The film of the show will be revealed at chanel.com Friday, December 8th 2023 at 9am, Manchester time.
One of the original influencers (she dislikes that word) is planning a reboot, determined to take her already burgeoning career to a new level.
The dictionary defines it as “the degree of excellence in something,” or “the standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind.” Yet quality can be mean different things to different people. It makes a “quality” day to different people at different times. It is a sunny, bright day with white clouds and a gentle breeze. It then turns into a cold, cloudy day with a strong wind and rain. That is one reason there are so many brands, aiming to cater to the massive variety of consumers.

Yet I believe the one thing almost everyone can agree on is that quality is something one knows when they see it. Nor does it mean it is expensive or it is a thing of great beauty. It is the opposite of another’s. Minimal or to the max? Colorful or muted? It can stir up as many varied opinions as there are dishes on the menu. As for fashion: one person’s taste in clothes can be the polar opposite of another’s. Minimal or to the max? Colorful or muted? It can stir up as many varied opinions as there are dishes on the menu.

Quality in fashion means a lot of things. Style director Andrea Onate tells WWD Eye editor Leigh Nordstrom how she is rebooting her style director's letter.

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Miami Art Week kicks off Dec. 4 and beyond viewing — and perhaps buying — contemporary artworks worth tens of thousands of dollars, there’s always plenty of other action — especially for those thousands of people who aren’t collectors but are in town anyway. Here, a guide to what’s new.

What to See and Do On Miami Beach

Audemars Piguet returns to the beach with its latest artist commission. Brazilian artist Sallisa Rosa will unveil “Topography of Memory,” a large-scale installation, at the Collins Park Rotunda on Dec. 5. The installation features more than 100 clay pieces, highlighting land-based materials as a conduit for memory. Next spring the artwork will be exhibited at the Pinacoteca de São Paulo, marking Audemars Piguet’s first commission in Brazil.

Faena is presenting a large-scale installation by Sebastian Errazuriz on Faena Beach. Using AI, the artist designed “Maze: Journey Through the Algorithmic Self,” a sandy labyrinth that leads visitors to a central reflective monolith. A book, accessible by a QR code within the installation, explores the impact of AI on everyday life. Faena is also presenting a sculpture by digital artist Beeple in the Faena Cathedral, in partnership with The Reefline. The mixed-media sculpture is a commentary on rising sea levels and climate change — particularly applicable to Miami.

Also on the ocean front, Eden Roc Miami Beach will unveil “The Art in Earth” on Dec. 6, an augmented reality installation that transports viewers to oceans around the world. The installation will benefit the PangeaSeed Foundation through prints available for purchase. Further south on Miami Beach, environmental organization Parley for the Oceans is launching a fundraising initiative with Art Basel, Art for the Oceans. To help kick off the collaboration, Parley is bringing Julian Schnabel’s series “Oceans.Climate.Life” to Collins Park from Dec. 6 to 80, following its earlier debut at United Nations headquarters in New York.

And while you’re there, stop by The Bass Museum, which is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year. The museum is unveiling several exhibitions during the fair, as well as a collaboration with Editions de Parfums Frédéric Malle. The museum shop will feature a selection of fragrances along with new scent release Heaven Can Wait. A little bit further south, Creed is toasting its collaboration with artist Shawn Kolodny, who created the holiday window installations for Creed’s global boutiques. Kolodny will debut a large-scale public sculpture, scented by The House of Creed, on Española Way in Miami Beach.

Need a break from the beach? Miami-based designer Silvia Tcherassi is taking over the rooftop pool at Mr. C Miami in Coconut Grove. The designer lent her touch to custom pool towels and lounge cushions, featuring motifs from her recent resort collection. The Tribeca Festival is making its Art Basel Miami Beach debut with The Music Lounge, a four-night series of musical performances and conversations at the Miami Beach Botanical Garden starting Dec. 6.

The Kimpton Surfcomber is hosting The Art of Wellness, a weeklong wellness and culture program that will feature fitness classes by Barry’s, recovery IV drips and ice plunge baths, as well as sunset cocktails, music by South Asian collective Indo Warehouse and zero-waste restaurant Slow Burn.

AI — proving a hot topic around the fair this year — has landed at The Standard Spa in the form of AI artist Tilly Talbot, making its U.S. debut at the hotel with House of Tilly. Alongside an installation of design prototypes, Tilly AI will serve as the hotel’s digital concierge for the week. In the café, Swedish designer Gustaf Westman’s colorful Scandinavian decor will be on display starting Dec. 4.
New in the Design District and Beyond

The Design District, synonymous with luxury fashion and art, is welcoming several new stores to the neighborhood. Gucci recently opened its fourth stand-alone men’s boutique in the U.S. around the corner from its main store. PatBo will celebrate its new boutique on Dec. 6 ahead of its public opening on Dec. 7, and Dion Lee will celebrate the opening of its Miami flagship, the brand’s first U.S. store, with a party on Dec. 9.

The Design District has debuted several new public art pieces in time for Miami Art Week. Lara Bohinc has been revealed as the winner of this year’s Design District design commission. Her immersive installation “Utopia” includes several bulbous sculptures, which will include a component on view at the Design Miami fair. Also keep an eye out for Samuel Ross’ three bench designs, newly installed in the district’s pedestrian walkways.

Nearby, French artist JR is debuting his new mural “The Chronicles of Miami” at the Design District’s Jungle Plaza. The artist photographed 1,048 people across ten different Miami neighborhoods, and has included their voices within an accompanying augmented reality app. Twin Cuban American artists Elliott and Erick Jimenez also recently completed a new site-specific mural, “Reclining Mermaid,” which underscores the connection between Miami and Caribbean and Latin America cultures.

LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton is presenting Culture House, a five-day art gallery pop up in the Design District from Dec. 6 through 10. Work by artists Cruise Bogle, Glenneisha Harris, Amelia Briggs, Harold Caudio and Crystal Paris will be on view, and the space will also host panels with LVMH executives, artists, music leaders and more.

Cartier is bringing its Time Unlimited exhibition Stateside to the Design District Dec. 7 through Dec. 22. The exhibition will present the brand’s watchmaking universe through displays of limited edition and iconic timepieces including the Santos de Cartier, Baignoire and Tank, along with a film in collaboration with ambassador Jake Gyllenhaal.

Gallery powerhouses Jeffrey Deitch and Gagosian will debut “Forms,” their eighth annual collaborative group exhibition on view in the Design District from Dec. 5 through 10.

The Virgil Abloh-founded creative studio Architecture has organized a retrospective of Atiba Jefferson’s skate photography, on view from Dec. 6 through 10. Jefferson, who has documented street skateboarding for more than 25 years, will be in town to host several panel discussions during the exhibition.

Rimowa has partnered with local artist Typoe on a custom chandelier, which will be permanently installed in the brand’s Design District boutique. The chandelier features the brand’s signature aluminum grooved design, along with geometric shapes in a bright color palette. To celebrate the release, Typoe created a limited-edition sticker pack that will be given out at the store.

In neighboring Wynwood, skin care brand Babor has linked with artist Cevin Parker, whose work appears on the packaging of a limited edition “The Art of Beauty Collection” set. The set will include an AR animation that can be activated using a smartphone. The collaboration will be unveiled at an event on Dec. 7, featuring beauty treatments.

In late November, outdoor graffiti museum Wynwood Walls unveiled its newest acquisition: a late 1970s subway car, reclaimed from the Center for National Response in West Virginia. The historic car is now an interactive art exhibit, permanently installed in Wynwood. On Dec. 3, Wynwood Walls will also unveil new sculptures by Dan Lam and Ron English.
Casadonna Heats Up In Miami

Located in the buzzy Edgewater neighborhood, the scene-y restaurant is a collaboration between Groot Hospitality and Tao Group Hospitality.

BY KRISTEN TAUER

Before Casadonna opened its doors along the Miami waterfront in late October, co-owner Noah Tepperberg could already see the writing on the wall. “I’m sure it’s going to be the hardest table to get by the time Art Basel comes around in a few weeks,” says the Tao Group founder.

Casadonna, located in Miami’s buzzy Edgewater neighborhood, marks Tao’s first foray into the Miami market, in collaboration with Groot Hospitality, led by local entrepreneur David Grutman. The longtime friends had been looking for the ideal opportunity to work on a project together, and Casadonna fit the bill.

“Groot and Tao, two real hospitality behemoths, combined into one project — it definitely sets the bar,” Tepperberg says.

“Expectations are high for what we have to deliver. But when you do something with people that you’re also friends with, it’s going to be a lot more fun to enjoy the success.”

Around seven years ago, Grutman signed a lease on the Miami Women’s Club building, a historic but rundown property along Biscayne Bay, and pitched the location to Tepperberg. “We recognized automatically that this property had amazing bones,” Grutman says of the space, located right on the bay, without a sand barrier between the water.

“There’s nothing like this.”

The idea was to create a scene-y, quintessential Miami dining and nightclub experience that would also appeal to the growing neighborhood. “Edgewater’s really becoming one of the hottest neighborhoods in Miami now,” Grutman adds. “We’ve all heard about neighborhoods with a lot of talk. One actually came alive.”

“The pair tapped designer Ken Fulk, who also worked on Grutman’s recent Goodtime Hotel opening on Miami Beach, for the interiors. Casadonna is an Italian portmanteau meaning “house of the woman,” and the team leaned into the Mediterranean Revival building’s historical significance as a meeting space for women, taking a feminine approach to design with a dusty pink and blues color palette. For the large outdoor lounge area, landscape architect Raymond Jungles created a lush oasis of greenery.

“It’s very Instagrammable,” Grutman says of the restaurant’s visual appeal.

The restaurant brings together culinary talent from both the Tao and Groot teams. The menu veers coastal Italian, drawing inspiration from French and Spanish cuisines. “A lot of olive oil based dishes, a lot of fish, a lot of fresh pastas,” says Tepperberg, who also highlights the appeal of lighter menu-anchoring selections including multiple crudo options and salads.

Casadonna kicked off with a launch party that attracted some of Miami’s biggest VIPs, including David and Victoria Beckham, DJ Khaled, Serena Williams and Alexis Ohanian, Caroline Wozniacki, Camila Cabello, Timbaland, Skrillex, Michael Bay and Alec Monopoly. Consider the bar set. “I think people are going to be blown away when they come and they get not only the fine dining, but also this social dining experience, too,” Tepperberg adds. “Because what we’re doing is combining great food with great atmosphere in a great backdrop.”
From Sudden Insight to Contemporary Design

Marco Bicego discusses SERENDIPITOUS INSPIRATIONS that appeal to a woman's TASTEFUL INDIVIDUALITY

AFTER TWO DECADES Marco Bicego is going back to its roots, highlighting the trademark coil technique that is the result of sudden inspiration spun in gold.

The extremely fine 18-karat gold strand, now shaped by the generational hands of expert craftsmen, was created by accident, saved by the founder of the namesake brand from being remelted in his father's factory. Bicego recalls that it was a moment of sudden insight, explaining that he saw the simple chain for its beauty that resembled a silhouette of golden ribbons along sand dunes.

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My muse is the kind of woman you meet in everyday life, who impresses with character, class and elegance. I like to think that those who choose my creations appreciate the care with which they are made, the fact that they express the taste of a 100 percent Made in Italy product, and the fact that they are timeless pieces of jewelry that never go out of fashion. Beautiful on their own, they can be mixed and matched so that every woman can create her personal style and wear them at every moment of the day, from an informal meeting to an exclusive evening.

Marco Bicego: In fall/winter 2023, we are putting the spotlight once more on our exclusive coil technique with new sophisticated, contemporary designs and collection extensions: Marrakech, Marrakech Onde and Masai. These new extensions are in line with my credo of creating beautiful jewelry pieces that complement each other and complete a look while exuding the wearer's personality. The results are seen today, in a seemingly simple coil chain, was the product of many hours of meticulous artisan research and development. Since the brand’s two-decade launch, the coil proves a masterpiece and artisanal technique of its most successful collections.

Fairchild Studio: How would you describe the Marco Bicego woman?

M.B.: My muse is the kind of woman you meet in everyday life, who impresses with character, class and elegance. I like to think that those who choose my creations appreciate the care with which they are made, the fact that they express the taste of a 100 percent Made in Italy product, and the fact that they are timeless pieces of jewelry that never go out of fashion. Beautiful on their own, they can be mixed and matched so that every woman can create her personal style and wear them at every moment of the day, from an informal meeting to an exclusive evening.

Fairchild Studio: What is your family history with the unique coil technique and how has it evolved?

M.B.: I made my debut as a designer in 2000 with Marrakech, which is still today one of the brand’s most distinctive and iconic collections. It was the year 2000 when a machine designed for processing gold jammed, resulting in a long, spiraling twisted strand being released. The craftsman was about to melt it down again, but I had spotted something special in that strand, a new way of making and creating jewelry. I decided to take advantage of that unexpected event by trying to develop a specific production method that would allow me to obtain that very same spiral. The exclusive coil technique was born from this unexpected insight, which led to the launch of the Marrakech collection. The coil is lightweight yet robust; delicate yet versatile, and reproducible yet simultaneously unique.

Fairchild Studio: How is Marco Bicego putting its distinct craftsmanship at the forefront of design?

M.B.: Artisanal mastery and technical expertise is really at the core of all we do. Our rigorously manual artisanal approach requires not only time but also extraordinary skill. The incisions we make using a burin, the painstaking coiling process and the meticulous choice of precious stones are all expressions of the care and mastery that go into every piece of Marco Bicego jewelry. My jewelry is a distinctly Italian take on the goldsmith tradition, where the skill of master goldsmithing is expressed at its highest level.

Fairchild Studio: How does the vertical integration of your factory and house in one place help contribute to the distinctive craftsmanship of your products?

M.B.: All my jewels are created in our atelier in Trissino, near the goldsmith hub of Vicenza, Italy. The goldsmith tradition is deeply rooted here. Our master craftsmen have a talent and a passion that no machine could ever replace. Knowledge and skills are passed down from generation to generation like a precious heirloom. They painstakingly etch and craft each intricate piece by hand using traditional techniques. This is one of the aspects I value most. The beauty of a piece of jewelry that is entirely handmade, cared for down to the smallest detail, and unique because it is irreproducible is an experience you can only find in Italy. It is not easy to safeguard this heritage, but it is what makes my work special. Those who choose my jewelry know this and feel it.

Fairchild Studio: How are you continuing to encourage the next generation of craftsmen?

M.B.: Last year, we launched an academy program to train new master goldsmiths and professional jewelry artisans to introduce new professionals in the company to increase its specialized production capacity.

My Muse is the kind of woman you meet in everyday life, who impresses with character, class and elegance.

This training program is part of the company’s mission to preserve and enhance a historical savoir-faire, supporting the link with the local district and the territory where this same goldsmith tradition has its roots. The initiative was carried out in partnership with the Vicenza Professional School of Art and Crafts, one of the oldest and most respected institutions in the Italian goldsmith district. In the next few months, we plan to replicate a second edition of the academy to strengthen and grow even more the highly specialized crafts and skills of our atelier in Trissino, Vicenza.

In partnership with Marco Bicego
The London List: Robert Mapplethorpe, Kinkally, By Dr. Vali

The guide on what to see, what to watch, where to eat and where to treat yourself this holiday season.

BY HIKMAT MOHAMMED

What to see
“Skateboard” From Tony Hawk’s first professional model skateboard to Sky Brown’s first pro model, the Design Museum’s latest major exhibition takes a look at the history of the skateboard from the 1950s to the present day. There will be 90 rare and unique boards on display, as well as wheels and tricks, safety equipment, VHS tapes, DVDs, magazines and ephemera on the subject of skateboarding.

“Robert Mapplethorpe: Subject Object Image” The Alison Jacques gallery will showcase works by Robert Mapplethorpe across 13 years, starting from 1976 documenting his transition from Polaroid images to using a Hasselblad 500 camera. His muses Lisa Lyon, Ajitto, Derrick Cross and Ken Moody make a cameo in the exhibition, as well as his use of Italian glass, antique silver and classical statuary.


What to watch
“Infinite Life” American playwright Annie Baker’s new play “Infinite Life” invites five women from Northern California to examine the themes of suffering and desire. The play is directed by James Macdonald, whose other works include “The Arsenic of Al Wine” at the Hampstead Theatre in 2013 and “Bakkhat” at the Almeida Theatre in 2015.

“Edward Scissorhands” The Tim Burton classic “Edward Scissorhands” is back at Sadler’s Wells for the holiday season with a Matthew Bourne twist, setting it in the 1950s rather than the ‘80s like the original film. The entire tale is told through dance and music by Terry Davies.

Where to eat
Kinkally (Dec. 6, the Georgian-inspired restaurant Kinkally opens on Charlotte Street with its own cocktail den, called Bar Kinky. The menu features a local dish called khinkali, a twisted dumpling traditionally filled with beef, pork or lamb and a touch of parsley. Other items on the menu include aubergine carpaccio; tomato ceviche in a spicy sesame sauce and smoked beetroot, goat’s cheese and persimmon. 43 Charlotte Street, London, W1T 1RS

Sushi by Masa at Harrods Critically acclaimed Japanese chef Masayoshi “Masa” Takayama takes the art of food more seriously than most at the Harrods restaurant hall, his sushi station serves rice washed in Evian water. The three Michelin-star chef behind New York’s Masa, Bar Masa and Kappo Masa serves a sashimi platter with 15 pieces of five different fishy; tuna carpaccio and black cod with miso butter at Sushi by Masa. Harrods Dining Hall, 135 Brompton Road, London, SW1X 7XL — 020 7225 6800

Where to treat yourself
By Dr. Vali Dermatologist Dr. Vali has set up shop at Selfridges with a treatment menu that can rival a Michelin-star restaurant with a skin lab that offers prescription grade medi-facials to a hair lab that includes treatments such as hair loss intravenous vitamins and laser hair removal. There’s a wellness and body lab on site too. Selfridges, By Dr. Vali 360 Experiential Centre, third floor, 400 Oxford Street, London, W1A 1AB — 020 3096 3884

Margaret Dabbs With six locations across London, Margaret Dabbs is the city’s go-to pedicurist, from medical pedicures and diabetic medical pedicures to luxury pedicures. The clinic also provides biomechanical assessment using a 2D laser scanning technology. 7 New Cavendish Street, London, W1G 8UU — 020 4559 8300

Aesop Facial Luxury personal care brand Aesop’s two locations in London, one in Northcote Road and the other on Regent Street, now offer bespoke facial treatments ranging from a 45-minute session that includes double cleanse, exfoliation and dry skin brushing to a 75-minute one that uses custom blended products applied under steam, extractions and a purifying clay masque. 185 Regent Street, London W1B 4JP — 020 7487 5510

“Women in Revolt! Art and Activism in the U.K. 1970-1990” photograph by Ahron R. Foster

Eve Eastern and southern Mediterranean cuisine meet at Eve in West London headed up by executive chef Talia Prince, who has held positions at Le Gavroche, The Fat Duck and her own chef residency at Soho House White City. Her menu at Eve features dishes such as smoked almond hummus; cured trout with pomegranate, orange and fennel; spiced rice pilaf, and fattoush. 202-220, Cromwell Road, London, SW5 0SW

By Dr. Vali at Sushi by Masa

Robert Mapplethorpe, Kinkally, By Dr. Vali

The guide on what to see, what to watch, where to eat and where to treat yourself this holiday season.

BY HIKMAT MOHAMMED
THIS HOLIDAY SEASON
THE RACE NEVER STOPS

TAG HEUER
Milan has been booming in recent years, and the pace isn’t slowing even as the holiday season approaches, with plenty of new stores, restaurants and exhibitions for both tourists and locals to indulge in.

Where to Eat

Egatele
Egatele was founded in 2018 and brought the know-how of the French bread-making tradition to Milan, first in the Porta Venezia area and now in the bohemian Litra district. The space seats 20 people and overlooks Piazza San Simplício. Key themes in French popular culture are traced on the walls, from the 1789 Revolution to kings and emperors portrayed with a baguette or a croissant in their hands. To celebrate the opening, a new Égatele croissant has been launched – the French version of the round croissant. It is offered with two different fillings – chocolate and pistachio – variations on the signature croissant of the boulangerie. As in the first location in Via Melzo, bread is a must, the result of extensive expertise and research into doughs, baking, flour and baking techniques. For breakfast, the croissants stand out, both traditional and in the two-tone version, the pain au chocolat and the caramel Cruffin, served with juice, tea, coffee or cappuccino. For lunch, the offering includes traditional dishes such as quiches and croque-monsieur.

For a French snack, guests can pamper themselves with a slice of tarte Tropézienne, a tarte tatin or an éclair. Finally, the aperitif menu comprises cocktails, wines and French beers with delicious assorted platters.

Atypique Wine
Atypique Wine was born a year ago by sommelier Simone Marchiori; Gabriele Natale, catering expert and store manager of various wine shops, and Anna Martinello, a sommelier and wine seller who has an uncanny sense of wine, a passion for reading and writing. The name “Atypique” was chosen for their proposal of unconventional wines and recalls the French inspiration that marked the beginning of their project.

Atypique Wine is not only a pop-up in Corso Magenta, but also a permanent store the offer comprises more than 300 wines from France and a selection of around 70 Champagnes. “The Atypique portfolio is made up of small producers from all over the world, very close to my environmental values, organic, biodynamic, natural. The selection is the result of a lifelong research and tasting,” says Marchiori. “We offer wines that match our lifestyle and the quality of the Atypique experience that fully represents the brand’s identity and the designers’ vision.”

Who to Know

Marcello
Footwear brand Marcello on Via della Spiga occupies two floors and 4,320 square feet and is the result of a collaboration between the brand and Lotus Studio, a design studio based in Milan and Berlin. Men’s and women’s collections are showcased on the first floor and there is a second floor showcasing collaborations and site-specific art projects. Each area is characterized by multiple materials such as travertine marble for the first floor and walnut and zinc for the men’s. The gallery has a special bright roof with metal grid flooring. The basement was conceived as a forum, both in terms of research and tasting. Store more than selling, the Atypique Wine store is the meeting point for the wine world.

Where to Drink

Vinoteca RSVP Pop-up
La Vinoteca RSVP, a Milan wine shop with a store in Via Cadore, has opened its first store outside of Spain in Milan. The space was conceived and developed imagining the personal and professional tastes of the owners, Enrico Nadeau and Marco Cima. “The space was conceived and developed imagining the perfect Marcello home, ideally a place where everything has always distinguished us blends together,” says Marco Cima, creative director and founder of Marcello.

“The healthy obsession with materials and their combinations, and a continuous search for perfect colors have allowed us to create a timeless space by expertly combining design and craftsmanship,” Cima continues.

The space is conceived as a cocktail bar, a place where everything has always distinguished us blends together,” says Marco Cima, creative director and founder of Marcello.

The access to the basement is through a large staircase from the ground floor. The basement was conceived as a forum, both in terms of research and tasting. Store more than selling, the Atypique Wine store is the meeting point for the wine world.

What to See

Fondazione Prada
Fondazione Prada, Largo Isarco, 2 – 20139; Tel. 02-56-66-2611; fondazioneprada.org

Fondazione Prada at Prada Rong Zhai in Shanghai and Palazzo Reale is hosting “Goya. The reason’s rebellion,” according to Fondazione Prada. The exhibition comprises around 70 works including paintings and engravings flanked by their original copper matrices thanks to a collaboration with the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid, which – with its calcografía – has the most complete collection in the world. The exhibition has been curated by the institutions’ academic delegate professor Víctor Nieto Alcántara. The exhibition tour will end in Shanghai this December and then travel to the United States and Japan.

Prada, a historical and artistic survey by Nicholas Cullinan, a series of monographic exhibitions titled “Paraventi: Folding Screens from 17th to 21st Centuries” will be on view at the Fondazione Prada in Milan until Feb. 22. Two complementary shows now taking place organized by Prada with the support of Fondazione Prada at Prada Rong Zhai in Shanghai and Prada Artyama Tokyo investigating the historical heritage, and contemporary interpretations of folding screens in Eastern contexts.

The exhibition explores the history and semantics of these objects by tracing the cross-pollination between East and West, the blending of different art forms and functions, collaborative relationships between designers and artists, and the emergence of newly created works, according to Fondazione Prada.

“This history of the folding screen is one of cultural migration (from East to West), hybridizations (between different art forms and functions) and of what is concealed and revealed,” Cullinan says.

The exhibition design was entrusted to SANA, the architectural firm founded by Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa. It gathers 70 folding screens in the Podium building, including valuable historical objects and more recent works on loan from international museums and private collections, and a selection of new creations commissioned from more than 15 international artists specifically for the project. On the upper floor, the space traces the history of screens, which are arranged in chronological order.

An illustrated book published by Fondazione Prada accompanies the exhibition and includes an introduction by Miuccia Prada, president and director of Fondazione Prada, a historical and artistic survey by Cullinan, a series of interviews with the artists involved in the production of new works and essays by leading scholars, curators and artists.

Roberto Coin: Crafting Happiness and Elegance

The famed jewelry designer shares his inspirations and what fuels his creativity.

Roberto Coin's journey through the world of jewelry design (and the creative process) is a testament to an unwavering self-belief and fearless pursuit of the extraordinary. "When I create a new collection, it is like having a new baby who brings happiness but also needs special care."

Coin's dedication to his craft has shaped his brand into a symbol of innovation and unmatched uniqueness. He said taste and experimentation "turn each creation into an unedited example of style and innovation that soon catches the attention of the jewelry world, placing the brand among the most renowned Italian jewelers," he said.

Each piece that bears the Roberto Coin signature is a result of an intricate process, a journey of cultural exploration and multiethnic influences that is inspired by nature, echoes of the past, and dreams of the future. "I am a curious person and I've always wanted to know more about different cultures, art expressions and elegance trends," Coin said.

