

IN-STORE

Bottega Veneta increases brand awareness via Milan maison

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By JEN KING

Italian label Bottega Veneta is strengthening its foothold in Milan's high-fashion district with the brand's first maison, a move that is likely to generate interest in the brand and increase foot traffic to the retail space.

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Bottega Veneta's new maison is regarded as an addition to the brand's flagship located at Via Montenapoleone 5, Milan, Italy. Brands such as Bottega can avoid diluting their image when expanding by curating exclusive experiences.

"Bottega Veneta's new maison is a great example of how a luxury brand can leverage their financial assets to create a physical presence that goes far beyond what most retailers would classify as a flagship," said Dave Rodgerson, a Toronto-based retail analyst and consultant.

"This may be a well-conceived strategy to elevate the brand beyond even the most extravagant of its competitor's locations," he said. "When you consider the breadth of the products carried by Bottega Veneta, it certainly explains the size of the location.

"The fact that they use the location to showcase all of their lines may also explain its proximity to another location that, while well-appointed, may not carry the full offering of

the brand.”

Mr. Rodgeron is not affiliated with Bottega Veneta, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Bottega Veneta did not respond by press deadline. It is part of luxury conglomerate **Kering’s** portfolio of fashion, apparel and accessories brands.

Housewarming

Located at Via Sant’Andrea 15 in Milan, the new Bottega Veneta maison creates an exclusive shopping experience for consumers.

The Bottega Veneta maison comprises two floors inside an 18th century building measuring 10,764 square feet where the label’s full product range will be available, including ready-to-wear, handbags, small leather goods and luggage, eyewear, shoes, watches, fine jewelry and jewelry, fragrance, furniture and houseware.

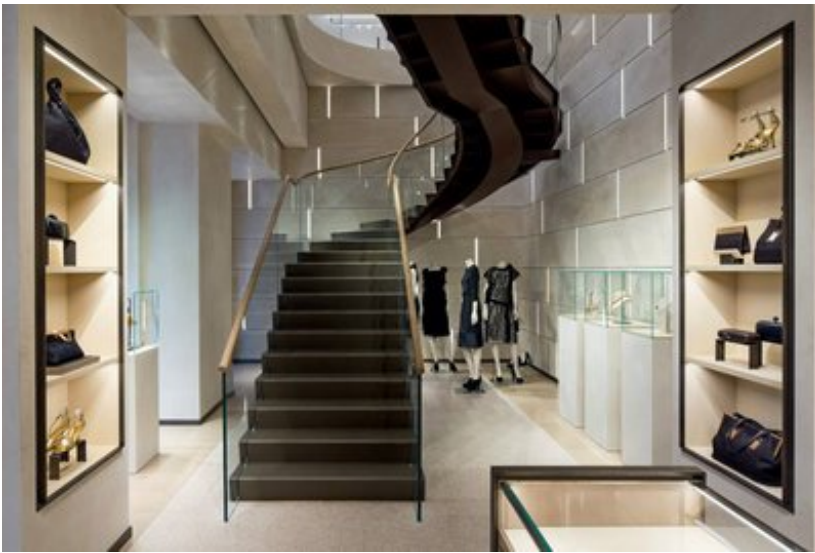


Exterior of Bottega Veneta's first maison

Men’s and women’s ready-to-wear collections will be sold on the ground floor of the Bottega Veneta maison with entrances designated for each gender. The maison’s second floor, meant to represent Bottega Veneta lifestyle, will hold the brand’s furniture and high-jewelry lines.

The design and concept of the Milanese maison was envisioned by Tomas Maier, creative director of Bottega Veneta. The space is centered on the idea of lightness but also has a strong foundation in the roots of the brand and Milanese architecture.

Bottega Veneta’s maison features large windows, balconies and a courtyard encased in glass. The courtyard has a central fountain and is surrounded by columns carved from Montorfano stone.



Curved staircase

Other notable details of the architecture are the entry way's Venetian terrazzo made of red, pink and white marble chips, a curved staircase and hidden light fixtures.

Interiors include Wilton wool carpet, suede and mohair wall coverings and upholstery, and a grey paint palette featured in the men's section and beiges and pale pinks in the women's area.



Bottega Veneta's menswear section in Milan

Bottega Veneta has been using its social media platforms to promote the newly opened space.

Storefront success

Opening a new storefront in a notable location can capitalize and build upon existing foot traffic.

Apparel and accessories brands are revamping stores left and right to keep consumers shopping, but the ones that are getting the most attention are opening location-tailored venues that create distinct shopping experiences.

Luxury marketers should make sure that their in-store experiences are constantly

refreshed to keep consumers interested. In addition to keeping the store experience interesting, individual boutiques should look to cater to their local markets ([see story](#)).

For example, Bottega Veneta opened a new boutique in Los Angeles that highlights the brand's evolution by shifting the focus to individual products in a simplified environment.

The new store puts more emphasis on product displays to help customers focus on the items. Revamping stores to cater directly to customers' wants and needs help create brand enthusiasts and reach new customers ([see story](#)).

Many brands and retailers are using digital strategies to enhance the in-store experience.

"The maison is a wonderful counterpoint to Bottega Veneta's Web site, equally beautiful and well-appointed," Mr. Rodgerson said.

"One opportunity that they may want to explore in the spirit of enhancing their customers' omnichannel experience is to use the Web site to provide virtual tours of the maison," he said.

"This would help bridge the gap that will exist for those who follow the brand online, or in their smaller international locations, and may not have the opportunity to experience the new location in Milan."

Final Take

Jen King, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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