

IN-STORE

Fortnum & Mason helps to preserve British ceramics via exclusive teaware series

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Richard Brendon and Pattermity teaware for Fortnum & Mason

By JEN KING

Department store Fortnum & Mason is rejuvenating interest in British bone china while celebrating Britain's heritage as a tea-drinking region with an exclusive teaware range designed by London-based designer Richard Brendon.

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Luxury Daily

Mr. Brendon collaborated with creative consultancy Pattermity, whose ideology is based on the notion that patterns connect individuals to each other and to nature. The parties involved in the exclusive collection aim to help consumers reassess British bone china as a modern homeware with rich tradition.

"Here at Fortnum & Mason we have a 300-year history of leading the way and setting the standard for everything relating to tea. Richard Brendon's goal, is to rejuvenate and reposition the British bone china industry by offering a more contemporary take on an industry that is also 300-years old," said Jo Newton, head of fashion and home buying at **Fortnum & Mason**, London. "Richard joined forces with leading pattern innovators, Pattermity to help realize his dream.

"The collaboration draws inspiration from over two centuries of British tea drinking history and supports Fortnum's desire to offer product that explores the tension between heritage and modernity," she said. "The collection brings together Richard's expertise in ceramic design and heritage with Patterinity's award winning pattern exploration and innovation, providing a modern take on classic bone china.

"We are dedicated to supporting and championing British talent across the entire business. From fresh food, to fashion and beauty and homeware. Fortnum's source a wide variety of its product from the United Kingdom. The Richard Brendon and Patterinity collection is hand made by the best craftsmen in Stoke-on-Trent, England. Driven by history and powered by pattern, this collaboration clearly demonstrates home-grown expertise in design, pattern."

The willows played tea for two

The department store helped to promote the teaware collection by announcing an in-store event on its Facebook page. On April 26, Mr. Brendon will be at Fortnum & Mason's Piccadilly location in London to celebrate the launch with consumers.



Richard Brendon will be joining us in-store on Saturday to celebrate the launch of his exclusive homeware collection.

You'll be able to learn more about the range from the man himself - one of the country's most exciting design talents

<http://bit.ly/FortnumsBrendon>



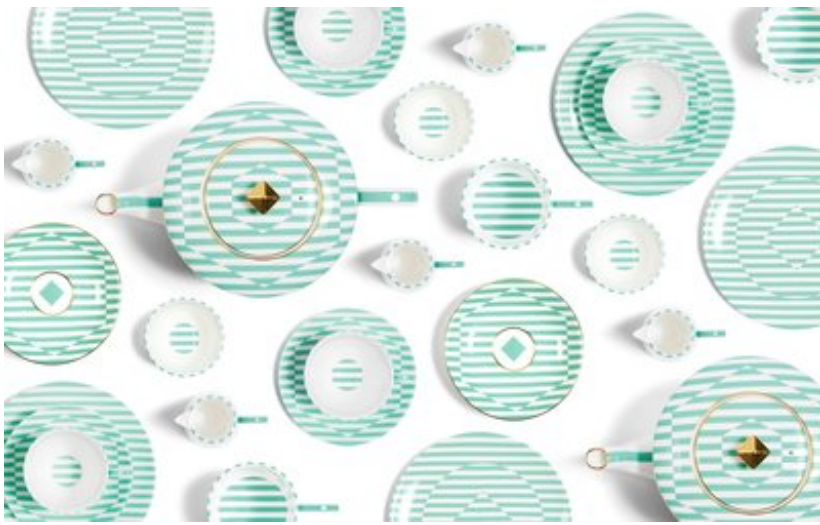
Event announcement on Fortnum & Mason's Facebook page

Fortnum & Mason consumers can stop by the first floor of the Piccadilly store to view the collection and its display through May 25. The display will also include Mr. Brendon's other lines carried by the retailer.

Inspired by British bone china and the nation's love for tea, Mr. Brendon hopes to revive interest in the centuries-old art of ceramics among present-day consumers. The "Richard Brendon meets Patterinity" collection is crafted by ceramicists in Stoke-on-Trent, a town that has been producing British bone china since the first pottery factory opened there in 1767.

The contemporary collection draws on the heritage of the Stoke-on-Trent potteries, which

has seen a decline in interest among consumers over the past years. Mr. Brendon told Fortnum & Mason that he “want[s] to reposition bone china, which can be seen as dated and twee, and bring a new audience to it.”



Richard Brendon and Patterntery teaware collection exclusively sold at Fortnum & Mason

Mr. Brendon also explained to Fortnum & Mason that he prefers to use bone china rather than porcelain because the glaze appears more glossy after firing. In his designs for the exclusive collection, Mr. Brendon incorporated Fortnum & Mason’s signature teal eau de nil pattern into the teawares.

"Richard is passionate about the heritage of bone china, a quintessentially British form of porcelain," Ms. Newton said. "Richard has a particular skill in identifying and distilling the best elements from the past and transforming them into contemporary designs. Launching the collection in eau de nil for Fortnum & Mason is perfect."

The collection carried exclusively by Fortnum & Mason includes two teacup and saucer variations, a mug, teapot, milk jug, plate and sugar bowl. Prices for the collection range from \$60 to \$295.

At the table

Fortnum & Mason has worked with designers in the past to increase foot traffic and celebrate British culture.

For example, the department store is undergoing maintenance on its flagship Piccadilly building in style with a façade covering designed by artist Rory Dobner.

Mr. Dobner transformed the tarps on the outside of the building to look like a black and white cartoon version of the store, with a giant butterfly motif. This mimics the design of the teaware the artist created exclusively for the retailer, and gave Fortnum & Mason the opportunity to promote the collection on the biggest billboard available—the side of its building ([see story](#)).

Tableware collections, although on the border of aspirational products, allow consumers to incorporate a brand into their daily lives in a functional way.

To show this, French leather goods and scarves maker Hermès pushed its race track-

inspired porcelain tableware line Rallye 24 by integrating it in an online game.

The game was named after the new tableware collection that incorporated classic racing colors such as yellow, green, red, blue and black, as well as a curved graphic that represents the oval shape of a track. In the game on Hermès' Web site, consumers navigated around Rallye 24 items on a virtual track with their vegetable game piece ([see story](#)).

Preserving a culture's artisanal heritage is a worthwhile initiative.

"British bone china has a rich heritage dating back to the late 1700s and it has retained its original design for more than 200 years," said Ken Morris, principal at [Boston Retail Partners](#), Boston.

"While it is still coveted by the traditional audience, the preferences of younger audiences have changed," he said. "The contemporary new collections from Richard Brendon will likely appeal to customer segments that may not appreciate the nostalgic heritage of traditional British bone china.

"Fortnum & Mason's bold move to extend the British bone china category to appeal to changing customer preferences should rejuvenate this mature product category and drive incremental sales."

Also, Fortnum & Mason's addition of an in-store event may spark interest in the collection from those passing by and others interested in learning more about the collection.

"Inviting Fortnum & Mason customers to meet Richard Brendon in-person is a smart strategy, as it develops a personal connection with the artist and reinforces the contemporary, hip image of the china," Mr. Morris said.

"The interaction with the famous artist will also make it more compelling to make an immediate purchase," he said.

Final Take

Jen King, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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