One of Coin's most distinctive collections, the "Animalier," carries a powerful message about protecting nature and wildlife. The lifelike eyes of the lion in this collection serve as a poignant reminder of the need for conservation. Coin, who was born under the sign of Leo, adds a personal touch to the collection: "One, I'm from Venice. Two, I am born in July. So, I am a lion. And three, my second name is also Leone," he said.

The "Venetian Princess" collection, on the other hand, is a reinterpretation of the city's iconic flower, showcasing Coin's unique perspective. "I never do whatever I see. I change it with my imagination," he says.

Coin's passion and determination are not confined to traditional materials. "Jewelry can be made with different materials. It doesn't have to be gold or diamonds. It can be anything else. After all, beauty is not based on price. Beauty is about elegance," he emphasized.

It's important to note that Roberto Coin is a pioneer in implementing ethical and sustainable practices not only at his own company, but for the entire industry. "Ethics is a must in my personal and business life," Coin explained. "The brand is responsible for all its actions and we are proud to be founders of the World Diamond Council, part of the RJC and Cibjo, which are both organizations dedicated to the entire supply chain and environment around the jewelry industry; and we follow the Dodd Frank Act in U.S."

In the heart of Vicenza, which is known as the “City of Gold” and for its rich history in the jewelry industry, Roberto Coin’s eponymous brand has carved a niche for itself, standing out as a testament to innovation, creativity and passion — as well as a commitment to sustainable practices.

Since the brand’s founding in 1996, this renowned jeweler has evolved as an icon of style and pure originality by captivating the international jewelry world with each new creation. Famous people who have worn the brand include Michelle Obama, Oprah Winfrey, Selena Gomez, Cynthia Erivo, Kate Hudson, Jennifer Lopez and Halle Berry, among many others.
Coin also noted that his company cares about the heritage, “and together, with the local artisanal network, we calculate the CFP (carbon footprint) caused by the construction of the brand’s new boutiques in order to neutralize the CO2e produced by planting new trees.”

Meanwhile, as Roberto Coin continues to push the envelope in the world of jewelry, he remains inspired by stories, architecture, art, and nature. “I am in love with creativity; it represents a never-ending energy to me, and this is the secret of inspiration: to enjoy what you do,” he revealed.

When asked about the Roberto Coin brand’s target consumer, he said they are contemporary and fashion-forward, and expect innovation, diversity, and competitive prices. Coin’s commitment to creativity and sustainability, along with his relentless pursuit of happiness, has established his legacy as a jeweler whose creations not only adorn, but also inspire and resonate with a deeper sense of purpose.
Sheila Metzner’s Fashion Photography Journey

On Display at the Getty Center in L.A.

Teaching herself to be a photographer while raising a family paid off, with premier assignments for fashion magazines and designers that included Ralph Lauren, Valentino, Fendi and Chanel.

BY DEBORAH BELGUM

Sheila Metzner recalls her first commission from a major New York magazine that catapulted her career. It was in the early ’80s when she received a call from Lloyd Ziff, the creative art director at Vanity Fair, the magazine recently resurrected by Condé Nast. He had seen Metzner’s name on a list of photographers he had previously considered for the magazine. He thought Metzner was the one for the job. Metzner discovered this method after being mesmerized by an Edward Steichen photo done in that carbon printing style. She was looking for something similar.

One day Marvin Heiferman of Castelli Graphics called her to his New York City gallery to show her a photo by French photographer Bernard Plossu, whose image used that method. When Heiferman was diverted by someone stealing a framed photo from his gallery and ran out, Metzner saw a Rodolux with the address for the company that had done Plossu’s rich photographic print. It was Atelier Fresson outside of Paris.

Metzner wrote the Fresson workshop a six-page letter inquiring about becoming a client. They wrote back with a price list and said they would work with her, but her communications had to be written in French, which she did.

When her first two still life prints were done, she traveled to outside of Paris to view them. “When I first saw the photographs, I cried,” she recalls. “I said, ‘Mr. Fresson, I am going to work with you for a long time.’ It was just one more facet of the photographer’s journey,” she says.

Metzner burst onto the fashion photography scene in the early ’80s and held her ground there for decades. Many of her photos were reproduced with the Fresson printing method—a carbon printing process done with pigments, which are archival, rather than dyes, which are fugitive, lending a moody quality and textural richness to images. Metzner discovered this method after being mesmerized by an Edward Steichen photo done in that carbon printing style. She was looking for something similar.

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After being noticed by New York Times art critic Hilton Kramer in 1978 for a photograph included in the Museum of Modern Art group show “Mirrors and Windows: American Photography Since 1950,” she had also had a show at the Daniel Wolf gallery in New York displaying some of her Fresson printed photographs. Those photos caught the eye of many influential people, which led to the Vanity Fair assignment.

Metzner’s year at Vogue saw her photographing Brooke Shields, Uma Thurman, Paloma Picasso, Kim Basinger, Isabella Rossellini, Molly Ringwald and many more. Her career as a commercial photographer happened after she talked to Liberman about increasing her rate. She told her best bet was to shoot advertising photos. “That’s when I wrote a letter to Ralph Lauren. I had a meeting and, I brought him my Fresson prints. We soon started working together,” she says.

Over the years her commercial clients have included Valentino, Elizabeth Arden, Perry Ellis, Shiseido, Fendi, Saks Fifth Avenue, Levi’s, Club Monaco and Neiman Marcus. Among all those commercial assignments, one of her favorite shoots was for the Fendi fragrance campaign done in Rome. “There were mood boards that came from Karl Lagerfeld. It was about Mannerist paintings. He called it ‘The Passion of Rome and The Colors of Rome,’” the photographer says. “Then Elizabeth Arden, who was making the fragrance, sent these fumigation drawings. So, we were looking for locations with antiquated walls.” She and her crew had gotten a permit to shoot in the gardens outside a museum, but the guard inside the gate maintained the permits were for the exterior of the gates, which was a parking lot.

“We left and went to the home of Alda Fendi (one of the five sisters whose father started Fendi). We opened the door and right there, in the foyer, was the statue used in the famous Fendi photo of the girl kissing a statue. But Metzner didn’t confine herself to fashion. In the early ’90s, she started photographing landscapes around the world after she met the editor of American Way, the American Airlines magazine. The editor gave Metzner two tickets and $2,000 to fly to any American Airlines destination to take photos. Metzner photographed the Atacama Desert in Chile, the everglades in Florida, Oahu in Hawaii and the Galapagos Islands. She went to Ireland and Iceland, the Grand Canyon and other national parks. She, too, went to Norway and the Swiss Alps. She also went to Iceland to see a glacier. She was altijd, doent, and I brought him my Fresson prints. We soon started working together,” she says.

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Rebooting 7L, Karl Lagerfeld’s Beloved Bookstore

The landmark in Paris is now brimming with cultural events, live performances, book signings — and cool merch. by MILES SOCHA

If the walls of Karl Lagerfeld’s photo studio on the Rue de Lille in Paris could talk, it would be in multiple languages — and the discourse would be fascinating enough to write multiple books to add to the 33,000 volumes already stacked around the perimeter, from floor to rafters. Tucked behind his beloved 7L bookstore, it’s where the late German designer happily worked late into the night two or three times a week, lensing numerous Chanel campaigns and press kits and, for a famous coffee-table tome, making portraits of some of the most famous people in the world wearing little black jackets.

When he wasn’t behind the camera shooting editorials, advertising or artistic experiments — via Polaroid transfers, daguerreotypes, platinotypes, resinotypes or digital prints — he would dart to an adjoining meeting room to conduct media interviews or to plan projects with architects, filmmakers, playwrights, authors, publishers, musicians and actors. The shutter clicks and conversations stopped when Lagerfeld passed away in February 2019, casting a solemn pall over this iconic place.

But 7L is roaring back to life in a way Lagerfeld would have relished: It’s now brimming with cultural events, dance and musical performances, exhibitions, book signings, readings, lectures, bespoke services and cool merch. “It is not a museum,” stresses Laurence Delamare in her first interview since being named director of 7L in 2021, shortly after Chanel acquired the venue, where a huge part of the French fashion house’s visual history was recorded. “My idea from the beginning was to bring creativity back to this place. It won’t be a fashion photo studio anymore, but a place for contemporary artists.

The idea is really to be inspired by the library, or the bookstore,” Delamare explains, mentioning that one of the first dance performances at 7L took its cues from a book about Tadao Ando, one of Lagerfeld’s favorite architects. (“Atlas Tadao Ando,” by Philippe Séclier, published by Atelier EXB.) Delamare worked at Lagerfeld’s elbow for 15 years as Chanel’s global head of fashion public relations, sharing his passions for movies and literature — and for elegant events and communications. She continues to wear a second hat as the head of Chanel fashion’s editorial narrative department. Lagerfeld, who helmed Chanel for more than 30 years, set the bar extremely high with his formidable creative output, so it’s not surprising to hear Delamare declare about all of 7L’s cultural happenings: “It has to be live, and it has to be exceptional.”

Delamare made clear that she’s running the bookstore, publishing house and cultural space as businesses, not philanthropy, and she has a development plan for each. Lagerfeld was famously a ravenous client of Paris bookstores including Galignani, and 7L has built an important clientele of artists, architects, designers and collectors, who treasure the curated and up-to-the-minute selection of books about photography, architecture, design, interiors and gardens. ►

In that vein, Delamare even commissioned a poet, Claire Marin, to pen the press release detailing this “new chapter” for 7L.

(continued on page 24)
During the interview, 7L staff lined up on a table a selection of current bestsellers — and what they call “long sellers.” They include books about artist Christian Berard, aesthete Charles de Beistegui, architect Carlo Scarpa, chessboard design, modernism in Beirut, the anatomy of color and psychoanalytic interiors.

“The bookstore itself is like a living projection of Karl’s mind. And the book selection is also a reflection of the taste, the things he loved. And I think our clients, our audience is very emotionally attached to our curation of books. The editorial line has not changed.”

In addition to revamping the website and recently resuming e-commerce, 7L introduced a bespoke library service for clients’ homes or offices, assembled by its bookstore staff according to their interests — or decor. Delamare notes one of its first commissions involved sourcing books in the color yellow. “They can do whatever the clients want them to do and personalize the curation,” she says.

Launching for holiday gifting are “book boxes” containing a trio of books on a specific subject, stationery goodies and a previously unpublished, numbered artwork. New 7L merch includes a range of sturdy tote bags, sketch pads, pencil and also co-branded items, like a Smythson slogan notebook emblazoned with the Karl-ism: “Books Should be an Everyday Affair.”

Regular book signings animate the space, with 7L hosting about 50 since April 2022, including with the industrial designer Ronan Bouroullec, and artist Sophie Calle, whose session welcomed an unexpected drop-in: Madonna. (Delamare notes that Lagerfeld wasn’t fond of signings, as all visitors to 7L, even those headed to his photo studio, had to pass through the bookstore.)

Among upcoming guests for signing sessions are fashion illustrator Jean-Philippe Delhomme and fashion editor and entrepreneur Carine Roitfeld.

Cultural events are the newest element and a Friends of 7L membership, subject to the approval of an internal committee, offers admission for two for an entire season — from September to June — of live, contemporary creation under the Frurner Correspondances and a monthly Reading Room program, starting in January.

Furnished with the gargantuan sofas and long leather benches Lagerfeld commissioned from Studio Putman and Christian Liaigre for his various homes, the photo studio can accommodate between 90 and 120 people for seated events.

Full-fledged members get a courtesy discount on books, preorder offers, preferential rates to rent 7L spaces, as well as access to the 20 events of the Correspondances program, plus monthly encounters in the library space with contemporary figures like architect Aline Aumânt, opera director Robert Carsen. (The Friends “entrance” fee is 3,480 euros plus an annual subscription fee of 7,164 euros.)

An exhibition space tucked behind the big salon hosts an exhibition by Cristina de Middel, president of Magnum Photos, who was given carte blanche to shoot the library. During his lifetime Lagerfeld published a host of books under the 7L imprint, most with Gerhard Steidl, including the complete writings of Friedrich Nietzsche; the artworks of Roni Horn, and reissues of Fran Lebowitz’s “Metropolitan Life/Social Studies.”

The new Éditions 7L will operate differently, teaming with contemporary figures like architect Aline Asmar d’Amman and opera director Robert Carsen, including the complete writings of Friedrich Nietzsche; the artworks of Roni Horn, and reissues of Fran Lebowitz’s “Metropolitan Life/Social Studies.”

She says half a dozen books are in the works for release in 2024 and 2025. “My aim is that this space remains a source of inspiration for artists and very creative minds and remains friendly and joyful for authors and publishing houses — the most friendly, coolest, relevant space for book lovers and friends,” she says. “It should be nostalgic and the only way is to be avant-garde and to host creative events with artists of today and tomorrow.”

**These 7 Books Keep Selling at 7L**

Several titles are considered “long sellers” that have become references for clients of the Paris landmark.

**LONG SELLERS**

- "Christian Bérard Excentrique Bébé" (Flammarion)
- "Chess Design" by Romain Morandi (Norma)
- "Carlo Scarpa: Architecture and Design," edited by Garth Belzett and Italo Zannier (Rizzoli)
- "The Anatomy of Colour," by Patrick Baty (Thames & Hudson)
- "Charles de Beistegui: Le Prince des Esbètes" by Thomas Pienaar (Rizzoli)
- "Modernist Beirut" by Guillaume Excelsior and Matthieu Salvaing (Norma)

**NEW BESTSELLERS**

- "Analysis," by Shelburne Thurber (Kehrer)
Rally wants to bring rare collectibles into the hands of the masses, turning a market that was historically restricted to a small pool of wealthy clientele into an accessible space where fans dictate the prices and can buy shares of these rare finds.

The investment platform launched in 2017 aiming to democratize ownership of rare collectibles across a variety of categories, such as classic cars, watches, sports memorabilia, fashion accessories, literature and others, by allowing customers to purchase shares of the items. Since launch, Rally has grown its offerings list to more than 450 rare finds, some of which are showcased at the company’s new SoHo museum-like storefront located at 446 Broadway in Manhattan.

“Our thought process was that everything on Rally triggers nostalgia or has a story behind it,” says Rob Petrozzo, Rally’s cofounder. “We wanted to do our best job to tell that story in the most tangible, possible way.”

Petrozzo explains the SoHo museum is set up in a timeline format, starting with the entrance that showcases a 60-million-year-old dinosaur skull. In the middle, visitors will find a turquoise 1955 Porsche 356 Speedster sitting in front of glass cases that house pieces like a Hermès Faubourg Birkin bag, a first-edition copy of “Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone” and a complete set of the 1990s Chicago Bulls championship rings. The space is rounded out with a make-your-own NFT station at the back.

“We've been really successful in a lot of different categories and bringing a lot of these collectibles to the masses in a way that I think a lot of the auction houses have had trouble doing,” Petrozzo continues. “It’s always one person buying one asset and, for us, we syndicate it to thousands of people individually who own it now.”

While Rally’s rare items are valued at hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of dollars, shares are typically priced at under $50 to make ownership more accessible. Petrozzo explains that the process begins with an item being introduced to the Rally app through the platform’s version of an initial public offering where Rally puts a price on the collectible. During the IPO process, Rally allows users to purchase up to 10 percent in shares of the asset so that one individual doesn’t have a controlling interest in the item.

Once the IPO is filled, the item enters Rally’s secondary market where users can buy and sell shares of each item like the stock market, which can change the value of that collectible. If an individual acquires majority ownership of an item, they can propose a buyout to buy all the shares and take physical ownership of the collectible. Petrozzo says this has happened many times since Rally launched, naming items like a first edition Apple iPod, which sold for $29,000, and a first edition 1940s Batman comic book, which sold for $2 million.

“Our position has always been that thousands of individuals in the future will be way better at pricing the things they care most about than one or two people at an auction who are bidding on something,” Petrozzo says. “The super wealthy have always been the ones that price these assets and they price it based on their mood in some cases. If there are two to three people in a room who really want something, it can really drive the price of something up millions of dollars over what the estimate was.”

As interest in Rally continues to grow, Petrozzo has many growth plans for the platform. The cofounder believes the platform will double its offerings by the end of 2024 and has plans to continue expanding into different categories. Rally most recently moved into real estate, with its first listing being baseball icon Mickey Mantle’s childhood home, and is furthering its presence in the wine category.

For Rally’s fashion offerings, Petrozzo states the platform will continue to showcase one-of-a-kind pieces from major fashion houses and memorable looks that have stuck in the cultural lexicon, like fashion worn by celebrities or public figures.

Rally’s SoHo museum will remain a focal point for the company, as it’s a way for the platform to engage with fans in an experiential format.

“We’ll be using this space to educate and also create entertainment around [the collectibles],” Petrozzo says. “If you like what you see, you can actually leave with equity in what you just experienced. That’s what the future looks like for us.”
More than 85,000 people accessed work through our inclusive sourcing program in 2022.

We care for our communities around us.

Our Solidarity Sourcing program directs a proportion of our Global purchases to suppliers who employ people from vulnerable communities to allow for improved access to work and income.
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vividly recall my inaugural first class Pan Am transatlantic flight, when an entire silver domed carvery was wheeled with an old fashioned “stand-up and walk-around” bar, staffed by beautiful, young, immaculately dressed Countess penned her missives from her pied-à-terres in Manhattan, Nantucket, Paris, London and Gouda, as well as wherever her travels took her, from California to Morocco.

Nobody remotely sane admits to relishing the prospect of modern air travel as the process has morphed from being something special and, once upon a time in the ‘60s, even luxurious to today’s human equivalent of cattle- herding. The days when one referred to a frequent-flyer as being a “jet-setter” are but a distant memory. Unless one is talking “private jet,” the expression is nothing but silly. The glamour was back when the old Pan Am Clippers were half empty, the spacious cabins were exclusively staffed by beautiful, young, immaculately dressed “stewardesses” with stylish uniforms designed by the likes of Oleg Cassini (TWA), Christian Dior (Air France), Coco Chanel (Olympic) and Pierre Balmain (Singapore).

Back then, the front of the aircraft was often furnished with an old fashioned “stand-up and walk-around,” where one could drink and harmlessly flirt with fellow passengers. In that front section at least, the passengers were piled with copious amounts of Champagne and caviar and the attentive service was second to none. I vividly recall my inaugural first class Pan Am transatlantic flight, when an entire silver domed carvery was wheeled out and we were offered rare roast beef, carved off the bone, “seat-side.” It was all quite thrilling. As an aside, I noted that on a recent TAP flight – Portugal’s crazy national airline – all the female cabin crew (as they are correctly labeled today) were short, snappy, wrist length leather gloves during our entire boarding process. This was August, in heat of 80 degrees Fahrenheit. I thought to myself, “Are these entirely redundant leather gloves the last bastion of those times when there was an unwritten but implicit allure around the women who served the aircraft cabins?” There is something deeply old fashioned but elegant about a lady sporting leather gloves, especially when they categorically are not being worn to keep the hands warm but simply as a fashion accessory. Back in those days, there were also crisply dressed porters to do the heavy lifting at both ends and one’s luggage became a collage of stylish pictorial labels announcing far-flung and exotic destinations.

In times past, we were told “with the exception of John in the rear cabin, we are required to do certain things, such as adopt the seatbelt, or be those of another passenger? And another humdinger of a redundancy. Can my belongings be impersonal or be those of another our “personal belongings.” I think the very word and remove the headphones of some total stranger a and insisting you have a “pat-down,” during which, as they our “personal belongings.” I think the very word and remove the headphones of some total stranger a

And then we face the last insult – the torturous grammar and syntax deployed by airlines worldwide in their unending announcements over the PA system. One shouldn’t blame the poor individual with the microphone. They are simply reading from a script, compiled spits out the elongated luggage tag, which, in order to attach properly to the baggage, requires either another hapless individual back at the airline’s respective headquarters, be it JFK, LAX or London Heathrow. We are duly instructed to “fasten your seatbelt securely.” Is there any other way to fasten a seatbelt, other than securely? Please show me an insecure seatbelt. We are informed that “in the event of an emergency” we are required to do certain things, such as adopt the brace position. To me, an “event” is a wedding, a party, a graduation… not an airplane problem. The phrase “in the event of an emergency” is entirely redundant – it’s simply a massive and life-altering emergency and most certainly not an “event.” And to add fuel to the fire, during such an “event,” we are encouraged to “remove all personal headsets.”

Hello, good for that helpful guidance, because my natural inclination was to grab my headphones and remove the and the headphones of some total stranger a couple of rows back.

Having safely landed, we are told not to forget all our “personal belongings.” I think the very word “belonging” in itself defines to whom the item belongs. Can my belongings be impersonal or be those of another passenger? And another humdinger of a redundancy. In times past, there was a rule that our telephones had to remain firmly “off” until the aircraft arrived at the gate. Now, with the miracle of regret once on back on terra firma, turning “on” a small device will apparently no longer cause the aircraft to involuntarily hurtle toward the control tower. Hence, upon takeoff, we might as well generously informed that it is safe to use our “hand-held personal electronic items.” That detailed instruction is particularly helpful, otherwise we might be tempted to take down those washing machines and 3D printers that we stowed in the overhead bins and quickly fire them up. Really?

Lastly, we are told that on behalf of “the entire crew” it was a pleasure to have served us on the flight. I long for the day when, following the use of the word “entire,” we are told “with the exception of John in the rear cabin, who begrudges the fact that he had to serve you today, as it’s his grandson’s birthday.”

Come Fly With Me

Long gone are the romantic days of air travel, replaced by low-cost airlines and in-flight announcements filled with annoying word choices.

Editor’s Note: The Hungarian Countess Louise J. Esterhazy was a revered – and feared – chronicler of the highs – and generally lows – of fashion, society, culture and more. Over the course of several decades (although she never really counted and firmly avoided any reference to her age), the Countess penned her missives from her pied-à-terres in Manhattan, Nantucket, Paris, London and Gouda, as well as wherever her travels took her, from California to Morocco.

Photograph by Getty Images

staff and in doing-so reduced their costs, we are forced to battle with computer terminals asking us to enter endless details and answer one mind-numbing question about hazardous materials, which of course everyone secretes into their luggage. By the way, in the unlikely chance that someone had packed them, are they going to tap the “Yes” button when asked that question? I think not. One day, during check-in, I will ask the General (husband of the Countess, aka, the German wife) in a booming theatrical voice, “Darling, remind me, is this the first time you have packed your checked bag or the carry-on?”

Having answered the pointless questions, the machine spits out the elongated luggage tag, which, in order to attach properly to the baggage, requires another hapless individual back at the airline’s respective headquarters, be it JFK, LAX or London Heathrow. We are duly instructed to “fasten your seatbelt securely.” Is there any other way to fasten a seatbelt, other than securely? Please show me an insecure seatbelt.

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Photo credit: Getty Images

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Photograph by Getty Images
“Quality in anything and everything we do, should be the ultimate standard. It’s the essence of excellence and my constant north star.”
— Tommy Hilfiger

“A night in or a day in with your family. It’s giving: eating some good food. And it’s giving: spending that quality time together. It’s all about togetherness.”
— Adut Akech, creative director of Carolina Herrera

“To me, quality is something made with love and purpose.”
— Wes Gordon

“Quality to me means especially commitment, hard work, responsibility. It means never taking anything for granted, constantly setting for yourself new limits to surpass and impeccable standards. This refers not only to the intrinsic characteristics of products, but also to the creative and production processes. To do this, I rely on local resources — Italy in this regard is still a real excellence — while taking into consideration high-quality production abroad. In a context such as this one, I remain convinced that less is better, at the risk of going against stream. I work to reduce the environmental impact of my production while I propose quality products, made to last. I am against the single-use, of-the-moment trends. Quality means also to create value, realizing outfits, accessories and objects capable of creating a link, an emotion in those who own them.”
— Giorgio Armani

“I often reflect on the issue of human quality, which, I believe, is obtained by constantly being aware of the distinction of our actions. But then, how do you achieve this? On this matter, I am helped on the one hand by Greek mythology and on the other hand by a great 19th century philosopher. One of the main mythical truths was that of the temple of Apollo in Delphi: ‘Nothing too much.’ After centuries, in such a different scope, that of reason, [Georg Wilhelm Friedrich] Hegel thought that ‘quantity determines quality.’ So, if we put them together, we notice that too much or too little hinder the possibility to achieve quality and it is evident that this is reached only with ‘the right measure’, moral and material, of our human actions.”
— Brunello Cucinelli

“Our vision of quality applies to an extended concept, meaning the set of characteristics of a specific product. From its original idea to the design, from the choice of materials to its construction and obviously service. But the most important thing is that ‘slowness’ is quality. Our mission is to take the necessary time to guarantee the utmost quality in every phase of the pipeline. Luxury is time.”
— Alessandro Sartori, artistic director of Zegna

“Quality offers a feeling of warmth long after its creation. A meal that makes you feel better the next morning. A worn wooden chair that was passed on for generations. A love that has been nurtured throughout time. All of these are signs of quality and ultimately have no price tag.”
— Willy Chavarria

“Quality to me is the quest of richness and abundance in community, self care, meaningful moments, and of course... something to spoil yourself with.”
— LaQuan Smith

“Quality is work that comes from the heart. There are so many extraordinary craftspeople and artists who create with their hands, create with their heart through their hands and that’s what quality is for me.”
— Jordan Roth, theater producer, couture collector and chairman of Friends of the CFDA

“Honesty and time.”
— Matthew M. Williams, founder of 1017 ALYX 9SM

“Attention, passion. I think ultimately, it’s about the love that you put into something. I think that’s the only way to really achieve quality: time, attention, passion, love — human qualities.”
— Iris van Herpen

“What Is Quality?”

Designers, executives and others weigh in on the key question.

BY WWD STAFF
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MASTER OF MATERIALS

DEC. 7, 2023
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Feel it!
“Chanel is the epitome of quality. The dress inside looks as good as it does outside, and it’s a pleasure to turn it inside out and see how well the finishing is. Chanel and Dior are the two houses that do fantastic work. The quality of the finishing is so good that it is possible to increase and decrease the size of a dress, whenever you gain weight or not. The fabrics are always top quality and the workmanship is quality as well.”

