

IN-STORE

Fortnum & Mason connects milliners and consumers with event series

May 20, 2014



Hat by Philip Treacy

By SARAH JONES

British department store Fortnum & Mason is highlighting the art of hat making with a two-week series of in-store events at its Piccadilly store.

Sign up now

Luxury Daily

A main focus of the "Millinery Fortnight," Fortnum will be British hat designer Philip Treacy, who will be on hand to talk to consumers and show off his latest collection. Hosting a timely event will help to draw consumers in-store.

"The idea of relating the program to millinery is well suited to the spring season," said Dave Rodgerson, retail business development executive at [Microsoft Canada](#), Toronto.

"As a fashion accessory, hats are as closely related to the season as spring flowers," he said. "The beautiful styles created by designers like Philip Treacy are quite elegant which complement the Fortnum & Mason brand.

"These will hold quite an appeal to the audience that frequents the retailer and considers afternoon tea a highly regarded social activity."

Mr. Rodgerson is not affiliated with Fortnum & Mason but agreed to comment as an

industry expert.

Fortnum & Mason did not respond by press deadline.

Head start

Fortnum & Mason promoted the event on social media, beginning about two weeks prior to the event to build anticipation. On Facebook, the retailer posted an image of its in-house milliner Adrian Phillip Howard, with a link to an article written about Mr. Howard's work, including his bespoke hat service.



Adrian Phillip Howard at Fortnum & Mason

Closer to the start of the official hat-themed event, Fortnum & Mason again posted a link to the information, this time paired with the image of Philip Treacy.

Mr. Treacy is the focus of the main event during the Millinery Fortnight, "Tea and Treacy." Guests who purchase a ticket for about \$92 can enjoy rosé Champagne and food in the retailer's Diamond Jubilee Tea Salon while watching a fashion show of Mr. Treacy's hats from the current season.



Philip Treacy

After the tea from 2-4 p.m., consumers can then move to the millinery salon to meet Mr. Treacy and talk to him about his career.

From Wednesday May 21 to June 4, archival pieces from Mr. Treacy's career will also be on display along with the work of students from Kensington and Chelsea College.

On May 27 and 29, Mr. Howard will be available for one-on-one consultations.

New talent will also be highlighted, with Juliette Botterill showcasing her new season collection with an emphasis on bridal looks.

Fortnum & Mason is also taking the opportunity to focus on William Chambers, who is new to the retailer.



William Chambers fascinator

Laura Cathcart and Vivien Sheriff, along with her head designer, will also be appearing in-store.

Meet and greet

Fortnum & Mason has previously brought designers in-store to give consumers a unique experience.

The retailer hosted a week of events in the Jewelry Room of its Piccadilly store to celebrate the first anniversary of its opening.

Fortnum brought together a range of the jewelry brands it carries for educational sessions, designer meet-and-greets trunk shows and personalization to help drive traffic to its new house for its collections. Bringing designers in-store to meet with consumers personalizes the shopping experience ([see story](#)).

The store also hosted a series of events at its Piccadilly store in London to commemorate National Stationery Week.

From March 31 to April 6, Fortnum & Mason hosted exclusive product launches and invited experts and artists to its stationery floor to celebrate writing with pen on paper. Since Fortnum & Mason is typically known for its food rather than its paper selection, this

event allowed the retailer to raise awareness of its other offerings ([see story](#)).

With all of these long-term events, Fortnum & Mason is showcasing its connection to designers.

"Fortnum and Mason has successfully dialed in to the concept of creating an experience where shoppers can participate in an event that will generate stories worth sharing with their friends," Mr. Rodgerson said. "The idea of engaging artists and designers is something that this retailer has leveraged to make the shopping experience more of an event that people will go out of their way to become involved with.

"What impresses me the most is how they have identified themselves in recent months with artists and designers," he said. "They are creating 'experiential content' which become stories shared by loyal customers.

"Each time a story is shared, the brand engages new customers that aspire to the experience of these events."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/_RyZzGfZluc](https://www.youtube.com/embed/_RyZzGfZluc)

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.