts promote Balenciaga's Rodeo Bag in *The Characters Campaign*. Image credit: Balenciaga

Meanwhile, Ms. Watts sets her gaze on something aside Mr. Kander's camera. For the effort, Ms. Kardashian, Ms. Hupert and Ms. Watts dress in items from the luxury label's latest ready-to-wear collections, evening dresses and Knife stiletto heels included.

Seated in front of an eggshell-toned backdrop, the set is one-dimensional, though Balenciaga suggests its cast is anything but,

as a campaign description states each individual offers audiences “a facet of herself by creating a character study.”

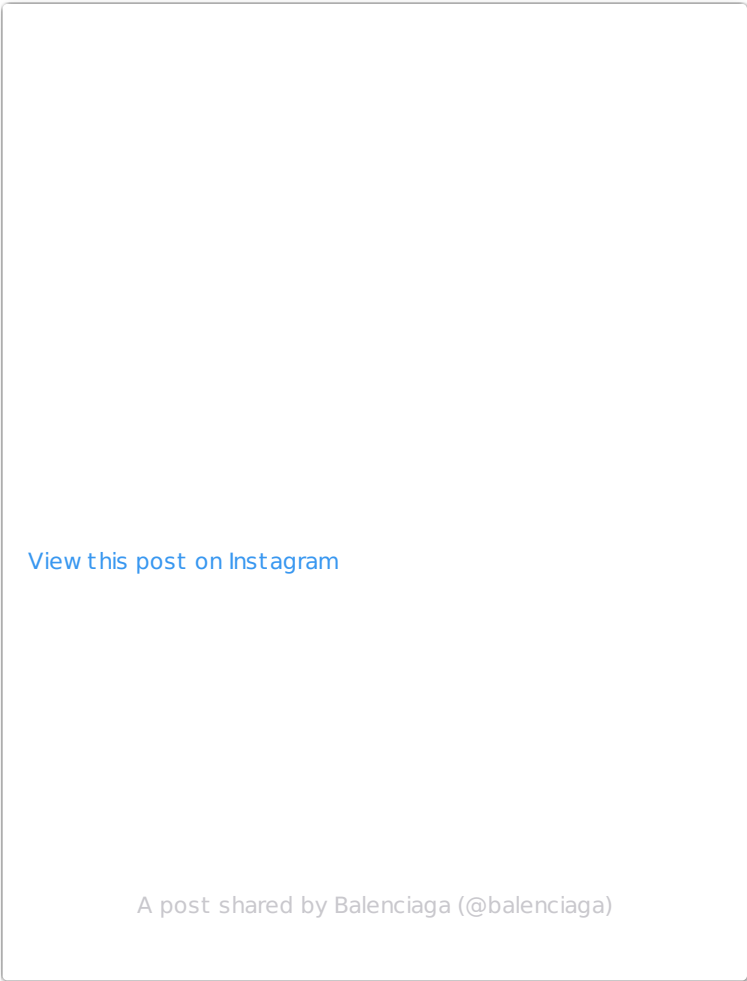
Balenciaga eyes legacy

Introduced this past February, this is the second major Balenciaga campaign to center the handbag, which takes its title from one of Beverly Hills’ (see story) most well-known streets.

The first featured Ms. Kardashian, who began representing the brand officially in January 2024 (see story).

The standard option is available in black, grey or white leather with gold or silver hardware. Pricing for the worldwide launch ranges from \$3,290 for the Rodeo Small Handbag to \$5,190 for the Rodeo Large Handbag.

Subsequently, in May, a miniature version of the Rodeo Bag was rolled out as part of Balenciaga’s Summer 2024 collection. It can be purchased at select store locations and on balenciaga.com.



With its pre-worn accordion pleats, softened piping, raw edges and aged-gold hardware, the Rodeo Bag’s construction fits right in with “old money” and “quiet luxury” trends of today. However, Balenciaga seems focused on the future in its attempts to boost the style.

Campaign messaging strategically frames the brand’s recent inductee. The bag is described as one that conjures up “relaxed sensations associated with a favorite item worn daily,” touting vibes typically given off by vintage pieces.

This aspect of the digital activation makes Balenciaga’s hopes clear: perhaps, in treating the Rodeo Bag similar to an heirloom, passing it from one generation to another, its owners could manage to chart new stories, carving out legacies all their own.