— Mouna Ayoub
real estate entrepreneur and couture patron

“I have always felt like quality has two things. One is about longevity and the ability of something to endure. It also has to do with materiality and to do with something that has a very human hand. Quality is something usually quite immediate, something you feel right away whether something has it or not.”

— Erdem Moralıoğlu
designer

“For me, quality is about effort — the commitment to research, to test, and to fail, perhaps a hundred times or more. I aim to create things that look, feel and tell stories in the best possible way. Achieving that takes time, energy and diligence; it takes effort.”

— Colm Dillane
KidSuper

“An expertise that you get to carry with you, or live in. And hopefully it evokes a feeling that makes you prideful and garners a conversation and curiosity.”

— John Elliott

“The first thing you always do when you go shopping is you rub your fingers on the material. And you can kind of tell right away if that’s something you want on your skin. It’s why it’s always tricky shopping online. You want to try it on. I feel like it’s sort of the same thing with anything, you get what you pay for. There really is good stuff out there and bad stuff. In anything, there’s a lot of s–t, but there’s also some good quality things out there. It’s the same in my industry in Hollywood. There’s a lot of unfunny comedians trying to make it, but there’s also some really funny ones. I’m in a business fully surrounded by people that are the product, you know, actors, musicians, influencers, whatever. And I’ve always been pretty good at kind of being able to tell, like, ‘OK, they’ve got the thing.’ They have that je ne sais quoi. That thing, I’d rather have less stuff and quality stuff than a bunch of s–t. Forgive the language. And as I’ve gotten older, it’s quality over quantity.”

— Simon Rex
actor

“Quality to me starts with raising the bar from clean. Clean is not enough. So many brands talk about clean nutrition, clean skin care. Well, clean is the absence of negative things. Clean isn’t enough if you’re talking about quality. What quality is is something that the body recognizes as nutrition. That’s the pathway to health. Quality to me is the presence of high doses of nutrition and the absence of things that provide no value.”

— Peter Murane
chief executive officer and cofounder of Mox Skincare

“Quality is about beautiful materials, intricate details, and expert construction.”

— Stacey Bendet
chief executive officer and creative director of Alice + Olivia

“When I think of quality, and more specifically ‘good quality,’ I think of something that’s been created with one’s true and sincere integrity and best efforts. I have crafted a life filled with good quality — good quality friendships, designs made to last, and home-grown ingredients to fill quiches with.”

— Laura Kim
co-creative director of Oscar de la Renta and Monse

“Quality is being in the present, whether with family or at work. Really being in the present results in quality — quality time or quality product.”

— Veronica Swanson Beard
cofounder of Veronica Beard

“Quality is indelible. The priceless experience that sticks in your psyche like Krazy Glue. Sensual, subtle & mystical. It’s a 2010 super Tuscan.”

— Veronica Miele Beard
cofounder of Veronica Beard

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— Laura Kim
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YOUR TICKET
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Neiman Marcus
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“Quality is great fabrics and excellent finishes.”
— Sergio Hudson

“Quality means seeing the hand and thought [behind the product], not just the product itself.”
— Amy Smilovic
founder and creative director of Tibi

“Quality is never an accident. It is the result of consideration, care and intelligent effort. I strive for quality in every aspect of my life and work.”
— Paul Andrew

“Quality is when you can get your day-to-day to quite a peaceful state. I walk my dog for an hour every single morning. I then either walk or drive to work. I sit in the car for 25 minutes and I’m alone with my thoughts. People sometimes think that routine is mundane, but actually there’s so much peace that comes with knowing what you’re doing.”
— Victoria Prew
CEO and cofounder of Hurr

“Quality is the time and care that is put into something. It does not have to be tangible; it can be relationship-building, a product, or even how you style something. To me, quality means taking your time and adding innovation or elevation to how you execute something. This is something that we pride ourselves in and love about creating Forvr Mood products. We always put quality at the forefront of how it benefits the consumer, how it makes people feel, and why they would want to repurchase. Quality is about how you treat things and people.”
— Jackie Aina
content creator and founder of Forvr Mood

“In this day and age, quality is more about the measure of cost but for me, it’s about the make and intention as well, though not mutually exclusive. For instance, an Ikea shopping bag and a Goyard Saint Louis GM: Both are thoughtfully made in their respective places and both of great quality but most won’t consider them equals because of the cost.”
— Angelo Urrutia
creative director of 4xDESIGNS

“Quality to me is authenticity, passion and attention to detail. Quality comes from being intentional about everything you do.”
— Priya Ahluwalia
designer

“Quality to me is like a sixth sense — it’s difficult to define but you know it by how it makes you feel. When it comes to material pieces, it’s the just right color, shape or weight that sparks a feeling of warmth.”
— Jade Ruzzo
jeweler

“Longevity — be it things or moments that last.”
— Daniella Kallmeyer
founder and creative director of Kallmeyer

“Quality to me truly and simply is just spending time with my family. I don’t take the time for granted. I try to have the most excellent time with my mom and the family in Jamaica. Literally just sitting at the beach laughing in my home city, Montego Bay makes me happy.”
— Matthew Harris
founder of Mateo

“To me, quality is great fabrics and excellent finishes. ”
— Sergio Hudson

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Offered any fabric in the world to make their next collection, plenty of designers would opt for vicuña, baby cashmere, mulberry silk, Japanese denim or some such. Not Iris van Herpen. Her dream would be to use an invisibility cloak — except only the U.S. Army seems to have authorization for this mysterious material, which bends the light around an object to make it seemingly disappear.

“It was supposed to come on the market but it hasn’t yet, so,” she laments. “I think a lot of my work is about a hypnotic sense — an illusion.”

Recently the Dutch couturier has been experimenting with 4D printing techniques, based on the same principle as the 3D printing she’s been exploring since 2009. “But you can build in transformations over time. And you can select what you want it to activate. For example, it can transform shape when heat is involved, or light or movement. So it’s a very beautiful technique. But it is not yet at the stage where I have enough control on the technique in order to really make it my own.”

Uncompromising with the exacting craft she employs to create her mesmerizing, otherworldly couture, van Herpen can make as many as 10 prototypes of each of her creations to perfect the technique and refine the execution. She often uses half-scale dresses first, and then the final, full-size garment has to be done perfectly.

A pioneer in employing 3D printing for clothing and footwear, van Herpen is also adept at silicon molding, laser-cutting and water-jet cutting alongside more traditional couture techniques such as hand-pleating, draping and embroidery.

All of these painstaking techniques are on display at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, where a retrospective of van Herpen’s work — on until April 28 — is bound to further raise her profile and educate the public about one of the most uncompromising and inventive fashion practitioners on the couture stage.

To be sure, van Herpen’s arresting designs — which draw inspiration from nature, art, architecture and cutting-edge scientific ideas — caught the attention of design experts early, with Holland’s Groninger Museum mounting the first large-scale exhibition of her fashions in 2012, only five years into her career. (The showcase would later travel across North and South America.)

After graduating from the ArtEZ University of the Arts in Arnhem, Netherlands, in 2006, van Herpen interned at Alexander McQueen in London and also with Dutch textile designer and artist Claudy Jongstra before launching her couture brand at Amsterdam Fashion Week in 2007. Her debut collection, titled “Chemical Crows,” introduced her penchant for unusual materials and sculptural shapes: She used the metal ribs of umbrellas to create jutting, samurai-like forms.

She notes that her early work often focused on protective, armor-like constructions to portray an empowering femininity, whereas more recent collections have been “much softer and more focused on the sensitivity and the sensory experience of femininity,” she muses.

Indeed, an impossible lightness defines much of van Herpen’s most recent work, though her dresses are far more hard-wearing than one might think. “We’ve been able to perfect some of the craftsmanship through those extreme challenges of the skydiving, for example,” she says.

She is alluding to one of her astonishing filmed collections during the coronavirus pandemic. For her fall 2021 couture collection, elite skydiver Domitille Kiger plunged headfirst toward Earth in a heavily embroidered gown that stretched and twitched traveling at 300 kilometers an hour.

“There are very fragile pieces in the archive,” says van Herpen, who wisely kept an “artist copy” of each of her couture creations to date. “But as movement and transformation is such an important element, and given ▶

Iris van Herpen Explores Outer Reaches of Fashion Possibilities

The Dutch couturier discusses the exacting craft she employs to create her mesmerizing, otherworldly dresses.

BY MILES SOCHA
my background in dance….I want them to be able to handle a lot.” (Van Herpen studied classical ballet before switching to fashion.)

In a wide-ranging interview in Paris, where she had her final meetings with the curators of the “Iris van Herpen: Sculpting the Senses” exhibition, the designer speaks about her creative process, her clients and her fierce independent streak.

There was never a question that her focus in fashion would be haute couture.

“It’s where my heart is. I really see fashion as a form of art and with couture, I’m really able to express that,” she says.

Van Herpen dabbled in ready-to-wear from 2013 to 2014 — around the time she won the prestigious ANDAM Prize in France. “But that really felt like going back to school,” she says of her brief ready-to-wear foray. “Because you have a very limited palette of techniques that you can work with.

“All of the techniques that I’ve been developing in the atelier that are now my signature, they are not able to be done in a factory. So it was like painting without arms. I couldn’t express my own language.”

So she returned to her first love, carving out a unique place in fashion and establishing a unique business that relies solely on sales to private clients, collectors and select museums, along with custom orders from the likes of Lady Gaga, Björk, Grimes, Cate Blanchett, Beyoncé and Tilda Swinton.

“My need for creative freedom is very strong, and I want to hold on to it,” she says. “If I were to work for another brand, I would have to stop my own label because I’m very creatively involved. I do every aspect of the design process, which is not necessarily the case for all creative directors.”

Nor does Van Herpen have ambitions to become a fashion or couture as a form of art. So they will have an art collection also. And I think that’s really beautiful that those two worlds can live together.”

While nature in the broadest sense has long inspired van Herpen — but think about mushrooms and root systems rather than flowers — an invitation to visit Arts at CERN many years ago opened her mind to scientific inspiration.

CERN — an acronym for The European Organization for Nuclear Research — operates the largest particle physics laboratory in the world near Geneva, and van Herpen has visited many times, interacting with some of the thousands of scientists who work there. “I realized I could really take science as inspiration for my collections, and even for my material developments,” she says. “That really became part of my process….Biomimicry has been a very important influence from the beginning up until now. It’s the moment that defines the inspiration in the end, but it can come from many different fields. It can be philosophy, it can be a book, it can be a conversation that I’ve had with someone,” she says. Or it could be the countryside.

“A while ago I moved outside of the city. So that’s a whole new exploration for me. OK, having a garden and being more in touch with nature even more than before, which I think has a very positive influence on my work.”

Van Herpen became a guest member of the Fédération de la Haute Couture in 2011. Her shows — often an immersive experience incorporating kinetic sculptures or live performers — have become a creative highlight of the week and opened her work to a larger audience.

Those showcases attracted celebrities who have further fanned her fame and the couture clients that bring the majority of revenues to her Amsterdam-based house. “I interact with them quite a lot and I really like the personal part of couture. Clients usually come to the atelier, sometimes even a few times,” she says. “We do the fittings, which is a very personal process….Actually, the exhibition was realized with the help of some clients.”

Van Herpen says that most of her clients are also art collectors, “which I think is really interesting. They see fashion or couture as a form of art. So they will have an art collection also. And I think that’s really beautiful that those two worlds can live together.”

She describes her collection archive as “a library of knowledge. I think, because a lot of the pieces are very specific in how they are made.”

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MARIOLUCA GIUSTI
SYNTHETIC CRISTAL

FIRENZE
ROMA
MILANO
That ‘70s Jewelry: High-end Vintage Finds at Particulieres Are An Art Gallery of Adornments

Shelly Branch has an eye for jewelry that’s worth more than its weight in gold.  

BY TARA DONALDSON

In a crowded sea of jewelry sellers, Shelly Branch is dealing art. Particularly, Particulieres, her Instagram and private sale business, is sourcing and selling bold vintage pieces that are at once simple and statement making. And what’s immediately apparent in Branch’s gold-filled feed is that rarity and form are what catches her eye. The pieces — many of which are from the 1970s by jewelry houses like Cartier and Bulgari — possess a quality of craft that makes them collectible for those who can afford them, and coverable for those who can only afford to admire them.

“I like to think that the jewelry I sell is timeless, classic because the ’70s, give or take a few decades, a lot of that jewelry is extremely wearable and doesn’t really go out of style,” Branch says from her Manhattan home, where her own adornments for the day include a Bulgari Monete necklace and a Bulgari diamond ring from the 1970s. “I find a lot of pieces that are appealing to the eye but that I know are marketable.”

In the gallery of Particulieres art pieces is a gold Elsa Peretti “e” cuff, a Cartier fluted diamond ring, and several pieces from the hard to come by and recently re-popularized Georges Lenfant. Known for incomparable quality, Lenfant and his son Jacques created pieces for the top Parisian jewelry houses in the mid-20th century. “Because she’s extremely selective, you know when she chooses something, it’s a piece to pay attention to.”

- Branch has collections of zodiac jewelry, “designs-in-relief,” as the Instagram post where due, Branch had an eye for it, adding pieces to her collection before discerning jewelry lovers caught on and prices doubled. Lenfant’s astrological ingots, intricately detailed with “designs-in-relief,” as the Instagram post featuring them notes, are part of Particulieres’ offer.

“Right now people are absolutely ravenous when it comes to zodiac jewelry,” she says.

Branch has an eye, and that’s what got the former writer and editor for The Wall Street Journal into the business in the first place. She was wearing vintage Parisian jewelry she procured and people in New York were imploring her to source similar for them. She did and then, she says, “I started throwing some things up on Instagram because I liked them and I thought. ‘Let me see if I can attract the attention of people who might like my taste in fine jewelry’ and I was shocked at what happened. I immediately started to hear from dealers in London and dealers here.”

Particulieres also attracted Blake Lively, who, it seems, likes Branch’s taste in fine jewelry, too.

“The world is abundant with vintage items, whether forgotten or sought after. Shelly finds both with an eye so exacting that each piece feels like the crown jewel,” the actress and client of Branch’s tells WWD Weekend.

“Because she’s extremely selective, you know when she chooses something, it’s a piece to pay attention to.”

- The pieces actually are worthy of the kind of attention jewelry boxes don’t do justice to, which is why Branch prefers to put some of her personal collection pieces away in plain sight.

“Because I’m a lover of objects and design, it’s a little hard for me to separate the idea of jewelry as just something to wear and jewelry as a design object, as an artwork. Therefore in my home you will find various pieces sometimes displayed in the way that someone might display a vase or tray because I love to look at these objects,” she says.

At the moment a pair of Pierre Sterlé bird brooches — one with a head of turquoise, the other coral — are on Branch’s bedside table.

Of all the jewelry she’s sourced, the best is one she sold and still regrets. “It was a very, very unusual bracelet by Georges Lenfant for Cartier Paris; I’ve never seen anything like it, I don’t expect to see anything like it again,” she says. It looked like a molecular project, a folding ladder of sorts with spheres, and it could expand and collapse, making it wearable but also fun to handle, Branch explains. “It was a sculpture as much as it was a piece of jewelry.”

But the business of Particulieres isn’t just about finding pretty things,” says Branch, who is entirely self-financed and not the product of a generational family business.

“I own all of the pieces that you see on my page,” she says. “I feel very strongly about owning the jewelry that I sell because it shows people that I’ve made an actual investment and the piece has to pass muster with my standards, which are very high. I’m selling my own collection of things that I’ve paid money for.”

While prices are intentionally omitted from Particulieres’ Instagram posts with the aim of inviting people to have a conversation about the pieces, they start around $1,000 and extend into the six figures. They can climb even higher in instances where she’s sourcing a piece of jewelry for a client.

Branch’s presence in the business is almost as rare as the pieces she’s procuring, but she’s adding representation where there still isn’t much.

“It’s a very male-dominated business. And there are very few Black people in this business. On the vintage, high-end side, I have not been able to find another Black person selling at the level I’m selling,” she says.

At that level, quality of service is as important as quality of product and Branch prides herself on the relationship she has with her clients, who include a list of people very much in fashion.

Lauren Santo Domingo, entrepreneur and cofounder of Moda Operandi, is one of them. She says Branch “manages to unearth incredible treasures” and that “she knows my taste so well by now, I buy almost everything she shows me.”

“Sometimes she’ll even make me reconsider designers or eras I had never been drawn to or had overlooked — her point of view always adds a new shine to anything,” she says. “She helped usher in the bold gold jewelry trend and it seems it’s here to stay.”
Graham Thompson, The Grand Master of Hats

The Chicago-based owner of Optimo has spent his career reviving the lost art of hatmaking.

BY JEAN E. PALMieri

Graham Thompson is an old soul. Whether it’s classic movies, vintage cars or cigars, the founder and owner of Optimo, a Chicago-based bespoke hatmaker, has always been a fan of what he calls “Old World stuff.”

It was this love that ultimately led him to his life’s work, reviving the lost art of fine hatmaking. Since he founded his business in 1996, Thompson has created chapeaus for musicians, artists, entrepreneurs and regular people who appreciate quality and craftsmanship.

A visit to his shop on Chicago’s South Side is like stepping back in time. His workshop is located in a 7,700-square-foot firehouse that he purchased for $1 in 2015 when it was being decommissioned by the city. He hired Skidmore Owings & Merrill to renovate it and it won a Design Excellence Award in 2018.

The space is essentially a working museum of hat equipment that dates back to the turn of the century. Thompson scoured the globe for each machine and can recite the history of each piece as well as its distinct place within the hatmaking process.

Because Thompson uses techniques invented in the late 1800s, much of today’s modern machinery is unable to achieve the quality he insists upon. So he is constantly on the search for old factories that are closing or collectors willing to part with their stash to find just the right machine for each job.

Creating a bespoke hat requires dozens of steps, starting with the felt bodies that Thompson sources from Fespa in Portugal, a company he believes is the finest in the world.

When the hats arrive in Chicago, they are stored in a warehouse. His search led him to Johnny’s Hat Shop on the South Side, Thompson opines, “That’s something that will never happen at Optimo, even if Thompson is hired out expanding his business. We might grow two to three times larger, but we want to stay on principle,” he says. “We’ve spent 25 years in the business, complete with the tools and client book, and pay it off over time.

Once he was confident in his abilities, Thompson struck out on his own. Today, in addition to the workshop on the South Side, Optimo operates a retail store in the Monadnock building in Chicago’s Loop where clients can stop in and see the latest collection or be fitted for a bespoke hat. For a custom hat, heads are carefully measured and kiln-dried timber is crafted into two separate molds that are then kept in the workshop for future orders.

Thompson’s story was chronicled earlier this year in a coffee table book titled “Optimo: The Art of the Hatmaker” by Danish publisher Forlaget Ellerhorn Hummerston. In the foreword, Justin Hummerston and Morten Ellerhorn write that Thompson’s “are so intuitively beautiful, you instantly feel naked not wearing them – even though you have never worn a hat in your life.”

They describe Thompson’s “relentless ambitions of resurrecting a lost quality of hats. Many manufacturers stare into the future, looking for potential technologies to improve their product today. Graham’s glance is aimed at the past.”

The book features a section on the Golden Age of hats, which was in the early part of the 20th century. It was 1914 when per capita hat sales peaked in the U.S., but when the automobile was introduced, people spent less time outdoors and more time driving around, reducing the need for hats to protect them from the elements. Thompson believes the greatest hats were created in the 1930s and ’40s when manufacturers competed on quality. But as sales declined, so did quality, with producers focusing more on price. It was this period when pre-shaped hats came into the market, which were cheaper and more disposable.

That’s something that will never happen at Optimo, even if Thompson is hired out expanding his business. “We might grow two to three times larger, but we want to stay on principle,” he says. “We’ve spent 25 years in research and development and have built a wonderful clientele. We’re still under the radar, but we’re ready for more awareness of our brand.”
HYOSUNG TNC Reinvents Brand Identity

Aims to Pioneer Sustainable Lifestyles

In response to growing environmental concerns, the textile industry leader revamps its brand architecture with a focus on ‘CREORA’ and ‘regen,’ its functional and green fiber material, respectively, emphasizing innovation, sustainability, and a ‘Better Lifestyle & Tomorrow.’

HYOSUNG TNC has solidified its reputation as a leading textile group through its innovative work with spandex, nylon, and polyester. The company is known for the unique performance and functionality of its products, and its leading sustainable fiber materials technology. Renowned for its superior quality and world-class technology, HYOSUNG TNC is rebranding with an aim to emerge as a leading facilitator of upgraded and more sustainable lifestyles. The company has announced a brand renewal project that launched this month, focusing on renewing its identity and vision, and restructuring its product brand architecture with commitment to innovation and sustainability.

The company is committed to empowering the future generation through sustainable and functional materials, believing they should enjoy a lifestyle of convenience, comfort, and effortless sustainability. HYOSUNG TNC is focusing on renewing its identity and vision, and restructuring its product brand architecture.

The company has been developing sustainable solutions for over 20 years, always focusing on R&D for the future generations, not just the immediate market demands. The company reaffirms its commitment to developing and envisioning a better future for everyone, promising to deliver innovative experiences beyond the limits of fashion. As a facilitator of sustainable lifestyles, HYOSUNG TNC aims to communicate directly with consumers and share their vision for the future with the global community.

The company underlines the importance of innovative textile materials as essential resources for designers to turn their creative visions into reality. With a focus on creating more functional products, HYOSUNG TNC is set to lead the charge toward a sustainable lifestyle, transcending the confines of fashion and sharing innovative experiences.
Lucchese Bootmaker’s Boots Are for Country Stars, Cowboys — and Brides

The company is renowned for its handcrafted styles that it’s been producing for 140 years.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

Lucchese Bootmaker may be 140 years old but its boots are still made the same way they were when Salvador Lucchese, a tanner from Italy, and his brothers set up shop in San Antonio, Texas, in 1883.

Sons of an Sicilian shoemaker, the Lucchese siblings opened a bootmaking shop at Fort Sam Houston, a U.S. Cavalry School, servicing the military officers stationed at the location. It was called Boots & Shoes.

From the beginning, Lucchese believed in offering the highest quality components while also embracing the latest technology to advance his craft. The company is said to have purchased the first “inssector” machine shipped to the Southwest and, according to his grandson Sam Lucchese: “If he got any word of a new machine, he wanted to be the first to try it.”

Today, the brand created by the Lucchese family is still considered one of the finest bootmakers in the U.S. The company’s boots that each pair is touched by 180 to 200 hands before completion.

No Lucchese family members remain, with the business now privately held and Texas businessman John Muse serving as chairman. But the production process remains nearly identical to what it was in the beginning and the boots still use a unique last created by Sam Lucchese, who studied the anatomy of the human foot and how people walk and stand.

Still proudly based in Texas — headquarters are in Dallas and the factory is in El Paso — the artisans who create the boots today still use the skills it took centuries to perfect.

Brass and lemonwood pegs help maintain the integrity of the insole and allow the brand the ability to re-sole the boot when the bottoms wear out. Lemonwood is more malleable than metal and expands and contracts with moisture much like leather, the company says. Each peg is carefully hammered into small holes cut into the leather outside and painted over during finishing.

Once that process has been completed, the artisans guide the needle through the leather by hand to create distinct stitch patterns that illustrate the craftsmanship Lucchese has become known for.

The upper is secured to the sole by hand, is wet with water, pulled over the last and tacked. Once dry, the lemonwood pegs are inserted.

When it comes to aesthetics, it’s up to the artisans to match the skins being used as best as possible. Two crocodile skin, for example, are used to make one pair of boots and craftsmen compare some 20 to 30 options to ensure the closest match. This can sometimes take days.

The leather is then cut using steel rule dies to align the grain precisely, at which point a clicking machine applies at least 20 pounds of pressure to create an exact cut without stretching.

Over the years Lucchese boots form distinct marks and creases thanks in part to a 10-year stonewash measure
So long, dry cleaners.

The cashmere sweater that feels like a hug. The slip dress from that night you’ll never forget. You could revisit those memories more often if you took dry cleaning off the schedule and indulged your favorite clothes with a luxurious clean, right in the comfort of your own home. It’s why The Laundress strives every day to craft the finest laundry products that take exceptional care of the clothes you love.

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THE LAUNDRESS
NEW YORK
Chanel’s Métiers d’Art Show Is All About the Magic of the Human Hand

Three weeks before the Chanel Métiers d’Art show in Manchester, England, the luxury house’s Paris workshops are a hive of controlled activity.

Since Karl Lagerfeld launched the annual display in 2002 as a way to showcase the know-how of its specialty ateliers, the fashion house has ramped up its commitment to craftsmanship. Previously scattered in cramped quarters across the French capital, many of its suppliers are now housed at Le19M, a striking building designed by architect Rudy Ricciotti and located near Porte d’Aubervilliers, a working-class area north of Paris.

Meanwhile, Chanel continues to acquire suppliers to guarantee their future. Earlier this year, for instance, it partnered with Italian firm Brunello Cucinelli to buy a minority stake in Italian cashmere manufacturer Cariaggi.

“Afterward, it’s interesting to see the mix of the different styles of each house and how we each give our own spin to the collection theme.”

Viard likes to riff on locations without getting too literal. Last year, the Métiers d’Art show was unveiled in Dakar, Senegal, resuming its tradition of landing in destinations as far-flung as Tokyo, New York, Dallas, Shanghai, Rome and Edinburgh, Scotland.

The designer has sprinkled references to Great Britain into past collections, both as a nod to founder Gabrielle “Coco” Chanel, who popularized the use of tweed, and to her own rock chic aesthetic. But Yamashita keeps details firmly under wraps, especially since she’s only glimpsed a portion of the final looks.

“We often work on sections of an outfit, so we don’t know exactly how it will look in the end and what different materials will be used. That means the show is a moment of discovery for us too,” she says.

