

EVENTS / CAUSES

Harrods aims for local foot traffic through Biennale des Antiquaires exhibit

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By TRICIA CARR

London department store Harrods is upping its status as a destination in Britain by hosting the first Biennale des Antiquaires antiques and art fair in the country.

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The retailer is inviting the public to visit the exhibition Oct. 1-14 in its fine jewelry room where brand partners will be showing their collections and vintage pieces. The event will help Harrods raise awareness for its newly installed Cartier, Chanel, De Beers and Boodles concept boutiques, its new Piaget boutique and the Harry Winston Salon.

“Bringing a piece of the Biennale des Antiquaires to London really helps legitimize Harrods as not just a quintessential British institution, but as a key player in the global luxury retail market,” said Jordan Phillips, founder and director of [Lure of Luxe LLC](#), New York.

“The Biennale has quite an international following, and this exhibition might attract a new customer into Harrods,” she said.

“It also serves as a great reminder for loyal clients to return during the limited exhibition run.”

Ms. Philips is not affiliated with Harrods, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Harrods was not available to comment directly on this matter before press deadline.

Crown jewels

Harrods will likely see an increase in foot traffic while hosting the 26th Biennale des Antiquaires exhibit.

With permission from the Biennale des Antiquaires in Paris and participation of its jewellery partners, the department store hopes to create a new experience for local consumers, per Harrods.

The exhibit focuses on brands offered in the ground-floor jewelry room. Those participating include Boucheron, Bulgari, Cartier, Chanel Fine Jewellery, Christian Dior, Harry Winston, Piaget and Van Cleef & Arpels.



Cartier bracelet from the Biennale des Antiquaires fair in Paris

There will be displays in the room to recreate the feel of the Paris-based exhibit, which was curated by Karl Lagerfeld this year.

In addition to the in-store experience, Harrods will showcase one piece of jewelry each day for the duration of the exhibit on its social media channels. The store will post images from the exhibit to entice local fans to come in-store.

Step by step

Harrods consistently aims for foot traffic in its efforts, but with a variety of demographics in mind.

For example, Harrods is likely aiming for store visits from true affluent consumers by hosting two events during which guests will interact with an artisan from Ralph Lauren's Italy-based factory and learn about the bespoke options available for the label's Ricky Bag.

The retailer is letting guests order a personalized handbag and shop the new Ralph Lauren collection at the event ([see story](#)).

In addition, Harrods targets younger consumers through some of its in-store efforts.

The department store aimed to increase in-store transactions from younger consumers

through a series of events that culminated in a fashion and music festival this summer.

Harrods incorporated youth-oriented brands and festival music for The Harrods Festival of Fun to encourage male and female consumers to try on apparel, beauty products and accessories in its Way In, Designer Studio and Men's Denim Lab departments ([see story](#)).

Also, Harrods engaged young consumers with an in-store sports challenge and Twitter contest in partnership with Nike centered on the sneaker brand's new movement measuring technology ([see story](#)).

For its youngest shoppers, the retailer extended its Harrods Rewards program by installing a new membership for children and parents that it launched with a Twitter scavenger hunt.

Mini Harrods, for parents and children ages 2-10, introduced a new line of benefits for the retailer in conjunction with the opening of the Toy Kingdom in July ([see story](#)).

Harrods' latest effort to bring the 26th Biennale des Antiquaires to London will likely please its longtime customers.

"With the rapid expansion of luxury boutiques and high-end shopping streets throughout the world, there are now many places to see top-notch jewels just by window shopping," Ms. Phillips said. "But the fine jewelry salon at the Biennale des Antiquaires truly takes your breath away.

"If Harrods is able to recreate that same magic and display these major collections in a similar manner as the Biennale in Paris, it should really impress current and potential Harrods fine jewelry clients," she said.

Final Take

Tricia Carr, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York