Artistic director of Montex since 2017, the embroidery specialist is known for her cutting-edge approach, incorporating unusual materials and combining techniques such as printing, machine embroidery, appliqué and laser cutting.

“These techniques are closer to jewelry,” she says in front of a table where a team applies silver metal rings onto black lace using pliers. “Just because we’re not working with a needle and thread that doesn’t mean it’s not embroidery.”

At Lesage, too, everything starts with the human hand. Anne-Lise Spivac, one of four textile designers who develop the house’s tweed fabrics, likes to design on paper, then weave a sample on a manual loom, noting down detailed production notes as she goes.

Her hands flit across the loom, flipping levers as she shuttles threads back and forth. Spivac works with everything from plain wool or cotton yarns to printed ribbons, frothy woven or knotted threads and tiny floral sequins inspired by the house’s signature camellia.

“It can feel like there’s a lot going on. There can be ribbons, yarns, sequins and pearls,” she explains, adding that she’s even used zipper tape and rubber bands. “We try to make it sophisticated by mixing a lot of very different materials but always keeping it light.”

The drawings are designed to be easily converted into pixelized information, but when it comes to manufacturing, the trick is to make the end result a little irregular to give the impression of a handwoven fabric. “A machine is a machine, but we try to maintain this illusion, this imperfection,” Spivac says.

For Yamashita, the Métiers d’Art collection transcends ordinary ready-to-wear.

“This collection is special because it’s designed to showcase our know-how and the result is still ready-to-wear, but it’s bordering on haute couture,” she says. “Sometimes the distinction is fuzzy, even for us.”
Travel in Coco Chanel’s Cap-toe-pump Footsteps?

Oui, Please.

It’s an itinerary fit for the fashion fanatic. BY TARA DONALDSON

There is something distinctly chic about traveling France the way Coco Chanel lived it. For many, the idea of seeing what she saw and perhaps feeling what she felt as she created one of the most legendary maisons is the stuff fashion fantasies are made of. And while the Chanel allure may have seen tickets to the exhibition “Gabrielle Chanel. Fashion Manifesto” – currently at the Victoria & Albert museum in London – sell out less than a week into the installation’s more than four-month run, those still keen to walk in Coco’s footsteps quite literally can.

A new curated itinerary from luxury travel company Red Savannah invites clients to channel their inner Chanel as they explore France in a way they’ve perhaps never seen it. The experience, as Camilla Davidson, the company’s head of destination management for Northern Europe who dreamed up the idea, sees it, “is for anyone who simply loves great design and history.” The “In the Footsteps of Coco Chanel” itinerary winds down in the French Riviera at the Château de Crémat, where the designer was a frequent guest. It’s there, in the stained glass of the windows, that the interlocking Cs – now inextricably linked to Coco and her fashion house – appear. But it wouldn’t be the first time Chanel encountered the connected letters that would become her signature symbol.

“There are some really interesting parallels throughout Chanel’s life where the interlocking Cs become really apparent,” Davidson says. They first appear in the stained glass of the abbey at Aubazine where Chanel was raised after her mother died, then at Château de Crémat, which was near her Riviera home, La Pausa. “You start to think there must be a through line here or a narrative that inspired her to use this logo.” (A salacious aside? London lampposts are rumored to feature the interlocking Cs because she was cozy with the Duke of Westminster at the time of their installation and he placed there as a nod to their love.)

On the final day in Chanel’s Riviera, things end on a fragrant note with an air of jazz, which ruled the day in the 1920s when Chanel could have easily been rubbing elbows with F. Scott Fitzgerald and his wife Zelda. Guests have the opportunity to visit the Chanel-owned rose fields in Grasse whose product produces the defining note in Chanel No.5. In the evening, it’s live jazz at Bar Fitzgerald at the Belles Rives. “Gabrielle Chanel. Fashion Manifesto,” which is the first retrospective in the U.K. entirely devoted to Gabrielle Chanel’s work, was the catalyst for Davidson’s designer itinerary. The exhibit, she says, “is a testament to her as an inspiring female founder, as a business owner, and also to the amazing design legacy.” The itinerary is a way to get just a little bit closer to that legacy and to Coco even before she was Chanel.

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One of New York’s first fashion influencers, Olivia Palermo talks longevity, relevancy, successes and failures in the fashion influence space.

By Leigh Nordstrom
Photographs by Myrthe Giesbers
Styled by Alex Bodia
Area stretch Lycra bodysuit; Gianvito Rossi shoes.
Louis Vuitton wool sweater, metallic knitted wool dress and belt; Tiffany HardWear ball necklace in sterling silver; Cartier Écrou de Cartier ring in 18-karat white gold; John Hardy Spear Flex Cuff in silver with white diamonds and Spear Flex cuff in dark silver with white diamonds.
Richard Quinn printed velvet bodysuit (made in collaboration with Gina Shoes), belt and gloves; Tiffany & Co. Elsa Peretti Teardrop hoop earrings in 18-karat gold.

Y/Project cotton dress; Marc Jacobs shoes; Rainbow K Handcuff Double Gold ring in 9-karat gold with white diamonds; Cartier Ecrou de Cartier ring in 18-karat white gold.
Undercover sheepskin coat and cotton cat ear top; Dior briefs; Marc Jacobs tights; Givenchy boots; Area gloves.
Mugler silk top and cotton and plastic hip skirt. Kloto Stone ring. 18-karat gold and sterling silver. Sara Shala sterling silver with 14-karat white gold Vermeil.
Maison Margiela black bin liner and tulle hat, black wool romper with a white cotton padded collar, gloves, tights and shoes; Eéra Dimitri chain in 18-karat gold with white diamonds (worn as a belt).
Luar paillette shie sty; Monot polyester bra; Dior briefs.
They've been "It" girls, they've been bloggers, they've been influencers, they're now maybe content creators — and despite skepticism from some of the editorial elite, they're as much a part of the fashion industry as ever. Our feeds today have never been more flush with people who have their own brand, who are making careers out of partnerships and appearances and paid posts. The longevity of this largely remains to be seen: what does it take to truly rise into a career, how does one stay relevant, how do you scale into a major business? Enter Olivia Palermo. Initially rising to fame courtesy of a role on reality series "The City," beginning in 2008, the New Yorker has been dubbed a socialite, an "It" girl, and, yes, an influencer (a term she doesn't love), all the while maintaining her relevance in the fashion world. She's collaborated with brands from Karl Lagerfeld to Banana Republic and Scallops; she's had her own site, fashion line and beauty brand and a full staff of people, only now to be a one-woman show. Interest in her has never wavered over the years, with consistent growth to 8.2 million followers on Instagram — a platform she maintains she doesn't quite understand, but behind the scenes is wading to success. "I always had a feeling I was going to be kind of in the public eye," Palermo says. "I had a sense of it. I didn't know why, I'm a very private person. But I had a sense of it, somewhere along the line it was going to happen, be part of my career. Luckily, I've navigated it really well."

Moments before, Palermo has breezed into the restaurant at Fouquet's in TriBeCa, gushing with apologies for her 30-minute-late arrival and unhooking a bedazzled handbag from her arm as she swings into a booth. She's as keept for a Thursday lunch as for any appearance and, over the next hour, will give off a nonchalance toward her enduring success as if it's something she's barely aware of — versus, as we suspect, something she's carefully cultivated years on end.

"I'm a person of influence. I think that's a better way of putting it," she says of the term "influencer." "I think, again, we go back to trends and trendy terms, and I think when I started out it was 'blogger,' and I'm like, 'No, I don't blog, I have a website. We create content.' So whenever someone's using the trendy word or lazy terminology [that doesn't] describe a person's overall, I sort of find it a little amusing. They're like, 'Oh, influencer.' And I'm like, 'I've been doing this job before the meaning even arrived.' "

"I think what's interesting about Olivia is she was authority in the fashion space before the fashion influencer existed," says Jeffrey Tousey, founder of social-first digital marketing agency Beekman Social. "And the thing about that is she has an uncanny ability to style anything and make it look timeless and sophisticated, but also can be daring and edgy. I think her secret sauce is that ability to curate her personal collection through a lens that's relevant to what's cool now, but also what will always be cool."

The 37-year-old says she's at the precipice of Olivia 3.0. First came TV, then modeling, embassiations, collaborations and consulting for brands. After that, it was time to create her own brand.

"I really enjoyed all of that very much but I really wanted to take a step back from it because I feel like I wear so many hats and I can do so much — I really just need to figure out what. 2.0, I think that was really about exploring collaborations and consulting for brands. After that, it was time to create her own brand.

"I think having it be more of a corporate account, those numbers are down. So we're a big believer of, please don't make it work. And if you decide to do what the client wants, they are going to have to understand that those numbers are going to go down, it's not going to be successful, and then it only hurts you when those numbers are down. So we're a big believer of, please sit there and overthink, you just have to keep moving forward and then it will come."

As for what sets her apart from others in her field? "I work really hard. I love what I do. I love my fashion community. I wake up every day and it motivates me," she says. "My friends motivate me, seeing what they do motivates me. Our industry, the beauty that the designers bring, the energy that we see with marketing, with everything."

And the field in general? "I think I'm really at the precipice of my own little world and there are people around me that I grew up with that are the same age, we grew up in the same industry, so far I see them and I'm like, 'Yeah, we grew around the same time. That's fine.' But I don't think I can think of a person," she says. "I'm not shading, I'm not at all I promise. I literally just can't. I've never been into comparison. I just do my own thing."

That thing means that she can confidently say that she plans to one day build a billion-dollar business and it means that she's earned the trust of the industry in a backstage way — again, atypical for most influencers.

"I do so much behind the scenes privately that no one sees and I would never publicly talk about it. There's brands that have IPO'd that I've done the introduction emails for, that's just hard to help," she says. "To me it's normal. It's just like you're helping friends."

She is aware of the fashion influencer culture en masse today, but pays little attention. "I smile at it and I am like, 'OK, I'm glad I created some sort of platform for everyone in the world to be able to have their own voice. I appreciate that,' she says. "You go do you."
Balenciaga snake-effect leather trenchcoat, boots and sunglasses; Cartier Éclat de Cartier ring, Clash de Cartier ring in 18-karat rose gold and Clash de Cartier bracelet in 18-karat white gold.

Hair: Andrew Chen
Makeup: Walter Obal
Fashion market editor, women’s: Emily Mercer
Senior market editor, accessories: Thomas Waller
Fashion Assistants: Ari Stark, Kimberly Infante
SURREAL STATEMENT

From juicy gemstone cocktail rings and elegant cabochon necklaces to vintage-inspired brooches, jewelry adds an element of fantasy to everyday life.

Photographs by Erik Tanner  Styled by Alex Badia
Top finger, from left: Roberto Coin ring in 18-karat white gold with diamonds and turquoise; Dior Fine Jewelry Diorelle ring in yellow gold, diamond, citrine and lacquer.

Bottom finger, from left: Dior Fine Jewelry Prêt Catalan ring in pink gold, diamond and amethyst; Roberto Coin 18-karat rose gold ring with diamonds; Dior fine jewelry Color Dior necklace in 18-karat yellow gold.
Inside hand from left: Marco Bicego ring in 18-karat yellow gold with pave diamonds; GiGi Ferranti Serenity Pearl ring in 18-karat white gold with South Sea Pearl, multicolored sapphires and diamonds; Novel Heritage 18-karat yellow gold and diamond bangle.
Cadar Flora 18-karat gold mesh blossom adorned with diamond dew droplets featuring diamond-tipped stamens; Mindi Mond Haute Joaillerie brooch with Colombian emerald surmounted by Old European diamonds, silver backed with 14-karat yellow gold mounting; State Property Nemara Pearl necklace in 18-karat gold with white diamonds and Akoya Pearls; Rahaminov Diamonds multicolor tourmaline cabochon necklace set in 18-karat yellow gold; Simkhai wool and polyester coat; Loro Piana wool jacket and pant; Quine Li nylon and red cotton dress.
Buddha Mama Hinged cuff in 20-karat yellow gold with black enamel and diamonds; Reza Eventail cuff in 18-karat white gold, mother-of-pearl and diamond.
Chanel fine jewelry’s Plume de Chanel ring in 18-karat white gold, cultured pearl and white diamonds; Mason and Brooks Cupcake ring in chrome tourmaline with amazonite; Aletto Brothers 18-karat gold, white diamond, turquoise and enamel link bracelet.
From top: Lalaounis ring in 22-karat gold and malachite; (3 stacked) Sapphire & Multigem Nicola Bouquet, Peridot & Multigem Kristen Bouquet and Orange Garnet & Multigem Carman Bouquet rings, all Chroma by G.A.; (4 on one finger) Lionheart ring in 18-karat yellow gold with citrine and diamonds; Tyle Jewelry stack pavé band in 14-karat yellow gold with white sapphire baguettes and pear-shaped emerald; (last finger) Yeprem ring in 18-karat yellow gold ruby and white diamonds.

Next hand: Mateo 14-karat yellow gold and pearl and diamond cube ring; David Yurman Cable Edge cuff in 18-karat yellow gold.

Last hand: Gigi Ferranti Mermaid ring with indicolite tourmaline, onyx sapphire, diamonds Tsavorite garnet in 18-karat rose gold; Lionheart ring in 18-karat yellow gold with citrine and diamonds; (next finger) Lionheart ring in 18-karat yellow gold with emeralds and diamonds and 14-karat yellow gold with topaz and diamonds; (last finger) Yeprem ring in 18-karat yellow gold emerald and white diamonds.

Models: Helaine Lee and Annis Kamara at Parts Models
Nails: Norit at See Management
Senior Jewelry Editor: Thomas Waller
Market Editor: Emily Mercer
Casting: Luis Campuzano
Fashion Assistants: Ari Stark, Kimberly Infante
Reed Krakoff has been a key part of the American fashion conversation for more than 30 years. He was brought on to Bali-based jewelry brand John Hardy — owned by L Catterton — this year to refresh and modernize it after leading the creative at Tiffany & Co. and a 17-year stint at Coach before that.

As he told WWD, when he debuted his first Hardy collection: "My whole life is based around design and being creative and collaborating with people. That is something that for the last 30 years has been really fundamental to what brings me happiness. It’s rewarding for me to do design-related things in both the fashion world and my private life."

Here, WWD takes a deeper visual dive into what inspires Krakoff’s work at John Hardy and beyond.

WWD: You’ve made an impact at several luxury brands; how does where you look to for inspiration evolve as you continue to evolve as a creative?

Reed Krakoff: I think they work hand in hand. Each brand creates a new path to building the next chapter. I always learn as much as I can about a brand, then put all of that away and explore more about a new way of thinking than I do about a particular image or design.

WWD: You are a photographer as well as a collector of fine art. How do these other artistic pursuits inform your designs?

R.K.: Being a photographer gives me a different perspective than a designer. It’s complimentary and helps me see the potential for a brand in a multidimensional way.

WWD: What emotions do you hope to evoke from your jewelry designs, and how do you accomplish that?

R.K.: Desire. If someone doesn’t feel desire, whether to wear something or simply admire or be inspired by it, it’s not a success in my mind.

WWD: Who are your jewelry icons, past or present? And why?

R.K.: I don’t have anyone specifically; I don’t really think of jewelry designers when I’m working on a collection. I’m much more influenced by unrelated creative disciplines.

WWD: What is your advice on how a modern customer should be wearing their jewelry in their day-to-day life?

R.K.: I don’t think there are rules on how someone should wear jewelry. The most important thing is to wear what you love often and in a personal way. Why keep the pieces you cherish in a box?

WWD: Is there a collection or a piece that resonates to you the most or marks a milestone at John Hardy?

R.K.: I think the Spear collection marks the next chapter at John Hardy. It takes the handwoven chain motif as a starting point, and imbues it with a modern, sensual luxury.

"Archival handcrafted prototypes."

"The unique combination of surf and beach culture with artisinal craft."
"Multiple shades of marigold, a prominent flower in Balinese culture."

"Homes that Delphine and I have spent our lives working on together."

"A John Hardy handwoven precious metals technique that inspired the Spear collection."

"The mix of sterling, hard stone and lacquer, referencing traditional hand-cut Heishi beads."

"My wife Delphine, always inspiring my creative work across disciplines: fashion, interiors, design..."
The holiday season is upon us once again, and as the last stretch of the year begins to pan out with the festive spirit filling the air, what better way to express your love and appreciation for horology.

Green dials have become less of a niche novelty and more of an essential option, and with several years of steadily trending in within the watch community, green-dial watches can currently be found in collections that range from sporty to military to dressy, from mint green to forest green to dark olive green and various shades in between.

And while red dials might not suit everyone’s palate, they are considered one of the most striking colors to wear, never failing to make a statement and catch people’s attention.

WWD, rounded up the top festive dials that are sure to make any wearer the conversation starter.

BY LUIS CAMPUZANO

Audemars Piguet Royal Oak Selfwinding Chronograph, 18k pink gold case.

IWC IW376515 Portugieser Chronograph.

Breitling Endurance Pro Ironman.

Hublot Spirit of Big Bang Red Magic.

Bell & Ross BR 03 Chrono Green Steel, in rubber strap.

Grand Seiko SBGH0273 High Beat GMT.

Patek Philippe Ref. 5930P World Time With Flyback Chronograph in platinum with green, hand-guilloched dial, gold applied hour markers with luminescent coating.

Jaeger-LeCoultre Reverso Tribute Small Seconds in pink gold.


Tag Heuer Aquaracer Professional 200.

Bell & Ross BR 03 Chrono Green Steel, in rubber strap.
The Chiseled Chase

Experts discuss the ins and outs of facial toning technologies and where to try them.

BY EMILY BURNS

A lifted look doesn’t have to be invasive.

From at-home devices to in-office services, there are a slew of sculpting treatments to choose from.

When it comes to lifting, most people have similar goals in mind, according to Raquel Medina-Cleghorn, formerly the lead aesthetician at Joanna Czech’s New York studio who recently founded her own venture called Raquel New York – her clients include celebrities like Jennifer Lawrence and Paloma Elsesser.

“Everyone always wants cheeks and jawline,” she says.

“That’s a universal desire to have those sharp and lifted.”

Regardless of the sculpting goal, starting with a hands-on massage is key, she says.

“Helping to relax those muscles through the massage is really effective because once they’re relaxed, you’re getting better blood flow, better lymphatic function.” Medina-Cleghorn says. “You can really do a lot of sculpting.”

Facial massage, which has become increasingly popular especially as intraoral buccal massages have become mainstream, can ease tension and boost lymphatic drainage for a depuffing effect.

From here, many experts opt for microcurrent, a modality that sends electric current to the facial muscles to stimulate and tone them. While the treatment shows some benefits right away, consistency is key.

“Each time you do [microcurrent] it just accumulates over time,” says Skamar Bondaroff, a New York- and Miami-based aesthetician who specializes in microcurrent facials. “It’s the same concept of going to the gym. I would love to go to the gym once every six months. That’s not going to do it.”

Although most people are seeking out microcurrent for its toning effects, since it prompts cell turnover, additional benefits, like reduction in acne, are also possible.

For Dr. Macrene Alexiades, a New York-based dermatologist who holds three Harvard degrees, and Ivan Pol, a celebrity facialist, the best sculpting treatment comes in the form of radio frequency.

“Radio frequency is a noninvasive treatment that helps reduce fine lines and wrinkles by focusing energy waves on the targeting spots to tighten and tone the skin,” Pol says. “I use a proprietary combination of radio frequency, stacked like a sandwich, to elevate, sculpt and define the appearance of facial contours.”

Alexiades adds: “What’s unique about these technologies is their ability to up-regulate elastin and it’s the loss of elastin that causes the skin to lose its sculpted look.”

While these two modalities are the most common when it comes to sculpting, trademarked, designer treatments and machines that use these and other technologies are also available.

For example, the Biologique Recherche Remodeling Facial combines radio frequency with high intensity facial ultrasound technologies. Known for its biohacking services, this Houston-based spa offers radiofrequency, microcurrent and ultrasound technologies.

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The Sha Method Heads to Mexico

Five-star Spanish resort Sha — often recognized as the world’s best wellness clinic — is expanding, first to Mexico in January and then to the United Arab Emirates in 2025.

Since it opened in Spain in 2008, Sha Wellness Clinic has been a favorite destination of everyone from heads of state to athletes, fashion designers to celebrities like Madonna, Demi Moore, Naomi Campbell and more.

Alfredo Bataller Parietti is the man behind the concept of the five-star, 6,000-square-foot resort that incorporates natural therapies like traditional Chinese medicine, macrobiotics and innovative technology for a holistic and personalized approach to wellness. Before opening the clinic, he had suffered from health problems for more than 30 years, says Alejandro Bataller, Parietti’s son and vice president at Sha.

“He was lucky enough to have met a doctor who had an understanding of nutrition and natural therapies, which enabled him to regain his health,” explains Bataller. “I was the second member of the family to visit the same doctor — at the time, I had been suffering from intensive migraines for over a decade that would not alleviate even with strong prescribed medication. So, I went to the same doctor, who changed my diet and integrated some natural therapies. My migraines went away after just a couple of weeks, and I have not suffered from migraines ever since. The change in diet, integration of natural therapies and lifestyle behaviors, was something so powerful we felt that it needed to be shared beyond our family and with the rest of the world.”

Now Sha is expanding, heading to Mexico in Costa Mujeres in January, just outside of Cancun. Designed by Mexican architectural firm Sordo Madaleno and interior designer Alejandro Escudero, the complex will have 35 residences and 100 rooms and suites overlooking the Caribbean Sea. A starting stay will cost $5,770, with a four-day “recover and energize” program, nutrition plan and daily “revitalizing medicine,” according to the clinic, which involves chelation therapy (removing heavy metals) and intravenous laser therapy (the irradiation of the blood with laser light stimulating natural bacteria fighting and detoxifying effects).

“A personalized experience is tailor-made to each guest’s needs by an unparalleled assembly of distinguished international experts and renowned medical specialists, united by their unwavering dedication, commitment and expertise,” Bataller adds.

Innovations include the use of neurofeedback, which focuses on the neuronal activity of the brain, he continues: It’s “an innovative therapeutic approach, utilizing real-time brain activity monitoring to enhance mental well-being....This technology [quantitative electroencephalogram] provides a noninvasive window into brain functioning to let our clinicians identify the source of symptoms or dysregulation in the brain.”

Century-old practices like acupuncture and osteopathy are among the natural therapies, Bataller says. “We also just launched a new, three-part transformational breathing treatment that takes you through a psychological analysis and breathwork sessions before ending with an ice bath. This therapy teaches the body to use its own tools, breath and mindset, to manage stress.”

Here, Bataller explains the ethos of Sha Wellness Clinic, the dos and don’ts, and what visitors can expect at Sha Mexico, as well as Sha Emirates — coming in 2025 on the coastline of Sahel Al Emarat, between Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

WWD: What are the dos and don’ts at Sha?

Alejandro Bataller: We know that our guests want to make the best of their time with us as productive as it can be. A stay at Sha is a self-discovery, an empowering journey to health and well-being, therefore you can do everything that leads you toward the best version of yourself in a pleasant way. In order to achieve that, we must learn and incorporate healthy habits that will allow us to prevent disease and live a longer, healthier life. Nutrition is key, therefore our menus are designed with no processed food, no refined sugar, no dairy, no alcohol, no coffee and minimal fish products. Coffee is also typically a part of the “no” list, and we strongly believe your results will be much stronger without it. We want guests to enjoy their visit, so the “do’s” include relaxing by our beautiful pool in between sessions, learning effective stress management tools, journaling, enjoying a cup of tea during tea time or joining a hike to the lighthouse overlooking the sea.

WWD: What is the Sha Method?

Alejandro Bataller: The Sha Method focuses on preventive and healthy aging — the absence of disease, with physical, mental and spiritual well-being in harmony with the environment. Programs start at four days, with most guests staying for a week or two. Activities range widely, with the most popular being “revitalizing medicine,” according to the clinic, which involves chelation therapy (removing heavy metals) and intravenous laser therapy (the irradiation of the blood with laser light stimulating natural bacteria fighting and detoxifying effects).

“The Sha Method is a personalized experience tailored to each guest’s needs,” says Bataller. “Our multidisciplinary team includes specialists, united by their unwavering dedication, commitment and expertise.”

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The West Coast's Buzziest Wellness Retreats and What Makes Them Unique

Wellness tourism has been booming. Along with seeking healthier lifestyles and cutting vices, visitors are looking for mental well-being and to manage stress. The sector reached $720 billion in 2019, according to The Global Wellness Institute, before cutting vices, visitors are looking for mental well-being and to manage stress. The

THE OPEN AIR GALLERY
Sensei Lanai, A Four Seasons Resort
1 Kaoaulu Highway, Lana'i City, Hawaii 96763; 800-505-2624

Art meets nature at Sensei Lanai, A Four Seasons Resort – a wellness property on the secluded Hawaiian island of Lanai. Contemporary sculptures and paintings are found throughout the 24-acre grounds, many of which were commissioned for the resort by owner Larry Ellison, the technology pioneer and cofounder of Oracle. The standouts are found in the gardens – kilt, vibrant and blooming with tropical plants and ponds – including two bronze sculptures, “Donna Sueda” (2001), a woman sitting and holding an unripe apple by Colombian sculptor Fernando Botero, and “Burning Desire” (2017), a striking red orchid by British artist Marc Quinn. Spanish artist Jaime Nogue offers a striking collection of self-portraits, “Heart of Rivers” (2016), depicting seven figures sitting around a palm tree and hugging their knees, with their bodies covered in names of world rivers. Also on this property, Nobu Matsuhisa himself.

THE PEACEFUL MOUNTAIN
Amanwella
1 Kauaula Road, Canyon Point, Utah 84741; 435-675-3999

Amanwella is a property that was a contemporary reinterpretation of native Indian architecture, hotelier Adrian Zecha, founder of Aman Resorts, has said. “It perfectly adapted, but hopefully generating a sense and spirit of it.” It’s minimalist and geometric, with concrete blocks, stone tiles and natural woods. Activities include lessons on the history of the area and neighboring Native American tribes.

THE FIRM
The Ranch Malibu
12220 Coturano Road, Malibu, Calif. 90265; 310-457-8700

In a sea of relaxed, go-with-the-flow wellness options, The Ranch Malibu is something different. It’s an incredibly strict regimen, located at a 200-acre ranch in the Santa Monica Mountains. Visitors (capped at 25 guests a week – with a price tag of $7,600 each) take four-hour morning hikes, run to six-hour low-impact exercise classes and follow a 1,400-calorie-a-day plant-based diet (no alcohol, caffeine, dairy, soy, gluten, sugar and artificial sweeteners). Alarms are set for wake-ups, meals are served at specific times. There is no cell service, with WiFi limited to in-room only, and no phones allowed on-site. According to The Ranch, which expanded to Italy and is heading to the Hudson Valley in New York this spring, “guests routinely lose 3 to 6 percent of their body weight along with substantial inches of fat loss and muscle gain.”

WWD: What does a nutrition program look like at Sha?
A.B.: It is a balanced, natural and alkalizing diet, designed according to individual constitution and condition to cover an individual’s nutritional needs. We are aligned with the nutritional principles of Harvard Medical School and the blue zone diets. There are three diet plans at Sha, which are recommended by the nutritionist based on your health, well-being state and goals. Every meal and meal plan is inspired by these principles and adapted to modern life. We start each day with a cup of organic miso soup, which is full of probiotics and is known to help curb appetite, before leading into three daily meals. Sha nutrition is based on foods of vegetable origin and, to a lesser extent, seafood, with an aim to being as organic, seasonal and local as possible and avoiding processed foods.

WWD: What is a typical day like at Sha for a visitor?
A.B.: Because every program is specific to the guest and their needs, no two days or stays will look the same. A day on the rebalance program might look like waking up and enjoying a nutritious breakfast alfresco, followed by some consultations with doctors and experts, such as a general health examination, nutritionist or a Chinese medicine consultation. Next you might have a workout with a personal trainer or a private yoga or breathwork session. You’ll probably have lunch and some time to relax and even enjoy the hydro circuit, followed by a variety of treatments such as cryotherapy, massage or pressotherapy. That evening, you’ll enjoy a lovely dinner and learn tips and tricks to bringing the method home with you.

WWD: How does Sha Mexico compare to Sha in Spain?
A.B.: Unique to Sha Mexico, the wellness clinic is set off the coast of the largest coral reef in the Americas, offering guests a unique location to immerse with nature, which has its own healing benefits. We’ll also feature traditional local therapies inspired by ancient, pre-Hispanic cultures such as Temazcal [a type of sweat lodge], aimed to cleanse the body and the mind.

WWD: What can you share about Sha Emirates 2023? What are your seasonal highlights?
A.B.: Sha Emirates will be located on the coastline of Sahel Al Emarat, located just between Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Here lies the natural beauty of Aljurf, a unique seaside destination steeped in history and lore and where the landscape reigns supreme. Aljurf is built in the UAE’s National Vision for the Nation, a tranquil gateway that is seamlessly integrated with its natural environment. It is a second home community where residents can escape city life and instead live inside a natural masterpiece dedicated to the preservation of life and the generation of legacy. Aljurf is a seaside development that celebrates natural beauty and is perfectly situated for our third location.
Andre Fu Digs Five Floors Under to Put a Spa in Claridge’s

The 7,000-square-foot spa brings a touch of Kyoto Zen garden flair to the heart of Mayfair.

BY TIANWEI ZHANG

Claridge’s, the legendary hotel on Brook Street that has been welcoming royal families and Hollywood stars for more than a century, has at last established a comprehensive wellness offering thanks to the Hong Kong-based interior architect Andre Fu.

Defying physical limitations, Fu and the team dug into the grounds underneath the hotel to construct a 7,000-square-foot spa and wellness area that includes seven treatment rooms, a relaxation pool, a hair salon, a gymnasium, and changing rooms. The space is also equipped with saunas and steam facilities.

Fu says he wanted to create a tranquil yet otherworldly experience for guests while respecting the hotel’s heritage. “Rather than trying to mimic a spa of a certain era or purely just to mimic the aesthetics, how can we create something that surprises the guest,” he says.

The project has been rewarding personally, Fu says, as many guests tell him how “genuine and cocooning they immediately felt as if they were in a world of its own” the moment they enter the spa he envisioned.

“Since its opening last year, Claridge’s Spa has offered our guests a haven of tranquillity in the heart of Mayfair,” says Paul Jackson, the hotel’s general manager. “Following a major renovation program which has doubled the footprint of the hotel – digging down five floors and going up three – Claridge’s Spa is one of the many wonderful new additions to the hotel, paving the way for the next 200 years of Claridge’s life,” he adds.

The spa also is one of many examples of how Fu is helping to define modern living through an Eastern gaze. His other projects with the Maybourne Hotel Group, the parent company of Claridge’s, include a spa at the Maybourne Riviera in the south of France, a bar for the Maybourne Beverly Hills in Los Angeles, and the Knightsbridge Pavilion Suite at the Berkeley Hotel.

This month he teamed with the Claridge’s once again to work on the interior of The Residence, a split-level, 3,000-square-foot suite with a fully equipped kitchen and private hydrotherapy pool overlooking London’s iconic skyline.

“I’m also helping with this particular group on a hotel launching probably early next year, called the Emory, which is next to the Berkeley facing Hyde Park. I’m involved in two levels of suites in this particular new address. It’s the fourth hotel of the group in London other than the Connaught, the Berkeley and the Claridge’s,” says Fu.

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It’s not just daylight savings.

One of the body’s key biological processes, sleep, is becoming harder to come by, despite its physiological and psychological benefits. Data from the Sleep Foundation suggests that more than one-third of adults in America sleep less than seven hours a night, while seven out of every 10 workers say they are tired when their work day wraps up.

“People don’t realize how important sleep is,” says Dr. Frank Lipman, an integrative and functional medicine expert. “People need to take sleep more seriously. Sleep is not a passive process, a lot of physiological things happen in the body — the lymphatic system, which is the brain’s detox system, kicks in when you sleep,” Lipman continues, noting that stress is among the key contributors to poor sleep.

“We try to look at what’s going on with someone’s poor sleep, and it’s often stress,” Lipman says, pointing to meditation, exercise, and getting on a designated sleep schedule as keys to deeper sleep.

The beauty benefits are also myriad.

“It permeates all aspects of health,” says Dr. Dendy Engelman, board-certified dermatologist. “Consistent sleep cycles allow for these innate repair processes to occur. If you’re limiting your amount of restorative time, it has detrimental effects — DNA repair, cellular turnover don’t take place, and that can manifest as increased fine lines, wrinkles and increased collagen degradation.”

Both are proponents of supplements like magnesium and L-theanine, while Engelman also recommends nighttime skin care products like retinols.

Here, products to maximize beauty sleep.
The Ultimate ‘It’ Girl Holiday Gift Guide

We asked seven of 2023’s biggest beauty “It” girls what gifts they’re eyeing this holiday season — here’s what they had to say.

Alix Earle
@alixearle
One of TikTok’s biggest breakout stars of the year, Alix Earle is best known for her lively personality and makeup know-how. Beyond amassing a TikTok following of more than 6.1 million, Earle was one of the first creators to sign to Alex Cooper’s The Unwell Network, recently rolling out a weekly podcast in which she dives into topics like mental health, dating (aka “NFL man” — IYKYK), and the importance of female friendship.

Go-to gift for others
Refy Lip Collection Set, $32 at sephora.com, refybeauty.com.

“If you love the Refy lip glosses so the full lip set would be my go-to gift when gifting a friend or family member this season. It includes a lip buff, blush, liner and gloss which is what anyone needs to complete their makeup look no matter the occasion.”

Favorite gift to receive

“I use this spray almost daily — it really locks in whatever style I’m going for without making my hair feel crunchy or greasy.”

To me, quality means...
“When it comes to a gift, [quality] is truly the thought behind it that matters most. It’s not about the size or scale — but more about the quality of thought and love they put into it.”

Monet McMichael
@monetmcmichael
Loved for her laid-back, unfiltered charm, New Jersey-based Monet McMichael is at the top of her #BeautyTok game. With 3.7 million followers and counting, the 23-year-old has cemented her status as a powerhouse creator thanks to her raw and real approach to content.

Go-to gift for others
Charlotte Tilbury Beauty Light Wands, $42 each at sephora.com, nordstrom.com, bloomingdales.com, charlottetilbury.com.

“If you use these wands with no additional makeup, they make your skin look amazing, and they also elevate any glam look.”

Favorite gift to receive
Pat McGrath Labs Lust: Gloss, $29 each at sephora.com, patmcgrathlabs.com.

“My favorite gift to receive is definitely a gloss of any form, specifically Pat McGrath glosses — they’re next-level in color and shimmer.”

To me, quality means...
“Quality means a lot of things to me in a product, especially in order to make the favorites list. Packaging, functionality, practicality and size are all factors. It’s always quality over quantity.”

Kensington Tillo
@kensnation
From happiness to heartbreak to the gripping lead-up to her driver’s license test last month (spoiler: she passed), Kensington Tillo brings her 1.6 million TikTok followers along with her through it all. In addition to her knack for making the intricacies of everyday life feel a little more lively, Tillo is one of the few people we’ll sit through a 10-minute “Get Ready With Me” video for and know it was time that — couldn’t have been better spent.

Go-to gift for others
Tatcha Plumping Dewy Skin Essentials Set, $87 at sephora.com, tatcha.com.

“My absolute favorite beauty and wellness gift to give during the holidays would be a luxurious skin care set with high-quality products. Some of my all time favorite skin care brands are Tatcha (you can never go wrong with Dewy Skin Cream), Caudalie, and Charlotte Tilbury skin care — which doubles as an amazing base for makeup.”

Favorite gift to receive
Spa days, like at Brooklyn’s Bathhouse, where day passes start at $55.

“My favorite beauty and wellness gift to receive during the holidays would be a spa day experience; it’s a fantastic gift because it allows me to relax and rejuvenate which is very needed after the holidays.”

To me, quality means...
“As a beauty influencer, quality means to me that products are not only effective, but safe and well-crafted; it’s about using and recommending items that I trust will enhance the beauty and well-being of my followers.”
Eloise Dufka  @eloisefufka

Between her effortless “that girl” vibe and tasteful local recommendations for fellow New Yorkers (or for the New York City dwellers-at-heart) Eloise Dufka has our For You Pages in a chokehold. Here, her faves.

Go-to gift for others  

Rhope Peptide Lip Treatments, $56 each at rhodeskin.com.

“To me, quality means…
"Quality in holiday gift-giving goes beyond the price — it’s about the thought that goes into picking a gift that the receiver will really enjoy. It’s finding something meaningful and showing that you’ve taken the time to remember things they may have mentioned to you in passing to make their holiday gift special.”

Favorite gift to receive

Starface's Pimple Patches, $14.99 at target.

“I'm stuck between the best and easiest mess-free skincare products. I often forget about, and has to focus on my eye area, which is a must in anyone's skincare range.

To me, quality means…
"For skin care, I love Osea's eye serum — it forcibly reminds me to focus on my eye area, which I often forget about, and has the best and easiest mess-free cooling roll-on applicator.”

Go-to gift for others  

NuFace Trinity+ Starter Kit, $295

“You definitely can’t go wrong with any facial toning kit from NuFace; It’s the best little device to give your face an extra lift and to feel fresh for the new year.”

Favorite gift to receive


“I love this makeup vault — it’s such a cute gift and you can use the box the makeup comes in as a little makeup organizer on your vanity; it’s like a 2-for-1.”

Go-to gift for others  


Meredith Duxbury  @meredithduxbury

Meredith Duxbury has come a long way from the 10-pump foundation technique that first made her go viral in 2023. The New York City-based creator has since inked deals with beauty’s biggest brands including Tarte Cosmetics and Tatcha, garnering a TikTok following of 18.8 million, and even co-created a six-product makeup range with Morphe this summer.

Go-to gift for others  


“Quality is about the little details that might go unnoticed but make a world of difference. It can be as small as the packaging, a note from the founder about the story of the product, or the ingredients being ethically sourced — just to quality time with a loved one. It’s the secret ingredient that makes everything better, you know?”

Favorite gift to receive

Osea Ocean Eyes Age-defining Serum, $84 at ulabeauty.com, bluemercury.com, oseamalibu.com.

“When it comes to brands, quality of course means an effective product — but beyond that, it means a brand run by people who care about the product they’re making and the people they are making it for. It means a brand with intention, integrity and care.”

Go-to gift for others  


To me, quality means…
"Quality is something that has a lot of thought and time put into it. If someone has dedicated their personal energy and effort into something, that’s what makes it ‘quality.’"
Inside the Mind of Beauty’s Most In-demand Perfumer

Jérôme Epinette, the nose — and brain — behind some of beauty’s most iconoclastic fragrances, draws as much inspiration from the brands he works with as he does from his surroundings. By JAMES MANSO

Harry Styles, Victoria Beckham, Ariana Grande. At the center of a megawatt client list sits Jérôme Epinette, senior perfumer at Robertet and one of beauty’s most in-demand noses.

Despite the eyeballs his clientele attracts, Epinette is a man of simple pleasures, evidenced by his interview with WWD on a recent morning in a New York farmer’s market. “It’s like being in a garden.” Epinette says of his surroundings, which range from organic produce to artisanal cheeses. “I don’t have a house and a garden in New York. This is what I do to set the mood for the day — usually on Wednesdays, or the weekends. That’s where I get inspired, and I usually buy flowers.”

His floral tastes are as varied as his creations, which include blockbusters like Byredo’s Bal d’Afrique and Sol de Janeiro’s Cheirosa ‘62. His favorite flowers range from lilacs, jasmine and honeysuckle to the simple eucalyptus stem, which he thumbs through under an open-air florist’s tent.

“Over the past eight years, I have spent a lot of time with Victoria Beckham and that’s where I got inspired,” Epinette says via email. “That’s why I was adamant that I wanted to collaborate with him, I think he is the best. You could say I stalked him. That collaboration came to fruition in October, with Beckham unveiling a trio of scents based off of vignettes from her personal life, such as romantic trips to Paris and Porto in life during her family’s stint in Los Angeles.

“One you understand the brand, and you understand the consumer, you can really partner with them,” Epinette says. “Victoria is involved with the brand, and when you feel that as a creator, there is nothing more interesting than that. It’s very refreshing and inspiring.”

Nyakio Grieco, cofounder of Thirteen Lune and founder of Relevant, sought out Epinette to create her first fragrance. That scent, called 13 Stems, debuted earlier this year. “What surprised me the most about Jérôme was his true desire to cultivate a fragrance that aligns with a founder’s mission so perfectly. His humble yet confident approach to taking you through the mind of his process, mixed with his true understanding of how to interpret his clients’ desires is a testament to his gifts,” she says.

Epinette says inspiration can come from anywhere. That translates to his other passions. He’s as inspired by the organic mise-en-scène in the market for what he likes to cook, which ranges from traditional French fare to simple shrimp sautéed in garlic and herbs. “Based on a conversation, or even a glass of wine or meal, my brain tunes in to outside noise — he keeps it to his dialogue with his partner. “I love people with conviction, especially in my job, you need it,” he says. “But conviction doesn’t mean ideas are good. When they trust you, and that’s what I want to build, they say Oh.”

That’s also why he’s not a fan of consumer testing. “It’s a tool, but it’s about how you use the results,” he says. “Some clients use the consumer testing to please everybody and they need to check all the boxes. And that’s where making a fragrance becomes making a soup. I’m always more in the niche world, and trying to do something different — I’m not doing it to please everybody.”
Treat yourself? That’s the big question. After the pandemic’s e-commerce boom, big spender expectations for this holiday season began to sour like spoiled eggnog when inflation entered the chat and the labor market softened. For many American consumers, smashing that “add to cart” button on luxury goods can feel more naughty than nice these days. Sure, TikTok users have been swayed by “de-influencing” and there’s a strong sense of fatigue from endless product drops in saturated markets, but can we still feel merry about a quality purchase?

While some researchers are quick to focus on the starry-eyed consumer with impulsive shopping habits, other studies have found experiential purchases to have longer lasting rewards. However, consumer psychologist Dr. Cathrine Jansson-Boyd explains there’s no consistency in research regarding substantial happiness and shopping, but that “we tend to feel happier about our purchases when we have researched them for a longer time period.”

This research Jansson-Boyd refers to can vary; a deep dive on a shiny new gadget can take countless hours of scrolling for information online, yet the purchase of a luxury food item of interest – say chocolate or coffee – can be a more instantaneous decision because the research has been built up naturally over time. A deep dive through Reddit posts show users align with Jansson-Boyd’s view that the value of an item is not based on its longevity, as splurge-worthy wishlists run the gamut from fancy perishables to smart appliances that make mundane life easier.

So, how do you know you found your happy purchase? Make sure to take a step back, reflect on whether it’s something you really want, and if it aligns with personal interests that bring you joy. To get you in the holly, jolly spirit of mindfully indulging, here are a few of our favorite finds we researched that might bring you some holiday cheer.
Gary Simmons Brings ‘Public Enemy’ to Miami

The artist’s mid-career survey exhibition opens at the Pérez Art Museum Miami following its run at the MCA Chicago. by KRISTEN TAUSER

Artist Gary Simmons can recall the first time he heard Public Enemy on a dance floor, a transformative experience that still resonates with him decades later. “It literally stopped everybody, because it was so unusual to hear somebody sampling and pulling sound effects off of tea kettles, whistles, chain link fences,” says Simmons from his studio in L.A. “It rocks a party today just like it would have years ago.”

Simmons looked to that seminal ’80s New York hip-hop group, known for their political lyrics, for the title of his mid-career survey, “Gary Simmons: Public Enemy.” The second iteration of the exhibition opens at the Pérez Art Museum Miami on Tuesday, following its initial run at the MCA Chicago earlier this year. Renee Morales, formerly at PAMM and now at MCA Chicago, and Jadine Collingswood curated the exhibition, with Jack Schneider.

“Public Enemy had a massive effect on me early on, who they were and what they were and how they redefined hip hop at the time. And then there’s the idea of the Black male being a public enemy in the public eye. You feel that day in and day out,” says Simmons, who often draws inspiration from music for titling his works and suggests metaphor through association. “They [Public Enemy] show you a sense of history that you automatically know that it’s about politics. That it’s about popular culture, Black popular culture; that it’s about pride and resistance and all those things that go along with it.”

Simmons’ art interrogates issues of race, gender, visual culture and history, often incorporating pop culture to challenge long-standing narratives. The artist has developed a signature “chalky” style, where his images appear smudged, as though someone attempted to erase them. His work is often described as “timely,” and that descriptive holds for many of his pieces decades after they were created.

“There’s certain images that aren’t very easy for people to confront. And I think that’s important,” he says of the 70 works on view. “Art isn’t always about making really comfortable, pretty images. Sometimes it’s about challenging people’s personal positions or having to welcome the thoughts and opinions of another side, another opinion,” he adds. “I was very happy that Renee and Franklin Sirmans [director of PAMM] down in Miami weren’t gun-shy to leave a lot of that kind of challenging, charged work in there.”

Not one to comb through social media, Simmons observes the exhibition’s impact on conversations in Chicago, and expects a similar, if not more intense, reception in Miami. “They [Public Enemy] were created. And then it’s about the same, but the action is different.”

The murals, from his 1984 series, include “Reflection of a Future Past,” painted on a primary blue backdrop and depicting the iconic New York State Pavilion in Flushing Meadows Park. The pavilion, now abandoned, stands as a deteriorated relic of the 1964 World’s Fair. Featuring his signature blurred lines, the work reflects Simmons’ exploration of erasure and memory. Who gets remembered? Who and what is forgotten? And what traces exist even when the image isn’t fully there? In the case of the World’s Fair – which coincided with the same year the Civil Rights Act was passed – what stories get told?

In addition to several large-scale murals, the Miami exhibition showcases installation pieces, such as his 1993 piece “Lines,” in which gold-plated basketball shoes are arranged underneath a height chart, leaving the unseen context to the imagination of the viewer. His 1994 installation “Step in the Arena,” which references a Gang Starr album, takes the form of a boxing ring, with tape shoes hung from the perimeter. The floor is a smudged painting of choreographed steps, and the pieces draw a line between boxing and the finesse of social dance.

“Surveys, it’s weird – at a certain point it’s almost like looking at an old photo book and there’s a story to tell with each piece,” he says. “Some of the pieces in [the exhibition] I haven’t seen since I made them, so they come out of the crates and I’m like, ‘wow, I haven’t seen this since way back in ’92.’ And it kind of blows you away. You start thinking, what was that? Where was I? Where was my studio? Where was I living?” he adds. “The art world was different, so coming up in that, you don’t really think about, wow, I wonder what’s going to happen in 30 years when I have a survey?”

Born in New York and a first-generation West Indian, Simmons came up in the art world in the aftermath of the ’80s stock market crash. That period opened doors for artists working in less commercialized forms like video and installation. “Money wasn’t really an issue, because nobody was making any money,” he says. “You could put up these challenging shows because, first of all, you were addressing the current climate that was back then, but also the fact that money had zero effect on what we were making and how we were making it. It opened the door for a lot of artists of color.”

Simmons approached each opportunity with the mindset that it might be his last – “so you tried to make your biggest, bravest, loudest statement at the time,” he says. “It wasn’t an idea of constructing a career. You were just moving from opportunity to opportunity. And then slowly but surely, it started to develop.”

Decades into his career, with blue-chip gallery representation and major institutional shows, Simmons maintains that relentless mentality. While a survey show offers a chance to reflect, his focus is on what’s still to come. “It’s important to keep working while you’re putting together shows like this,” he says. “It’s important to keep multiple projects or work moving at the same time, so that you don’t get stuck in one place and start spinning your wheels,” he says. “I could be flying to an exhibition, but I’m already thinking about two down the line. What makes good art is challenging yourself like that and not being satisfied and keeping it moving.”
Hernan Bas Brings His Conceptualists to The Bass Museum

The Miami painter’s series of fictional conceptual artists is on view in a solo exhibition at the Miami Beach museum. BY KRISTEN TAUER

“The Conceptualists” opens Dec. 4 and will be on view through early May.

“It’s much easier to make fun of her than it is an abstract painting — because you don’t understand it, you know? So for me, it was so much fun to explore all these ideas about conceptual activities, practices — whatever you want to call it — and be able to pass it off to this other person,” he says. “Because if you don’t like what the artist is making in these paintings, or what they’re doing — it’s not my work, it’s their work. I’m just making a portrait of them,” he adds. “That became so liberating that maybe that’s why I’ve continued the series for as long as I have, because it opened a floodgate.”

The artists in Bas’ paintings are all fixated on conceptual activities, practices — whatever you want to call it — and be able to pass it off to this other person,

It’s much easier to make fun of her than it is an abstract painting — because you don’t understand it, you know? So for me, it was so much fun to explore all these ideas about conceptual activities, practices — whatever you want to call it — and be able to pass it off to this other person.”

For example, the first painting I have planned for that series is ‘the last museum guard at the last museum on earth,’” he says. “When I mention the series to one or two people I talk to about art, they’re like ‘Oh, Hernan, are you done?’ It sounds so pessimistic, but the last — it’s just a concept,” Bas adds. “And I thought maybe the next series after that will be ‘the first.’”

The “Conceptualists” opens Dec. 4 and will be on view through early May.
Craig Robins, Bringing Art to Life in the Design District

The Design Miami founder and Design District developer discusses his approach to collecting art, his passion for supporting emerging artists, and contributions to his hometown’s cultural landscape. BY KRISTEN TAUER

When Craig Robins decides to buy an artist’s work, he’s in it for the long haul. “My goal as a collector is always to find artists that I want to collect in depth,” says the Miami-based real estate developer. “So I generally look for young artists who are emerging and then I buy work by them. And if I really like what they’re doing, I try to keep collecting them,” he adds. “Once I become interested in different artists, the next stage is then to consider if we have an opportunity to do a public art project with them.”

Robins, who as chief executive officer of his company Dacra developed Miami’s Design District and co-founded the Design Miami fair, integrates culture into all of his projects, with public art at the forefront. A major art patron, his excitement for design and creativity is palpable. “Virtually wherever you walk you see amazing museum quality examples of art, architecture and design. It’s just part of the DNA of the neighborhood,” Robins says of Dacra’s approach, adding that other major luxury shopping districts look to the Design District as an example for creating an immersive customer experience. Each year the Dacra office hosts an exhibition themed to Art Basel that draws from Robins’ personal collection. The 2023-24 exhibition is titled “A Train of Thoughts” and features new and historical works by established and emerging artists, including John Baldessari; Bisa Butler; Chase Hall; David Hammons; Isabelle Albuquerque; Jana Euler; Marcel Duchamp; Kenturah Davis; and Simone Leigh.

“We want our offices to be equally a place to exhibit my collection as a working environment,” Robins says. “That touches really nicely on the same thing that we did with the Design District, where we said we want it to be a place for business, but we want it to be equally a place for culture. When you walk in the office, a lot of what you see relates to what’s on display in the Design District.”

For example, in the Design District, Marc Newson was commissioned to create a wavy fence, Baldessari designed an entire building facade, and Urs Fischer created a bus stop installation. And Bisa Butler designed jerseys for this year’s annual Miami bike ride to raise money for cancer research. All artists are part of Robins’ personal collection. One of Robins’ most recent acquisitions is a work by Chase Hall, from his show at David Kordansky Gallery earlier this fall; the work will be on view at Dacra with the new exhibition. “Some artists I think are really good, but they’ve already kind of been discovered. I am less inclined to then want to build my own collection of theirs unless they really add to the overall collection,” he says. “It made a lot of sense to collect John Baldessari after collecting all of his students. And it made a lot of sense to collect Duchamp after collecting Baldessari. And then that opened me up to artists like Richard Tuttle.”

Sometimes his desire to collect is limited by supply and demand. “There are artists that I want to continue acquiring works from but I’ve so far been unable to get one — artists like Sasha Gorin,” he adds. “Robins’ discovery of new work is guided by conversations with dealers and artists that he admires, and considers gallery director Jeffrey Deitch an important adviser. “But I don’t collect with my ear; I collect with my eyes,” he adds. “I’m always out there looking.”

So how does he decide to add a new piece to the collection? “It’s definitely not some intellectual process. It’s, do I feel that this is something new and innovative? And it may lead to a process that’ll make a long contribution to the art world and ultimately the history of art. But obviously I don’t know what the artist is going to do in the future. I don’t know what is gonna happen in the art world,” Robins says. His support, however, has a strong track record, particularly for young artists. “There’s lots of examples where I’ve been lucky and able to do this and amassed interesting collections by people who I think are indisputably part of the history of art,” he adds.

He offers the painter Kehinde Wiley as an example; in 2003, Robins acquired one of the young painter’s works and helped organize one of his first shows in Miami in collaboration with Deitch. More than a decade later, Wiley would be commissioned to paint the official presidential portrait of Barack Obama for the National Portrait Gallery. Robins notes that he has amassed one of the largest private collections of Baldessari’s works, drawn to start collecting the artist through the work of Californian artists like Nicole Eisenman in the early ‘90s. His dedication to collecting artists throughout their careers has an upside as they go on to become major figures in the art world: he makes the work available to museums. In New York, he currently has work on loan for Rirkrit Tiravanija’s MoMA PS 1 survey and Henry Taylor’s Whitney Museum retrospective.

“And of course I love doing that because ultimately I’m doing it to support the art world and support the artists. I’ve always felt like art is a frontier from which mankind advances, and I’ve integrated that into the neighborhoods that we [develop],” says Robins, who’s currently on the board of trustees of the Pérez Art Museum Miami. “These iconic design pieces, working with really interesting architects, adding art to the equation — it all combines to create a really nice sense of place.”
Defining West African Modernism
Tejumola Butler Adenuga, the artist sometimes known as Butler Archive designs furniture and lighting in addition to his work as an architect.

When artist Tejumola Butler Adenuga first moved to London from Ogun State, Nigeria, the access to constant electricity made him feel like the future was full of possibilities. “When the lights came on in Nigeria, I knew I had to make a name for myself,” he reminisces. At 29, his life has rapidly changed. Since moving to London as a 15-year-old schoolboy, he’s become a rising member of the U.K.’s creative Nigerian diaspora community, sometimes referred to as simply Butler Archive. His work perhaps first resonated on a global scale with his pointillist portraits of famed personalities like the late actor Chadwick Boseman and Lee Alexander McQueen, which he composed using photos gleaned from social media and the internet.

Adenuga’s color blindness led him to celebrate the use of black and white and focus on contours rather than shades, which in part distinguished his portraits — one of which was most recently featured in the exhibition “Portrait of a Top Boy,” a collection of 16 portraits from the diaspora to integrate with this new physical landscape,” he says. Last time Adenuga was back home, he realized how much the cultural scene had changed when he found himself at an art show surrounded by 2,000 people. Things are changing at home and abroad.

“Artists are becoming new celebrities,” he points out, adding “a lot has changed, there are more conveniences, there is now a faster way to do things, especially when it comes to design and appreciation for art.” From Adenuga’s East London studio, he designed his own renditions for the new space, which will break ground near Lagos this year. The restaurant, awash in brige, is adorned with round architectural features and meditative spaces that connect with the nature, flora and fauna of Nigeria.

A member of the Yoruba tribe — which in ancient times perfected the crafts of wood-carving, sculpture, metal work, textiles and beadwork — Adenuga’s vision was born during a new golden age of the Nigerian zeitgeist. The diaspora’s influence has spread worldwide in the fields of sports, fashion, film and music, particularly Afro beats, which emanated from Nigeria, Ghana and the U.K. in the 2000s and 2010s. The sheer size of Nigeria’s diaspora population is also a factor, Adenuga says. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, about one out of every four Africans as of today is Nigerian.

Fellow Nigerian and architect Olujobinde Odeloso, the author of “Neo Heritage Defining contemporary African architecture,” explains the breadth of the nation’s impact on modern African culture, particularly architecture: “Nigeria consists of over 500 ethnic groups by distinct languages and cultures. There is no other country in Africa (that) reflects the sheer ethno-cultural diversity and environmental variations that create a matrix of architectural design problem-solving ideal. Every expression of architecture and building type, or architectural style, is an answer to the ethno-cultural context and physical realities of the locale and studied Nigeria and all its variety helps us study the whole continent...”

Back in his East London studio, Adenuga says branching out to other disciplines means his studio is now littered with unexpected materials such as pure, eco-friendly materials such as jesmonite plaster base and the same aluminum used for Apple MacBook computers, in addition to 70 different types of paper, sharpie pens, scraps of charcoal and plain black paint.”I think quality is intertwined with craftmanship. This to me represents a harmonious blend of skill, passion and dedication. It’s about selflessness of the craft, mastering techniques and the infusion of one’s self. It requires relentless attention detail, a pursuit of perfection and an unwavering commitment to using the best materials and remaining true to them,” Adenuga said.

Adenuga made his foray into the worlds of design, furnishings and lighting in 2021 with Soho Home, the range created to mirror the look and feel of Soho Homes worldwide. Soho Home at the time was looking for a designer to transform an old 19th century church into a modern retail space. His own pieces, which he does on commission, range from tables and chairs to lamps and mirrors and even a swimming pool. The aim is to produce pieces that echo the luxury feel of high-end Italian firms like Cassina and Poliform that will look relevant even in 600 years.

“I want people to get excited about my work like they do a Cassina or Eames piece,” he muses. Whether producing a portrait or a couch, Adenuga’s aesthetic has an enduringly modern quality in the same way a piece from bygone icons like Ray or Charles Eames or Gio Ponti remain modern through the decades. Adenuga’s pieces are enhanced with a layer of storytelling that calls to mind the nobility of Nigeria’s royal past — its emirs, kings and chiefs that ruled over its mineral-rich lands for centuries.

Adenuga says his big break happened when his graphic designs were spotted on Twitter by U.K.-based rapper Tinie Tempah. While still a student at Ravensbourne University, Adenuga was designing album covers and styling stage ensembles and traveling with Tempah’s entourage. Shortly after being discovered by Tempah, Adidas offered the young creative a collaboration deal, delivering him a substantial check while he was still living with his parents. “The envelope had been sealed and he called me up the next day and opened it. We were all freaking out, but it was more than enough for me to start doing my own thing,” he says, recalling his first major exhibit at the Old Truman Brewery in East London in 2016. He’s since built a reputation with other high-profile collaborations with brands like Nike, Selfridges and Dr. Martens and, most recently, Crocs. In 2021, Adenuga also began designing leather goods for Hackney-based luxury label Nosakhar’s London team as its art director. He united his minimal aesthetic with Nosakhar’s creative director Nosas Osadolor’s sleek urban vision and for the brand designed his first leather accessory, the Butler Crossbody bag.

Looking ahead, he says an upcoming exhibition will pay tribute to his native Nigeria by incorporating the use of aluminum, the work behind aluminum casting this material, as well as how colonialism extinguished well-preserved techniques. In 2021, nearly 139,000 metric tons of refined aluminum were produced in West Africa, according to Statista.

His sensitivity when hand crafting furniture and lighting is similar to the sort of poetry Adenuga explores when assembling a galaxy of black dots to shape the contours of one’s face and depict the sadness in one’s eyes, or the warmth of an embrace. “By definition, I am an artist. I can encompass a lot of disciplines rather than vocations and I see them all under the same artist umbrella that apply the same principles of minimalism, purity of material and honesty throughout,” he says.
Could Napa Valley Become A Fashion Destination?

Elyse Walker is bringing high-end shopping to the wine region where luxury giants LVMH and Chanel have long been invested and a new generation is shaking up style and culture.

“Stun-ning,” says Mimi DeBlasio, a former wardrobe stylist who is the co-owner of the cult Scarecrow Wine, watching her friend emerge from the dressing room in a $4,500 Valentino cocktail dress at Elyse Walker’s new store in the Napa Valley’s St. Helena, Calif.

Walker is hosting a cocktail party to celebrate the brand’s Black Tie eveningwear collection — which popped up at only one other store in the country, Bergdorf Goodman — then having a dinner at her home with an appropriately Valentino red table-scape and food by “Hell’s Kitchen” winner Christina Machamer.

Stylish women, some who flew in for the event, are snapping up minidresses and bags for the many occasions that happen in the California wine region 50 miles northeast of San Francisco that has some of the world’s most luxurious hospitality, food and beverage offerings but has been “starved for fashion,” as Colgin Cellars doyenne Ann Colgin puts it.

“Elyse has figured out that even though this is an agricultural market, we’re all businesswomen, we travel a lot, and we don’t always have time to put together outfits. She has a Valentino if you need it, but if you need an up-to-date jean, sweater and boot, and maybe you aren’t sure how to put it together, they are experts at it,” says Leslie Frank, a broadcast journalist turned founder of Frank Family Vineyards, wearing a Valentino Iconographe cape.

Luxury groups LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton and Chanel have been investing in Napa Valley vineyards since the 1970s. And while you won’t find Dioriviera or Chanel pop-ups attached to tasting rooms — at least not yet — waning wine sales, particularly among Millennials, are forcing the area of 400-plus wineries to look at new ideas. Main Street in downtown Napa was dead and now there’s hardly any space not under construction and ready to open,” she says of the offerings in Veronica Beard’s sixth California store.

Napa Valley has long been a luxury travel destination, with numerous high-end hotels including the classic Meadowood, now fully restored after the devastating 2020 Glass Fire; a Four Seasons, and three Auberge properties. The newest is Auberge Stanly Ranch on the southern edge of the valley, which opened in April 2022 with a new focus on retail: a Fifth Avenue Club offering personalized digital communications.

In September, Traina’s sister Veronica Swanson Beard took over Elyse Walker’s temporary space just off Main Street in St. Helena. “The Veronica Beard uniform is a blazer and jeans…you can wear that with flats if you’re a marketing executive or a winemaker in Napa Valley, then throw on your heels to go to dinner at French Laundry,” the designer says of the offerings in Veronica Beard’s sixth California store.

Walker is one of a number of pandemic-era transplants bringing new ideas to the destination — comprised of small towns Napa, Yountville, St. Helena and Calistoga — which has a lot in common with secondary markets that have become retail magnets in recent years, such as Aspen, Montecito and the Hamptons.

All of which begs the question: Could Napa Valley become a fashion destination?

“I’ve talked many times about Dolce & Gabbana doing Alta Moda in the Napa Valley. Their Asian clients could get there easily and there are so many locations that are a fit for a backdrop,” says Alexis Swanson Traina, who for many years served as creative director of her family’s Swanson Vineyards from Saks Fifth Avenue, including same-day delivery for those who might prefer to shop from afar than visit troubled downtown San Francisco.

“San Francisco is trying to find its footing so a lot of people are also using day tripping as a great opportunity,” says Traina, who in 2017 published the guidebook “From Napa With Love.”

“There are so many things going on. The Slanted Door, which is Charles Phan’s extraordinary French Vietnamese restaurant from San Francisco, just opened in Napa…. Capo from Santa Monica is coming. Elyse’s store was eye-opening to me, she put such care into it. I’m desperate to see Kemo Sabe show up,” she says of the high-end Western wear retailer based in Aspen that has five stores in resort towns.

“Napa Valley survived two massive fires and the pandemic, and it’s taken time to reignite a way of living. But at the same time new people are coming in, bringing fresh ideas. Main Street in downtown Napa was dead and now there’s hardly any space not under construction and ready to open,” she says of the momentum, while cautioning that Napa Valley is just 26 miles long and 3 miles wide, and is an agricultural preserve with many use restrictions.

Walker, who owns six stores in California and New York, never thought she’d find a business opportunity when she started spending time at her home in St. Helena during the pandemic, only to move to the area permanently. She now commutes to her office in Los Angeles twice a month.

“It’s farmland, I was coming here to relax,” she says, adding that when she began doing some styling and shopping for local friends during the height of COVID-19, it solidified that there was an untapped market. “It reminded me of the Pacific Palisades when I started there,” she says of the small town community in L.A. where she started 24 years ago.  

“Stun-ning,” says Mimi DeBlasio, a former wardrobe stylist who is the co-owner of the cult Scarecrow Wine, watching her friend emerge from the dressing room in a $4,500 Valentino cocktail dress at Elyse Walker’s new store in the Napa Valley’s St. Helena, Calif.
The retailer has brought Celine bags, Rosetta Getty blazers and Saint Laurent blouses to a historic 1800s building on St. Helena’s Main Street, where shopping has until now leaned more toward the lowkey and traditional, as evidenced by the 800-plus-year-old Model Bakery, Mario’s from Seattle for men’s haberdashery, and Sportago for Patagonia fleece.

Luxury brands have taken notice; Bottega Veneta approached Walker for an exclusive art installation, then Valentino came calling. “I was surprised to see a lot of people flew in for the event but also locals who shop Valentino with Elyse. It was good to see we have clientele here that we weren’t necessarily aware of,” says Karoline Auger, brand manager for Valentino.

Other European luxury players have long invested in the local wine industry, but not brought fashion with them per se.

In 1973, LVMH’s Moët Hennessy opened Chandon, the first French-owned sparkling wine producer in Napa Valley, which has just renovated its Yountville Estate for the 50th anniversary with a contemporary and sustainable design with soothing earth tones, a new restaurant and stunning outdoor venues with private patios, nooks and cabanas, creating a day club atmosphere.

The restaurant at Chandon launched Napa Valley’s time dining scene, opening in 1977, and it was the first winery to receive a Michelin star.

“There was a moment in time when it became a first house, we acknowledged the reality…the piece on wine education got lost, and now we’ve rebalanced that experience,” says Chandon’s marketing manager Miralee Gupar of updating the experience, touting the new chef’s education got lost, and now we’ve rebalanced that experience.

Chandon will debut a new retail concept on-site with tableware and home and heartfelt accessories selected by sustainable marketplace Powered by People, but no LVMH fashion merchandise.

You won’t find any at the three other Moët Hennessy-owned vineyards, either.

“If anything they are bringing us of their private clients, but we don’t talk a lot about being owned by them. It’s out there but when you come here, you don’t see any Louis Vuitton,” says Elizabeth Phelps Neuman, chief executive officer of Joseph Phelps Vineyards. The St. Helena winery with a tasting terrace that has a postcard view of the valley was acquired by LVMH in 2022.

“This is the original building my grandfather built in 1974 and when the chief executive officer of Moët Hennessy Philippe Schaus came the day the acquisition closed, he said, ‘I think we could do a little modernizing and put some comfortable furniture in’,” she says. “And he’s made some great changes,” she says during a tour of the indoor space that reopened in September after a renovation by Nobu go to Monsignor of experiences.

“We need more brand awareness and amplification and they know how to do that,” she says of selling to LVMH. “I’m proud of the relationship.”

The vineyard produces one of the most iconic American wines, Insignia, California’s first proprietary Bordeaux blend, which has been served for decades to presidents and heads of states, including former U.S. President Barack Obama and French President Emmanuel Macron.

On the subject of fashion, Neuman says her grandfather was a bon vivant in his day. “He got his pajamas from Harrods and had them pressed every day,” she remembers, adding that he wore them out to dinner, too. “That’s Napa style, if you want to go glam you go glam, if you want to wear pajamas, you wear pajamas.”

In 2015, Chanel owner Alain and Gerard Wertheimer purchased the sustainable St. Supéry Estate Vineyards and Winery in St. Helena, adding to their two properties in Bordeaux. At the property’s historic Queen Anne Atkinson House, built in 1882 and now on the National Historical Register, a tome about Chanel sits on the coffee table next to Napa Valley history books.

“We have done the remodel of part of the Atkinson house and a lot of investment in the cellar, and they’ve been hugely supportive of us doing more each year,” says Emma Swain, St. Supéry’s CEO, of the relationship with the brand. “She’s wearing Chanel boots during a tour of the French-style gardens and winery which produces Estate-grown, certified Napa Green wines, including a terrific 2022 Dollarhide Sauvignon Blanc fermented in cold concrete.

“We work together on our global strategy, particularly improving quality, improving experience, our giving and philanthropy. And we share a lot of ideas on sustainability with each other. They are very involved on a global level and we are on a local level,” says Swain, adding that St. Supéry also collaborates with Chanel on raising money for the area, for clients’ causes, and hosting employee events.

Chanel’s nearest boutiques in San Francisco, however.

“I think there is a desire to have more activities other than wine. We have the Agricultural Preserve and we can’t develop other activities within that,” she says of the first and only zoning legislation of its kind in the U.S., passed in 1968.

“But where we can do more things in town, it’s great. You can’t drink wine all day.”

Napa Valley impresario Jean-Charles Boisset is one of a new generation trying to create more experiences while celebrating the area’s history. The native of France moved to the Bay Area in 1991 to lead his family’s wine import business and acquired several vineyards, including California’s oldest, Buena Vista, in 2011 and Elizabeth Spencer in 2021, which now houses the Kathleen Thomas Hill Kitchen Memories collection of culinary relics.

Married to Gina Gallo, the third-generation face of the family behind the world’s largest wine producer by volume, E & J Gallo, Boisset has a flair for branding and has produced jewelry with Swarovski, crystal with Baccarat, fragrance with Ex Nihilo and hosted events with Neiman Marcus. His De Laisse Chambére sparkling wine has been featured in Nefflix’s “Emily in Paris.”

Boisset has several F&B and hospitality projects in his portfolio, including the historic Oakville Grocery with its Napa Wine History Museum, and the Calistoga Depot, where in February he’s opening a distillery with its own collection of spirits, and creating an “adult beverage experience” across 2 acres and six vintage train cars offering everything from whiskey blending to tequila and wine-tasting, Champagne and caviar pairing and wine-infused chocolate.

He’s also setting up a wellness boutique, tapping into Calistoga’s heritage of hot springs and health, and is bullish on the future of the town, which has 800 hotel rooms, including a Rosewood coming in, and connects to the walking and biking Vine Trail currently under construction to connect the entire Napa Valley.

The region now has a lot of activities beyond wine and food, Boisset says. “BottleRock Napa Valley is an incredible event in May. We are very active with Festival Napa Valley in July, which is bringing the best classical music singers like Andrea Bocelli up here….it’s wine and food, music, art and a younger generation who want to come and play and make wine,” he says, adding a plug for another project that will let people purchase a few rows of one of his vineyards.

The ultimate experience could well be a luxury brand fashion show in one of those vineyards, of course.

“I see it coming,” he says. “There is no shortage of taste,” says Traina.

“So many people have moved here over the last 25 years from other areas, and while most of them travel a lot, go to art exhibitions in other places, and shop around the world, they want their community to be elevated,” says Colgin, the art collector, philanthropist and founder of top-tier Colgin Cellars who sold a 60 percent stake in her business to LVMH titan Bernard Arnault after bonding with him over modern art.

“Luxury branding, I’m not sure St. Helena is really ready, but this mix of what Elyse has is a niche for this area,” she adds.

What about a Dior runway show among the vines at Colgin? “Well,” she says, “that would be fantastic.”
Walking Along Shanghai’s Art Deco Lanes: A Guide for Flâneurs

Experiencing Shanghai, or taking a “city walk,” entails checking out historical architecture and indulging in personal discoveries along the way.

BY DENNI HU

There’s no better way to experience Shanghai, the bustling metropolis of 26 million people that straddles the historical and the futuristic, than by foot. It has recently been popularized by Chinese social media as taking a “city walk,” which is a self-devised trek around town, in true flâneur style that encourages checking out historical architecture and indulging in personal discoveries.

To take part in its city walk culture, WWD Weekend has devised two routes covering the latest arts and retail offerings to enable first-time visitors to experience the dynamism that helped shape Shanghai and make it the de facto fashion capital of China with diverse neighborhoods.

Rambling Through Wukang, the Historic Downtown

As a part of Shanghai’s former French Concession, the winding streets between the Changshu Road and Fuxing Road area are known for their charming European architecture stemming from when the city was under French occupation in the 1920s. The well-preserved historical area has become Shanghai’s lifestyle center, rebranded by local Xuhui government officials as a tourism-heavy Historic Protection Zone which, according to the district, includes 64 “first-class roads” lined with towering plane trees that give it a distinctive charm.

The most iconic architecture in the neighborhood was created by the Hungarian-Slovak László Ede Hudec, who found his way to Shanghai after escaping a Siberian prison during World War I. Though Hudec’s work started in the classical revival style, it quickly began to incorporate Parisian Art Deco and the International Style, after being influenced by Le Corbusier.

Hudec’s most recognizable work is the Wukang Mansion, a wedge-shaped building at the downtown junction of Wukang Road and Huaihai Road. Start your day trip here early to avoid the selfie-obsessed crowd that emerges at noon, then meander down Wukang Road to discover works by Hudec’s contemporary, the Frenchman Alexandre Leonard, who created more than 60 architectural marvels in Shanghai, which also helped establish the outlines of the former French Concession.

Perhaps more iconic than Hudec, Leonard suddenly disappeared from Shanghai in 1946. His farewell letter, which was sent to the French consulate-general in Shanghai, is only allowed to be revealed in 2046. Midget Apartments is a charming Leonard project, sits at the intersection of Wukang and Hunan roads. With an imposing cement-brushed exterior and geometric coral accents, the triangular residential building is referred to by locals as “the elephant house.”

The tranquil Yongfu Road will lead you to Wuyuan Road, a famous filming site dotted with charming lane houses. Here, you can discover quaint boutiques such as the well-knowledgeable Dave’s Custom Tailoring, a go-to tailor shop for diplomats and executives located in a three-story villa house. Wander into its neighboring lane at No. 96 Wuyuan, where you will find Bamboo Beats (WeChat reservation required), an antiques shop known for its Asian scrolls and collectible tea cups, all handpicked by its keen-eyed Millennial founder.

Make a right on Wulumuqi Road to find not-to-be-missed retail pit stops such as An Ko Rou, a playful sportswear brand founded by the local fashion group ZucZug, and the Wulumuqi Wet Market, which was christened by a Prada takeover.

Venture onto the sun-kissed path of Yangqiu Road, where visitors can marvel at another Leonard legacy, the towering Savoy Apartments known for its angular Art Deco silhouette. Enjoy a walk down any lane entrance; they often lead to unexpected shops or hidden architectural gems not marked by established travel guides. ►
Taking an Art Walk Along Suzhou Creek

Shanghai's avid consumerism has quickly spilled over into the art scene. Witnessing a new wave of budding patrons trading Chanel bags for pieces of art, a score of leading local and global galleries have quickly set up shop alongside Suzhou Creek, reviving the warehouse-lined waterside corridor with contemporary flair.

Compared to the charms of Wukang, Suzhou Creek, or Suez Canal, is all about megaliths such as the Embankment Building and Broadway Mansions that have come to define Shanghai's skyline.

Formerly occupied by empty warehouses and factories, the Suzhou Creek corridor has become part of a natural extension of the city's gallery district by the Bund, first with the establishment of UCCA Edge, M50, and OCAT Shanghai, then with the recent opening of Fotografiska Shanghai and Suhe Haus, both warehouse-turned-art establishments.

Embark on your art tour from Fotografiska, the Swedish photography art center, which is currently hosting four solo shows with more than 200 images on display, including rarely seen early works by Feng Li, the self-taught photographer known for his surrealist street photography. Grab a vanilla or pickled pepper-flavored gelato at the art center's Gelato Bello, before heading eastward to Suhe Haus, a newly converted warehouse that showcases a good mix of local galleries, including Objective Gallery, Longlati Foundation, Hive Center for Contemporary Art, H&M Gallery, and Galerie Balice Hertling, all hosting pop-up exhibitions of contemporary artists.

Take a coffee break at the Suhe MixC World, a futuristic shopping mall that includes a series of restored historical housing groups called "Shenyu Li," where you can get a glimpse of the historical Thean Hou Temple, one of the oldest temples in Shanghai.

There's no way to miss the well-marked Embankment Building, conceived by Victor Sasson, a 1930s Baghdadi-Jewish real estate tycoon. Stretching over the whole block and complete with nine elevators, it was at the time the largest residential building in Shanghai and all of Asia. In the '40s, it housed the foreign press and several American film production companies, including one founded by Charlie Chaplin and other Hollywood heavyweights. Since the early 2000s, the building has been a preferred address for the creative and the nomadic. The easiest way to get a taste of the labyrinth of Embankment is by making an appointment at Gallery 101, a furniture showroom located on the first floor.

Continue upstream to the arched bridge way that is Zhaopu Road Bridge, where winding streets and the smell of scallion pancakes will guide you toward Rockbund, a collection of historical buildings newly renovated by David Chipperfield, who harmonized the eclectic building cluster, which spanned Art Deco to dusty European styles, with similar brick facades. The Rockbund Art Museum, one of Shanghai's most established private art museums housed in the former North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, also an Art Deco beauty, is an integral part of the Rockbund project.

The museum recently opened after Chipperfield's two-year restoration, which added a back entrance and a museum plaza. It's worth visiting Shenzhen artist Tan Jing's slimy dreamscape on its second floor before venturing to its sixth-floor RAM Café, where you can sip cocktails while enjoying a close-up view of the famed Oriental Pearl TV Tower. Rockbund can also be a departure point for a stroll alongside the tourist-heavy Bund. You can also conclude the art-heavy trip at Pearl Lam Galleries on Hong Kong Road, a block away from Rockbund. Currently on view is a solo exhibition by Ni Zhiqi, aptly titled "Flâneur." Ni’s textured color blocks pay homage to the daily wonders of Shanghai living. ■
L’Albereta, Italians’ Home Away From Home

As the Relais property turns 30, founder Carmen Moretti de Rosa reflects on changes in the hospitality industry and how privacy is the real luxury today. BY SANDRA SALLIBAN

Offering a home away from home has always been Carmen Moretti de Rosa’s mission, ever since she established L’Albereta Relais & Châteaux with her father Vittorio 30 years ago.

Nestled in Italy’s Lombardy region, in the Franciacorta area-slash-shine wine heaven some 50 miles outside Milan and not far from Lake Iseo, the destination has been attracting locals and a loyal Milanese crowd for relaxing weekly stays and weekend escapes for years, rising as a quiet haven and an alternative to the more touristy hot spots on Lake Como.

With its ivy-covered villa surrounded by lush gardens dotted with contemporary art sculptures and the renowned wineries, the charming property on the Bellavista hill foregrounds in hospitality with its blend of high-end cuisine, advanced spa treatments and an aesthetic that differed from traditional luxury hotel chains with a cozier environment in which each room is furnished differently.

“When today there are recurrent concepts, but at the time this was in 1993, rooms, of modern and classic décor and the overall idea of making visitors feel at ease [were new],” recalls Moretti de Rosa. “That’s why the best compliment I receive is when people tell me they keep coming back because they feel at home. Which is a recognition that is even more important now considering how the world has evolved and the high levels it has reached, like with domotics...but that’s not our idea of luxury. We don’t believe in flamboyance, but in a certain elegance.”

For Moretti de Rosa, luxury is “to be able to offer a sensation of rest and relax in a safe space, because in the past couple of years we have all really felt safe only when we were at home. So now when they are traveling, they’re looking for that feeling, which is not that different to what we try to offer in our rooms.

What has helped L’Albereta stay relevant in the eyes of its guests isn’t just maintaining its high quality, but also its ability to adjust with the times. Started with nine rooms, the structure over the years expanded to about 60 before Moretti de Rosa decided to eliminate some of them during the pandemic to create bigger suites.

Spanning five buildings, L’Albereta has 13 suites out of 53 rooms, including a special “cabriole” one that comes with a roof top, which offers guests the experience of sleeping under the stars.

“These past few years have been pivotal for the world of hospitality, as the pandemic at first caused this impossibility to travel and then discouraged being around too many people. We have made tweaks to guests even on the hotel levels like re-creating some of the old apartments,” says Moretti de Rosa. “I think in the future the overall trend of the industry will be offering more and more privacy and hyper-customization, something tailor-made for each guest...because everybody is seeking their own space,” adds the executive.

She underscores the challenges this approach faces, considering the scarcity of new workers in the industry.

“No one wants to work on weekends or in the evening anymore, so finding flexible resources willing to embrace this concept of luxury and trends in education is not easy,” admits Moretti de Rosa.

That’s why celebrations of the Relais milestone kicked off with a big party in honor of all the employees and collaborators of the company throughout the years. Held off with a big party in honor of all the employees and collaborators of the company throughout the years. Held

Today L’Albereta has four gourmet restaurants along with a chic lounge area for afternoon tea and evening aperitivo. Guests can enjoy dishes inspired by traditional Italian rustic cuisine from chef Fabio Abbattista at Ristorante LeoneFilice, where a large terrace opens to a view of Lake Iseo, or opt for the more informal La Filiale serving award-winning Franco Pepe’s pizzas paired with wines from Franciacorta’s vineyards.

Most recently, the Relais added the Stanza 54 room offering another relaxed space to eat, play cards, listen to music or read a book with charming views over the vineyards.

These locations flank the healthy Ristorante Benessere restaurant reserved for guests of the Espace Chenot Health and Wellness Spa, which is another jewel in L’Albereta’s crown.

“We opened the spa in 2003, and the idea of bringing [Henri] Chenot is rooted in another story of friendship,” says Moretti de Rosa about the late well-being guru, who died in 2020, and his renowned health care programs.

“He was a man of his word, and put his ideas into action. We built the spa at the front of the hotel in front of the main entrance to L’Albereta’s crown. That’s why we wanted to get closer to his Milanese clientele so we offered him the opportunity to join us...At the time the coexistence of high cuisine and great wines with wellness was seen as a binary option but we thought, “why not?” Diet is key in feeling well.”

Undergoing a revamp to be unveiled in early 2024, the 20,000-square-foot spa includes 14 treatment rooms, an indoor pool, sauna, steam bath, Turkish bath and hydrotherapy pools.

It has a team of 30 experts across masseuses, doctors, dietitians, osteopaths and wellness coaches. They focus on a holistic and systemic screening method to customize wellness programs, which focus on diet and weight loss, antiaging, energy treatments, health and prevention to improve the overall wellbeing with bio-energy check-ins.

There is also a fitness center along with tennis courts, and indoor and outdoor pools.

The addition of the spa increased L’Albereta’s attractiveness among international guests – especially from France and the U.S. at first. Moretti de Rosa underscores that foreigners also value L’Albereta’s strategic position, close to cities like Milan, Bergamo, Verona and Venice, enabling different shopping or cultural trips.

Yet 60 to 70 percent of guests are still Italians who see L’Albereta as their country house. While the international audience is mostly mature in terms of demographic, Moretti de Rosa highlights that these local frequent guests are now mainly ages 25 to 40, including couples and young families. Fans of the Chenot program also make for a loyal cluster, visiting the spa at least twice a year.

“We all look for healthier and greener lifestyles now, in general,” says Moretti de Rosa. “Think of sustainability, which is increasing in hospitality but is also so difficult to apply when it comes to luxury hospitality. You can have guests who want a change of towels three times a day and you have to serve them, of course,” she continues, also pointing to example like the amenities, which in the case of L’Albereta have been tweaked to be in recycled plastic and paper.

“It would be nice to take a year off, and revamp the whole place in a sustainable way but it’s not easy,” adds the executive, who also owns the L’Andana resort in Tuscany. Along with her father and her husband Martino de Rosa, Moretti de Rosa acquired the second estate in 2000, renovated all of the buildings in the ancient hamlet, converting the main villa into L’Andana resort and the surrounding farms into the Casa Badia Tuscan Inn, inaugurated in 2009. The project caught the attention of another acclaimed Michelin-starred chef, Alain Ducasse, who partnered with the Moretti de Rosas from 2004 to 2015. In 2016, the founders began a new project involving Michelin-starred chef Enrico Bartolini.

Now the dream is to move to a city, as Moretti de Rosa reveals she would like to open “a 10-room home” in Milan before ultimately exporting her concept of hospitality to “the city of my heart: New York.”

Her bucket list includes launching a hospitality training academy in Italy to pass down all the knowledge and skills required to make guests feel at home. “It may sound banal, but this is a very complex job, because making others happy is not only a question of service – there’s way more behind it,” she concludes.

As the Relais property turns 30, founder Carmen Moretti de Rosa reflects on changes in the hospitality industry and how privacy is the real luxury today. BY SANDRA SALLIBAN
Mindfulness Is Serious Business At Ebbio

The Tuscan retreat was a mother’s dream that turned into her daughter’s business venture. by MARTINO CARRERA

A striking note of lavender bursts from the tiny wooden façon wrapped in a rope ribbon that Sibilla De Vuono is opening to run on its own.

The image consultant and personal branding expert is emptying a goodie bag full of products from her Tuscan hamlet Ebbio, which include olive oil with a mineral taste and fruit preserves, among other produce.

Nestled amid holm oak woods a stone’s throw from the now-extinct volcano, Ebbio is unlike any other retreat in Tuscany, which is known for its numerous countryside getaways. A huge dining table that can accommodate all 20 guests, the entrance hall equipped with an ancient wood-burning oven to make bread and pizzas and the fireplace dominating the second floor’s communal space enhance the at-home feeling.

Talking from the Milan headquarters of the CB Made in Italy footwear brand in which she officially became a partner earlier this year, De Vuono says she left her family home at age 14 looking to free herself from her parents’ and other holistic practices, as well as ”any other ’New Age’ environment.”

Talking from the Milan headquarters of the CB Made in Italy footwear brand in which she officially became a partner earlier this year, De Vuono says she left her family home at age 14 looking to free herself from her parents’ and other holistic practices, as well as ”any other ’New Age’ environment.”

De Vuono was her mother’s dream, until it became hers, in 2010, De Vuono found balance in splitting her time between Ebbio and Milan, where the company is based.

Speaking of the Milanesi footprint has family connections and values that, Bringheli says, the pair discovered they share: “It’s about community living,” De Vuono offers. “It’s the everyday and get out of your comfort zone,”

When Bevilacqua returned to Italy — going by her nickname Nirdosh — she acquired the farm a few miles south of the medieval hamlet of Monteriggioni and left Naples in 1989 dreaming of recreating the communal lifestyle she had experienced abroad.

De Vuono herself grew up as a vegetarian, at a time when this was viewed as an unusual choice. She has fond memories of her mother channeling all her efforts and proving resourceful amid difficulties to living the estate alive. But as a regular teenage girl attending public school — albeit in an art-leaning institute — she never really loved the estate, nor her mother’s lifestyle, and suffered from being bred in such a ”hippie” environment.

The history of the project has family connections and harks back to the mid-’80s when De Vuono’s mother, Francesca Bevilacqua, embraced the Osibho Rajneesh philosophy, frequently visited India, temporarily moved to Oregon to live in a commune, and became passionate about traditional Chinese and Ayurvedic medicine, shiatsu and other holistic practices, as well as ”any other ’New Age’ trend she encountered along her path,” De Vuono says.

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“I found that that book was genius, and I started studying a lot, practicing yoga… I eventually reconciled with my family’s values and realized that what set me apart from my mother’s fundamentals was just the aesthetics and the people she surrounded herself with,” she says.

“My mother’s been a pioneer of this ’New Age’ wave, but she had little management skills,” ’De Vuono adds. That’s the main reason why she joined her at Ebbio temporarily at first in 2016, leaving her life in Paris behind, and imagining she would spend no more than a few weeks, months perhaps, helping her smooth over hiccups and then revert to her usual glitzy lifestyle split among New York, Mexico City, London, Riyadh and Paris.

Yet the trip was ”a homecoming and the end of some sort of psychanalysis,” she says. ”I got passionate about the fundamentals of my mother’s project, which were right although aesthetically they were not.”

Ebbio was her mother’s dream, until it became hers, too, in 2017. “I guess that when you grow up with a person with such a strong dream, it eventually becomes your dream, too,” she contends.

Since joining the business she’s sought ways to update it and make it relevant to people that have little to do with the hippie, New Age movement that originally inspired the place. She worked to preserve its spirit — of mindfulness, peacefulness and a frenzied lifestyle — and the 21st century with a shabbily chic bent and penchant for providing a full Italian lifestyle experience.

A 12th-century estate with seven hectares of farmland that allow it to be self-sufficient up to about 80 percent, Ebbio is replete with an organic vegetable garden; a farm field to produce olives; a chestnut grove, and a small vineyard, which De Vuono plans to replace with a herb garden to further frame the business as female-owned and managed.

The colonial-style farmhouse preserves the blueprint of about eight centuries ago, as it’s been barely modernized. Barring energy and a clean water supply — the former enticed by bonesos and solar panels, the latter made sustainable via osmosis filters to get drinking water – the 23-foot high ceilings, original flooring, and 1.56-foot square foot wooden floored of the stater house were left untouched. The latter is used for yoga workshops. Design is spare and thoughtful, or sustainable, with most furniture vintage or crafted from chestnut wood trimmed every five years from the estate’s grove. Earthly tones and the natural light filtering through the windows overlooking the rolling Tuscan hills contribute to the charming sense of peacefulness. The house can accommodate up to 20 guests split among nine bedrooms, none with en-suite restrooms.

”Through discomfort you can break free from the everyday and get out of your comfort zone,” De Vuono says, somewhat summing up the goal of creative retreats, weeklong yoga workshops and team-building stays customers buy into. “Staying away from what you’re used to, one can discover curiosity. It’s a different way of living, almost timeless. It could be anytime.”

Compared to similar countrysidegetaways, Ebbio only rents the entire house, rather than single rooms, in an effort to provide the most tailored experience for groups of like-minded people.

From April through early November, De Vuono organizes recurring retreats with yoga and holistic trainers scouted around the world or customizes the experience for any given group of guests. The list of activities Ebbio offers includes yoga and holistic health-related sessions, cooking workshops, food preserving (jamming, larding, harding, sun drying, salt preserving) and natural cosmetic-making classes, wine tastings, art workshops, foraging sessions, horseback riding and hiking, as well as group walks in the fields or in the neighboring sites of cultural and natural interest.

”We want to keep the [familiar] vibe because that’s how my mother dreamed it, she left Naples to come live here in Tuscany.”

Ebbio is female-owned and managed. It’s your house. You come here to share the experience, there’s my mother’s furniture, a small art collection. It was important for me to keep that [familiar] vibe because that’s how my mother dreamed it, she left Naples to come live here in Tuscany.”

A huge dining table that can accommodate all 20 guests, the entrance hall equipped with an ancient wood-burning oven to make bread and pizzas and the fireplace dominating the second floor’s communal space enhance the at-home feeling.

De Vuono is now strongly committed to Ebbio and has plenty of plans for it, including the creation of a bio-lake, an artificial lake that integrates with the natural environment; the implementation of a photovoltaic system, and furthering the concept of female farming, cooking duties to her mother, who prepares veggie recipes based on the day’s harvest.

But the most important thing for me to keep this [familiar] vibe because that’s how my mother dreamed it, she left Naples to come live here in Tuscany.”

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As per the Oxford English Dictionary, quality can be defined by “the degree of excellence of something,” or a distinctive attribute or characteristic possessed by someone or something.

Visiting the Planeta vineyards peppered Sicily, the term comes to mind again and again, as it fits any of their wines, from the chardonnay to the syrah; the stunning views of their estates under the Etna volcano, those on the soft hills near Lake Arancio, or by the white rocks jutting out of Capo Milazzo; the perfectly tended rows of their carobs, olive and almond trees in Noto, and their hospitality projects, from La Foresteria in Menfi to Casa Panettieri in the restored Sambuca hamlet that was first founded by the Arabs in 830 A.C.

To be sure, visiting the Planeta estates allows you to take a trip across Sicily, savoring the flavors that reflect the integration of the cultural, aesthetic and culinary influences handed down throughout the island's Greek, Roman, Arab, French and Spanish dominations over the centuries.

“There is a sense of a new rediscovery of Sicily now, a fresh buzz running through the island,” believes chairwoman Francesca Planeta. “There is a sense of a new rediscovery of Sicily now, a fresh buzz running through the island,” believes chairwoman Francesca Planeta.

Tourism is booming, also boosted by oenogastronomic trips. After an episode of the second season of HBO’s “The White Lotus” that was filmed at Planeta’s Sciaranuova estate, the company saw an additional leap in international tourism. At the location, actors Theo James, Meghann Fahy, Will Sharpe and Aubrey Plaza are seen trying out some of the estate’s signature wines, from the Caricante Sicilia Eruzione 1914 dating back to 2018 to the Etna Bianco 2020.

Planeta now offers a “Grand Tour” of the same name as the successful series that includes a tasting of wines, from the chardonnay to the syrah; the stunning views of their estates under the Etna volcano, those on the soft hills near Lake Arancio, or by the white rocks jutting out of Capo Milazzo; the perfectly tended rows of their carobs, olive and almond trees in Noto, and their hospitality projects, from La Foresteria in Menfi to Casa Panettieri in the restored Sambuca hamlet that was first founded by the Arabs in 830 A.C.

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One-third of business travelers said they are influenced by workout possibilities when choosing a hotel, according to a survey released this year.

For many vacationers, lounging by a hotel pool—without ever stepping into it, much less swimming in it—qualifies as an activity in itself. But such inactivity isn’t as entrenched as it once was. No longer considered a chore that people have to check off their daily to-do lists, exercise is increasingly a must for many, not just from a fortifying health and wellness standpoint but also as a sure-fire way to connect with friends and a community of like-minded people.

Unlike in years past when travelers were content to get their heart rates going in a nondescript, compact fitness room with a treadmill or two and some free weights, now they are seeking hotels that offer brand-name equipment and in some instances multiple types of fitness classes. Instead of hooking up guests with day passes to area health clubs, some properties are trying to spare them any further travel time by ramping up on-site services. In fact, one-third of business travelers said they are influenced by sports possibilities when choosing a hotel, according to a survey released by Accor and Dan DNA. And more than a quarter of them are willing to pay a little more for a hotel with a gym.

Hotels are clearly paying attention. For example, guests at the International Hotel Group’s EVEN Hotels will find a yoga mat, block, on-demand fitness programming and a binder with exercises in their rooms, as well as exercise balls in some instances. There are also fitness rooms for cardio and weight-training options.

Some can’t even wait to get to their hotels to exercise and while away their airport layovers by working out on-site. The Ambassador Transit Lounge in Singapore’s Changi Airport, the G-Force Health Club at the Dubai International Airport, The Fairmont Hotel Health Club at the Vancouver International Airport and the Hilton Health Club at O’Hare International Airport in Chicago offer fitness enthusiasts daily or hourly passes.

The fact that the Equinox Hotel New York was one of only two U.S. properties to land on the World’s 50 Best Hotels signals how more fitness-minded travelers aren’t abandoning their routines on the road. The inaugural list was comprised by the World’s 50 Best Hotels Academy, a group of 500 international well-traveled authorities in the hotel and travel industry. Guests at the Hudson Yards hotel pretty much have no reason to exercise, given the 60,000-square-foot on-site Equinox Club. Illustrating people’s zeal, Equinox Hotels chief executive officer Chris Norton said that club has 5,000 members and 1,500 of them use it on a weekly basis. "We are creating a space that brings together a community of like-minded individuals willing to exchange, learn and improve their lifestyle," the spokesperson says.

At Amanyara’s Turks & Caicos resort, visitors can crank up their athletic skills via its “Legends” program, which offers a series of clinics with professionals. Former tennis star Maria Sharapova launched the initiative in 2021, and about 15 standout athletes have followed her lead in the past decade, a company spokesperson says. "We are creating a space that brings together a community of like-minded individuals willing to exchange, learn and improve their lifestyle," the spokesperson says.

Next up will be Siro Boka Place in Montenegro that is slated for next year, and the company is on the lookout for other relevant destinations. Siro was created in direct response to consumers’ interest in self care and prioritizing fitness and recovery, which have accelerated in the past decade, a company spokesperson says. "We are creating a space that brings together a community of like-minded individuals willing to exchange, learn and improve their lifestyle," the spokesperson says.

The Los Angeles Chargers’ Asante Samuel and former Paris Saint-Germain player Blaise Matuidi are a few others who have held clinics at the property, which rests on the western shore of Providenciales. The touring clinics have right to 10 participants and cost $375 for adults and $275 for children.

Through the end of this year, the Amanyara is offering all sorts of heart rate-boosting activities. Overnights -adults and children—will be able to compete in pickelball tournaments while two of the more unexpected options are Aqua Barre Bodywork and Ai-Chi (Aqua Tai Chi). More restorative options can be found in the Thai options are Aqua Barre Bodywork and Ai-Chi (Aqua Tai Chi). More restorative options can be found in the Thai

Getting ready to spin.

The aerial view of the Equinox Hotel in New York, designed by Rockwell Group. Equinox Hotels has handled the hotel’s other areas.

Emphasizing wellness as a form of luxury and how Equinox Hotel offers it in a refined way, Norton said that club has 5,000 members and 1,500 of them use it on a weekly basis. "We are creating a space that brings together a community of like-minded individuals willing to exchange, learn and improve their lifestyle," the spokesperson says.

Emphasizing the brand’s comprehensive approach, Norton says the idea that wellness consists of retreating somewhere for a five-day weight loss stay that is restful is an old-fashioned one. "Our definition of wellness and well-being is not a once every six months retreat, it’s a daily routine. Everything you do on a daily basis becomes really important in your life," he says. "Our hotel is kind of 24-7 well-being. It includes not only fitness but movement, regen, recovery, sleep, spa and a whole sense of community and belonging in an environment that you feel comfortable in. For the generation that wants to fit it all in, we provide that under one roof.”

Another established name in the fitness sector, Tracy Anderson, is partnering with The Colony Hotel in Palm Beach, Fla., for a second season. The fitness specialist, who is popular with celebrities like Gwyneth Paltrow, will be offering the latest innovations of the Tracy Anderson Method. Hotel guests can partake in 90 minute group classes led by Anderson’s team at the property. Separately, Anderson is working with the Pendry Hotel by having her trainers serve up her hour-long MyMode class at the chain’s hotels in Washington, D.C., and Newport Beach, Calif., among other locations.

A newcomer to the increasingly competitive field of sports-oriented travel is Siro, which pitches itself as an immersive destination that is built on the biokinematic principles of fitness, nutrition, sleep, recovery and mindfulness. The first hotel—the 132-room Siro One Za’abeel—is slated to start welcoming guests in Dubai in February. The athletically inclined will have a nearly 11,000-square-foot Fitness Lab to get their heart rates up. Spanning an entire floor, the space will offer group classes, including ones in studios for spinning, yoga and Pilates. There will also be a tranquil Zen Room for recalibrating. In fact, recovery is a priority that a floor is being designed for that with recovery rooms, cold plunge options, hydrojet services, cryotherapy and an infrared light chamber.

Siro representatives declined to reveal the investment. Parent company Kerzner International has designed the standard guest rooms for the Dubai location and LW Design Consultants has handled the hotel’s other areas.

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When you push open the doors of Alain Ducasse’s new chocolate workshop in Paris, the first thing that hits you is the smell. The rich scent is all-enveloping and provides a warm olfactory counterpoint to the thrumming of machines in a succession of rooms where technicians oversee the transformation of cocoa beans into chocolate. They are roasted, crushed and mixed, each step controlled with chemical precision. That’s what sets Ducasse apart: where other chefs purchase the raw material for their confectionery, he makes his chocolate from scratch. Just don’t call it a chocolate factory. And Ducasse is no Willy Wonka.

“This is really high-craftsmanship,” says the Michelin-starred chef, whose name is synonymous with French gastronomy.

Over breakfast at Le Meurice, the Paris luxury hotel where he’s been head chef for a decade, Ducasse leaves through a coffee table book dedicated to the lavishly appointed labs where he produces not just chocolate but also coffee, ice cream and biscuits, in a thriving sideline for the busy restaurateur.

He works in small batches, preferring to operate from a network of “manufactures” in Paris rather than one large organization. On a tour of the new chocolate facility, located at a cost, a fact that is not always well understood in the birthplace of haute cuisine. Ducasse reckons that top chefs could learn a thing or two from luxury brands. “I think we’re not expensive enough, and we’re not perceived in the same way as haute couture,” he says.

“Nobody complains about the price of fashion. People always complain about the price of restaurants, even though haute gastronomy requires just as much labor as haute couture.”

As copresident of the Collège Culinaire de France, an industry body founded by leading chefs, Ducasse is talking to fashion representatives about how to increase synergies between the two sectors, which contribute to France’s reputation as a global leader in luxury. “We have to build bridges between fashion and gastronomy,” he says.

Within his own industry, he’s been an early advocate for new talents. Ducasse no longer cooks himself, instead appointing a cadre of young chefs to helm his restaurants. “I provide inspiration. I’m an artistic director,” he says. “I bring new talents. Ducasse no longer cooks himself, instead bridging between the two sectors, which contribute to France’s reputation as a global leader in luxury. “We have to build bridges between fashion and gastronomy,” he says.

In a sector that remains male-dominated, he’s promoted a number of female chefs, including Kelly Jolivet at Benêt, Iliana Regan at Allard and Victoria Roulder at Aux Lyonnais. “I find that even if they are classically trained in haute cuisine, women’s cooking is more sensitive where men focus more on technique,” he says.

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PHILIP LIM TOKYO: ROMANCING REALITY
THE DICHOTOMY OF BEAUTY, ELEGANCE AND UNEXPECTED GRITTINESS IN THE CITY THAT INSPIRES HIM MOST.

It is no coincidence that our second flagship store for 3.1, after New York, was in Tokyo — having a presence in this city was of utmost importance to me very early on.

What in your mind makes the city special?
The city is sophisticated with a sense of madness, just like 3.1 Phillip Lim. There is always something unique and a little subversive about Tokyo, even in its most classic elements.

Can you describe the city in one word?
Dichotomy.

How has this city inspired your own design?
I believe now, more than ever, in the power and necessity of craftsmanship, of seeing the artisan’s hand in the small details, and in bringing nuance to simplicity. That is the very essence of ‘romancing reality’ which is what we’ve always said 3.1 Phillip Lim is about. And I see that in every alleyway and every street corner of Tokyo.

Japanese artisans are inspired by nature, by the beauty in the humble and pragmatic. That ethos speaks to my soul more than any other and I really feel that connection in Tokyo and in all Japanese culture.

COM-PLEAT LUXURY
The Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo at Otemachi was designed with fashion in mind, from its interiors to its restaurant to its florals. Inspired by Pleats Please Issey Miyake, each guest room features a wall-to-wall artwork of floating textile. Inspired by the late Japanese fashion designer, Fashion is also the inspiration for est restaurant uniforms, designed with a nod to Chanel, Gaultier and Givenchy, and its décor featuring intricate Japanese Kumihiimo brands.

Upon request, fashionistas can be chauffeured by hotel car to Ginza, the city’s premier shopping district. Then to Harajuku, the epicenter of Japan’s street style culture, including a visit to Takeshita Dori, a dreamy live action fashion gallery.

Before heading back to the Hotel for a guest favorite Rice Renewal Treatment at the beloved spa, visit Omotesando, Tokyo’s Champs Elysees and the vintage shops of Cat Street where luxury bags, watches and clothing get a second life.

PHILIP LIM

Phillip Lim shares his love of Tokyo, the sense of belonging that makes it unique, and a stay at the Four Seasons he is manifesting with a trip back for the 20th anniversary of his eponymous label.

When did you first start appreciating Tokyo?
Phillip Lim: My first experience coming to Tokyo was in 2007, about two years after starting 3.1 Phillip Lim. But I have long been inspired by Japanese fashion and by amazing designers like Rei Kawakubo and Yohji Yamamoto. Before I moved to New York, I had a brand in L.A. called Development. This was back in the early 2000s and we sold these incredible front pleat pants that my Japanese clients went wild for. I remember being struck by the openness in Japan, to experiment with clothes and layering — to celebrate personal style — while also staying true to the designer’s vision.

In 2004, Phillip Lim co-founded the L.A.-based fashion brand “Development.” He worked there until 2004. Then, in the fall of 2005, he co-founded “3.1 Phillip Lim” with Wen Zhou. In 2007, the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) honored Lim with the award for “Emerging Talent in Womenswear.” In 2012, he was awarded the CFDA’s Swarovski award for Menswear.

The Four Seasons is also a celebration of fashion. With a nod to fashion icons like Rei Kawakubo and Yohji Yamamoto, the hotel’s design is inspired by the late Japanese fashion designer. The hotel’s décor features intricate Japanese Kumihiimo brands. Upon request, fashionistas can be chauffeured by hotel car to Ginza, the city’s premier shopping district. Then to Harajuku, the epicenter of Japan’s street style culture, including a visit to Takeshita Dori, a dreamy live action fashion gallery.

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READ MORE ABOUT PHILLIP’S CONNECTION TO TOKYO

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Lafayette’s, a Restaurant That’s a Trip Through Time

French chef Mory Sacko explores the culinary intersection of Parisian brasseries, African recipes and American food in the latest address by Moma Group. \( \text{BY} \ \text{LILY TEMPLETON} \)

In the Marquis de Lafayette’s former Paris townhouse, the party’s about to get restarted. The 17th-century French general might be best remembered as a hero of the American War of Independence and a central figure of the French Revolution, but it’s the genial epicurean host who inspired Lafayette’s, the latest address from hospitality specialist Moma Group on Rue d’Anjou.

Restored to its former glory, the 4,300-square-foot ground floor of the marquis’ former residence is a restaurant that can seat up to 100 guests in its main rooms but also the more secluded pantry, a chef’s table of sorts. There’s also a wine cellar on the lower level that can be privatized.

“You can put millions on the table but you can’t buy time or history,” says the group’s founder Benjamin Patou, who fell under the charm of the historic town house a stone’s throw from the Elysée Palace on a side street to tony Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré back in the 2010s. When the place came up for sale in 2019, the entrepreneur had formed a joint venture with friend Romain Costa, founder of the Blackcode Group that owns upscale eateries such as Kinugawa, for a first restaurant.

“Travel is above all curiosity and a desire to discover other times or history,” says the group’s founder Benjamin Patou, who wowed the public and judges’ hearts as much for his performance in the culinary contest, a chef of Senegalese and Malian descent who vowed the public and judges’ hearts as much for his inventive fare as his sunny disposition.

Only months after the show, the chef had his first Michelin star with his restaurant Mosuke in Paris. Since then, attention on the 31-year-old has not abated. He’s gone from strength to strength, including imagining recipes for the Louis Vuitton restaurant in the White 1921 hotel in Saint Tropez. Time magazine even chose him for the cover of the edition highlighting the year’s 100 rising movers and shakers.

When Patou approached Sacko with the project, the chef already had a hankering to explore a different path from the Japanese and African influences he’d been developing in his first restaurant.

“As any good journey, this one ends around a table, because we are in France and everything always ends there,” the chef says.

“Travel is above all curiosity and a desire to discover others,” he says. “I’d always had in the back of my mind the desire to offer a cuisine that could be at the confluence of French gastronomy, so rather Parisian, and the desire to offer a cuisine that could be at the confluence of French gastronomy, so rather Parisian, and the influences that are mine.”

What made him say yes to this project was the connection he formed with Patou and Rosa-Violán but also the lack of nostalgia. “There was just the evolution of a journey through time,” Sacko says. With images of very French table settings rife with silverware, candelabras and porcelain — sourced by cook and interior designer Isabelle Moltzer — already floating in his head, Patou’s project and the stage Rosa-Violán was setting, the menu for Lafayette’s sprang into existence as “a cuisine of the three worlds, between French gastronomy and Parisian brasserie, marked by nods to the American continent and recipes that hail from the African continent.”

On the table at Lafayette’s are a very French platé en croîte, with Chicken Yassa inside; an all-American corn soup under a puff pastry; Lafayette’s fried chicken, served in a woven silver basket, a buttery sole meunière with a Champagne sauce and, of course, an all-American classic cheeseburger made of matured beef, aged cheddar and relish. They can be paired with French fries with a Cajun seasoning, a fried plantain version or an herby “attiéké,” a granulated cassava side dish. Finishing off the menu are a caramelized mango tatin tart, or an hibiscus panna cotta topped with basil jelly and fresh pomegranate seeds.

Then there’s the restaurant’s expansive selection of wines. The list spans France’s and Europe’s winemaking regions but also rarer finds like chardonnay vintages from Napa Valley’s Inglenook estate and the Kistler Vineyards in California.

If for Patou, “the greatest satisfaction is to have a place that looks like no other,” Sacko goes one step further.

“I’d like for people to leave with a desire to come back alone, with the same people, with another group — but come back,” the chef says. “That’s when I know the job’s well done.”

The board outside the entrance of Lafayette’s.

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The board outside the entrance of Lafayette’s.
At the Bristol Hotel in Paris, Bread Comes Alive

Chef Eric Frechon installed a flour mill in the basement kitchen where he bakes his 100 percent natural “living bread.”

For Eric Frechon, not all bread is created equal. The head chef at Le Bristol Paris has long made his own loaves, rolls and baguettes. But for the last five years he has also ground his own flour, making his bakery unique among the French capital’s top luxury hotels.

A favorite with celebrities including Leonardo DiCaprio, Lady Gaga and David Beckham, Le Bristol employs around 100 cooks. But Frechon had his bread epiphany hundreds of miles from his glass-walled office in the middle of the hotel’s kitchen, where his desk is lined with awards including his 2009 Chef of the Year gong from the industry’s Le Chef magazine.

It was in the hillside village of Cucugnan (population 113) in the South of France that he discovered the work of Roland Feuillas, who grows and mills ancient varieties of wheat to produce what he terms 100 percent natural “living bread,” as opposed to industrial bread made from standardized grain.

A lover of authentic, local products, Frechon was conquered by the idea of going back to the origins of breadmaking. For this Normandy-born chef, it meant replacing fancy bread rolls with rustic loaves that are served in slices.

“We were radical. From one day to the next, we banned the old bread and we said, ‘This is it,’” he explains. “The notion of quality is different for everyone, so no doubt there are some who will be less demanding than others. I think we probably push it to the extreme.”

Feuillas, the wheat expert, has traveled the world cataloguing different types of grain and believes that, contrary to conventional wisdom, flour should be used immediately instead of being left to rest.

That’s why Frechon had a stone mill installed in the basement of the hotel, where he also makes his own pasta and chocolates and stores a selection of cheeses and fine wines. Despite his many accolades, the chef believes food excellence lies not in fancy techniques but in sourcing the best-quality ingredients.

“Bread is such a simple product that to actually make it something incredibly unique using just flour and water — since those are the only ingredients — we had to source beautiful varieties of wheat,” he says.

Frechon has handpicked seven types of single-variety grains, including khorasan, which is known for its rich, nutty flavor and excellent nutritional properties. The resulting sourdough bread is served exclusively at the hotel’s three Michelin-star Epicure restaurant.

“It’s unlike any other wheat. This one gives us a lot of trouble,” he says. “You have to tame it and each day is a little different, and that’s what makes it difficult for the baker to deliver regular, excellent bread every day. That’s where their expertise and intuition come in and where they truly excel.”

Matthieu Favier, head baker at Le Bristol, says he had to unlearn old habits. “Nobody works with fresh flour like this,” he explains during a tour of the facility. “You have to think of it like coffee: between ground coffee and freshly ground beans, you won’t get the same aroma and nutritional qualities.”

The dough needs more time to rise. “The kneading is slow and short. The fermentation time is quite long and afterward, there’s no shaping,” he says. “It’s a different approach, but it’s much nobler to work in this way.”

As an added benefit, the resulting bread is said to be easier to digest. “Rather than rejecting gluten, I think it’s much wiser to return to a more natural approach,” Favier argues.

He admits he wasn’t immediately convinced about the need to overhaul the hotel’s bakery. “I had a hard time understanding what the chef was trying to achieve,” he says. But a trip to Cucugnan, where Feuillas runs workshops, made him a convert too. “All the pieces of the puzzle came together.”

Today the Bristol gets through around 220 pounds of wheat daily, by Frechon’s estimates. The hotel sells its bread and pasta alongside a range of gourmet foods at its in-house grocery, L’Épicerie des Ateliers du Bristol, which is open from Wednesday to Sunday.

Frechon, who next year will celebrate 25 years in the job, would love to add a charcuterie workshop next, but space is limited in the historic building.

One thing’s for sure: the Bristol’s “living bread” is here to stay. “Once you’ve tasted it, there’s no going back,” Favier says.
Time machines still have to be invented, but stepping into Peck offers a similar experience. Once inside the glass doors, the gastronomic experience is as dynamic in the heart of Milan, a visitor discovers traditionally Italian delicatessen offerings or culinary specialties tracing back to the city's economic boom in the '80s, not to mention various counters offering everything from meat to cheese, fresh pasta to veggies, pastries to chocolate.

The outside clanging of trams and frenzy of the nearby Via Torino shopping street vanish in a distant echo, replaced by the gentle manner and recommendations of the formally dressed Peck staff – their solicitousness more like the friendliness seen in small towns rather than the tourist epicenter of a big city.

These are some of the ingredients that have made Peck stand the test of time since it was founded in 1883, when Franz Peck, a maker of cold-cuts from Prague, decided to open a workshop of German-style cured and smoked meats. Throughout the decades the company has passed under the control of four different owners, expanded locations and assortment, ultimately growing but never losing its charm.

While Peck’s offerings may cause visitors to ooh and ahh, even more captivating is what takes place behind the scenes in its 21,527-square-foot kitchens, where a quiet choreography is performed every day from dawn. The rhythmic cutting of zucchini alternates with the speedy rolling of pasta dough for fresh ravioli, while the meticulous cleaning of seafood takes place next to preparations of Italian dishes such as tripe or cassoeula stew. Everything that is served daily at the deli counter is made locally, with a weekly menu tabled on Thursdays that mixes traditional and seasonal dishes.

Adjacent to the main kitchen, a small area is dedicated to all chocolate-based recipes, including Peck’s large assortment of pralines and – at press time in November – the first prototypes of treats for the holiday season, such as Santa Claus-shaped chocolate sculptures or chocolate snowflakes that have made locally, with a weekly menu tabled on Thursdays that mixes traditional and seasonal dishes.

The executive stresses the importance of guiding clients in discovering all the artisanship behind Peck’s assortment. For example, the store leverages its scouting skills and relationship with small local producers to offer treats that can’t be found elsewhere, like hand-picked mimosa baby artichokes in extra virgin olive oil jars and with a price-tag of 120 euros. Peck has also recently introduced a line of vacuum-sealed products to offer customers solutions with a longer shelf life but without preservatives and that are easy to cook at home.

Wine is another category to leverage. Peck’s wine cellar is among the most important in Italy, with more than 3,500 labels across international red, white and rosé wines, Champagne, liqueurs and spirits. It stands out for its wide price positioning too, with bottles retailing from 12 euros up to 50,000 euros for one out of 11 bottles of a 15-liter bottle of Masseto red wine worldwide. Starting this month, special editions of Ca’ del Bosco with the Peck brand will be joined by exclusive bottles of pinot noir with a label celebrating the company’s 140th anniversary.

“We truly have a cellar that has no equal in the country, with rare bottles that few can boast in Italy. So we can offer our clients exclusive or editorial contents to explain everything we do,” Marzotto says about strategies he’s looking to implement to further engage consumers.

“Attention to service has always been in our DNA but there are a series of tools consolidated in fashion retail that we want to introduce in food retail, too, like CRM strategies and more proactive ways to improve customer loyalty,” he adds.

Peck can already count on a loyal Milanese clientele who visit the store on average three times a week, while those who had the habit to shop at the store, still prefer e-commerce for Europe. “We still do home deliveries but those who had the habit to shop at the store, still prefer the physical experience,” says Marzotto, who looks at alternative solutions to the online channel.

“We don’t believe in the traditional e-commerce. I don’t think it’s in tune with our business because on one hand we would compete with those who have much more budget for digital marketing…on the other, it kind of flattens the diversity of the offer, meaning that a jar of tomato sauce looks the same on [different websites],” the executive says.

“We believe more in a concierge format,” he continues, explaining how shoppers phone their trusted sales assistant or Peck’s customer service and get one-to-one shopping suggestions before complying their orders and have goods delivered. Marzotto aims to expand it by, for example, emailing the weekly menu or information on fresh products. The catering and special events businesses are also seen as areas of growth.

“If we think at competitors in single categories, like patisseries, there are some names we can steal market share from. But being a company with no competitors nor comparable, overall,” Marzotto says. “I don’t think there’s another brand like us in terms of artisanship and history, or combining competence in product with a different kind of vision in serving the client. We’re quite a unicorn in this sense.”
Cofounders Kevin Poon and Gerald Li are betting on a contemporary art-driven lifestyle experience that aims to jolt Hong Kong back into action.

Engaging All Senses at Forty-Five, Hong Kong’s Sky-high Lifestyle Destination

BY DENNI HU

Hong Kong has plenty of social clubs, yet Forty-Five, a new skyward lifestyle hub in Central, is retooling the posh and decadent concept with a fresh take on art-driven experiences and haute cuisine. Located at the top of Landmark, a luxury retail destination in Central—the city’s frenetic central business district—the three-story, 20,000-square-foot Forty-Five opened its doors last April with a series of restaurants, a skyward bar and a members-only Gloucester Arts Club.

Forty-Five arrived at a time when Hong Kong has slowly emerged from the doldrums of the pandemic, with the skyward bar and a members-only Gloucester Arts Club so far. When visitors go up vertically, the willingness to pay high prices also rises accordingly, which is why the dining crowd would usually ascend to The Cardinal after a full meal. The rooftop bar accordingly, which is why the dining crowd would usually ascend to The Cardinal after a full meal. The rooftop bar accordingly, which is why the dining crowd would usually ascend to The Cardinal after a full meal. The rooftop bar accordingly, which is why the dining crowd would usually ascend to The Cardinal after a full meal. The rooftop bar accordingly, which is why the dining crowd would usually ascend to The Cardinal after a full meal.

With an entry fee of $13,000, more than 100 members have signed up, 400 staff.

Byredo fragrances and, most impressively, a Matías Sánchez painting that features the self-taught artist’s sausage-nose characters goofing around.

Some might recognize the address as Hong Kong’s Victoria Cardinal Point. A view of Hong Kong’s Victoria Harbour from the sky-high palace, helping it stand out from the city’s sea of social clubs.

As Poon’s and Li’s first luxury project, Forty-Five’s warm walnut tones and sumptuous marble accents were designed by Sean Dix, alongside a steady rotation of blue chip artworks that decorate its interiors—all of which are from Poon’s private collection—add a personalized touch to the sky-high palace, helping it stand out from the city’s sea of social clubs.

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In November, Forty-Five unveiled its crown jewel in its culinary lineup, The Cristal Room by Anne-Sophie Pic. Helmed by Pic, currently the most decorated female chef in the world, the 40-seat fine dining restaurant celebrates French cuisine fit for the local palate.

The culinary experience begins with a boldly adorned Baccarat chandelier, which revels in the magical substance created by the four elements—fire, air, earth and water, all of which also fuel a fine dining kitchen.

The duo is also known for creating hip local eateries such as Elephant Grounds, Morty’s Delicatessen and WagumA, which have grown beyond Hong Kong to cities that include Chengdu, Guangzhou, Manila and Tokyo. The company has revenues of around 400 million Hong Kong dollars, or $53 million, and oversees more than 400 staff.

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Steamed Herring Fish with Sliced Avocado and Dill in Aged Shaoxing Wine at The Merchant

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“Meshing the culinary sense, the sensory experience, incorporating art and music. We are also digital natives, so we take a fashion approach to a lot of the ways we do food.”

As a pop psychologist would agree, when visitors go up vertically, the willingness to pay high prices also rises accordingly, which is why the dining crowd would usually ascend to The Cardinal after a full meal. The rooftop bar is outfitted with Oja sound system, mood enhancing lighting, Byredo fragrances and, most impressively, a Matías Sánchez painting that features the self-taught artist’s sausage nose characters goofing around.

“When we started the project, one of the first things that we did was to single out each restaurant’s own creativity in terms of the theme, the detail and the materials,” Li explains. “It’s about understanding the five senses,” Poon adds. “Meshing the culinary sense, the sensory experience, incorporating art and music. We are also digital natives, so we take a fashion approach to a lot of the ways we do food.”

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**Café Lapérouse Sets Sail for London**

The restaurant occupies a shiny pavilion in the courtyard of the Old War Office, which now hosts the Raffles Hotel.

*BY TIANWEI ZHANG*

From afar, Café Lapérouse’s latest location within the courtyard of the Raffles Hotel in London looks like a gemstone-shaped spaceship from a superhero franchise. Its futuristic shape forms a striking contrast to the Baroque-style Old War Office Building it nestles in.

But walking into the warmly lit pavilion, designed by the London-based studio DaeWha Kang Design, you are instantly transported to a classic Parisian café with a hint of Art Nouveau flair – the seashell chairs, petal-like columns and the mosaic glass canopy.

The interior was envisioned by Cordélia de Castellane, Dice Maison’s artistic director. She took inspiration from the travels of the 18th-century French naval officer and explorer Jean-François de Lapérouse, who shared the same name as the restaurant.

Café Lapérouse takes up two additional rooms in the main building, the Lobby Orient and Salon Orient, which are only open in the evening. The pavilion, meanwhile, is open all day. The Lobby Orient features grandiose displays of the restaurant’s pastries, while the Salon Orient offers a fine dining menu with bold wallpaper in hues of scarlet and lavender chandeliers.

The restaurant offers an array of French classics throughout the day that include Croque Monsieur; Burgundy snails in the shell with parsley butter; sole with meunière butter and capers; the Rum Baba Royal whipped cream, and the “Belle Otero” sundae with vanilla, strawberry, pistachio, hazelnut ice cream.

Introduced in 2021 at the Hôtel de la Marine in Paris, which was occupied by the Ministry of the French Navy till 2015 on Place de la Concorde, Café Lapérouse can be seen as a modern interpretation of the legendary restaurant Lapérouse on the Left Bank. Founded in 1766, it was the first restaurant to be awarded three Michelin stars from 1933 to 1968.

In 2018, Benjamin Patou, founder and chief executive officer of Moma Group, purchased Lapérouse alongside investors like Antoine Arnault, head of communications and image at luxury conglomerate LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton and chairman of Loro Piana.

Café Lapérouse London is part of a major regeneration of the 107-year-old Old War Office, which used to host Britain’s Secret Intelligence Service that developed into MI5 and MI6. It had more than 1,000 rooms linked by two-and-a-half miles of corridors and inspired Ian Fleming’s MI5 and MI6. It had more than 1,000 rooms linked by two-and-a-half miles of corridors and inspired Ian Fleming’s James Bond series. When Winston Churchill served as the secretary of state for war from 1919 to 1921, he occupied a grand suite of offices there.

In 2016, after it was sold by the Ministry of Defense to the Hinduja Group and Onex Holding for more than 380 million pounds on a 250-year lease, the building underwent an elaborate six-year renovation to restore its former glory and host the Raffles Hotel, residences, and a slew of dining concepts.

Patou anticipated that Café Lapérouse would attract a similar crowd in no time in London.

“I think fashion leaders would want to experience this type of grand building. We opened at the end of September, unfortunately, two weeks after London Fashion Week. But I can assure you we have had a lot of requests to organize fashion events,” he says.

In terms of the quality of the food, Patou believes that the London location might be better supplied than the Paris one.

“I shouldn’t have said that, but it’s true. The produce [from the British Isles] is fantastic, especially the seafood and lamb. But walking into the warmly lit pavilion, designed by DaeWha Kang Design, you are instantly transported to a classic Parisian café with a hint of Art Nouveau flair – the seashell chairs, petal-like columns and the mosaic glass canopy.

Dish served at Café Lapérouse London.

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“I shouldn’t have said that, but it’s true. The produce [from the British Isles] is fantastic, especially the seafood from Scotland. We have business in St. Barths in the Caribbean. These little islands are in the middle of nowhere. All the produce is imported, but our restaurants in St. Barths are fantastic in offering fine dining experiences. Nowadays with globalization, you can source all the best products wherever and whenever you want,” Patou touts.

Following the opening of the London location, Café Lapérouse will enter the Gulf region with a branch in the new shopping mall Jeddah Walk in December, and open its first U.S. location next summer at the upscale shopping destination Bal Harbour Shops in Miami.

Since 1997, Moma Group has grown to become a global hospitality player with more than 30 restaurants and event venues in Paris, Lyon, Saint-Tropez, Marseille, Athens, Doha, St. Barths and now London.
**Food for Thought**

Fortnum & Mason has opened a new food and drink studio that blends education and craft, with a drizzle of fantasy.

**BY SAMANTHA CONTI**

**LONDON** – Months ahead of Hollywood, Fortnum & Mason has created a Willy Wonka world that offers sugary confections – and savory creations. Just as in the upcoming “Wonka” film, a prequel to “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” there are tall, shiny contraptions that pump out colored concoctions, a vast, high-tech kitchen for experimentation, and an unblinking focus on craft.

Unlike Wonka’s chocolate factory, there’s also a lot of homemade gin – and rum – as well as Champagne, and a smorgasbord of knowledge, rather than secrets.

The new Food & Drink Studio on the store’s third floor is about indulging – and educating – food fans at a time when people are savvier – and hungrier than ever for knowledge about everything from fragrance to wine-making.

Also, it’s a high-end cooking store. Instead, it’s a gourmand’s playground. “It’s very forward thinking,” says Hatty Cary, the studio’s producer, who worked for companies including Jamie Oliver Group and London’s Borough Market before joining Fortnum & Mason last year.

“We look a lot at sustainability, new innovations and craft, and the space allows us to champion people who are doing wonderful things in the industry. We can sell their products, tell their stories and showcase producers,” she says.

Craftsmanship plays a big role. To wit, the floor’s centerpiece is the distillery, a lineup of pots, pipes and drums as shiny and exotic looking as the Tin Man from “The Wizard of Oz.”

The copper vacuum still is called Amalthea, and the store is working in partnership with The Craft Distilling Business, which has been creating micro distilleries since 2017. Customers can buy small batches of “Made in Piccadilly” London Dry or Pink Gin, and personalize the labels. Fortnum’s even offers a refill service.

The London Dry contains dashes of the store’s earl grey tea and a touch of marmalade, in addition to juniper, coriander, rose and licorice. The Pink Gin also contains the store’s Monarch marmalade, in addition to juniper, and educating – food fans around the world.

The store’s copper still, there’s a library filled with the latest cookbooks and places to sit and read. There are museum-like displays featuring pasta-making, baking and fruit preserving paraphernalia, and showcases filled with hand-forged cooking utensils made by Alex Pole fromwork in Dorset, England.

A step-by-step display shows how Alex Pole makes his pots and kitchen tools.

“Many of these skills are dying out. And I think we have to look back in order to look forward, which is why we want to champion someone like Alex Pole who’s doing incredible work with metal,” says Cary, adding the store’s approach to the third floor space is simple.

“If you’re going to spend money, why not spend it on things that are really special?” she says.

There is an accent on live events pegged to food trends, cookbook releases or holidays. Cary says there have so far been hundreds of cooking, charity-related, private and public events, such as supper clubs, since the space launched in March.

Earlier this year, the store hosted a talk with the Korean American chef Judy Joo, which tied in with the “Hallyu! The Korean Wave” exhibition that took place at the Victoria & Albert Museum earlier this year. For the festival of Diwali, there was an evening with Manuwa Gowardhan, the Indian chef and author.

Fortnum’s has also explored the rise of West African cuisine in the U.K.; brought Giles Dauley, a war photographer-turned-cooking expert known as The Armed Chef, to prepare meals ahead of International Men’s Day, and invited the Australian Indonesian food writer Lara Lee to highlight the beauty of pulses and grains.

In the runup to the holidays, the store will be hosting masterclasses in Christmas cake and mince pie-making, and gluten-free baking.

“One of the core words for us, before we even opened, was authenticity. We wanted to make sure we were always doing things with the right intentions,” Cary says. “Our goal is to learn and to evolve, and then pass that passion on, and educate others.”

For guests, it’s pure entertainment, and unlike Roald Dahl’s novel “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory” – or the sinister 1971 film starring Gene Wilder – there are no trap doors, perilous rivers or secrets. Except, perhaps, how to score a ticket to one of the studio’s regularly sold-out events.
These Glasses Will Make Your Wine Taste Better

Sixth-generation glassmaker Kurt Josef Zalto has created five glasses and three carafes for Josephinenhütte that gets wine experts hot under the collar.

BY LILY TEMPLETON

The only thing that’s standing between you and a great wine isn’t the price of the bottle — it’s the glassware.

“It’s important to recognize that the shape of the glass significantly impacts the aroma and flavor of the wine,” says Kurt Josef Zalto, creative director of glassmaker Josephinenhütte but most of all, a sixth-generation practitioner of his family craft.

And it’s not just artisans in the field who say the vessel affects the beverage — it’s science.

In 2015, scientists at the Tokyo Medical and Dental University captured the effect of different shapes and temperatures on wines, concluding that these parameters could change the resulting perception significantly.

In a nutshell, the larger the bowl, the more aroma will be released, while rim taper will guide the scent to the nose. The right combination will bring out the most flavor and aroma, which accounts for some 80 percent of the experience, according to experts.

In short, the wrong shape could turn that treasured vintage into pedestrian plonk.

What makes a good glass? Various elements play a part: “A thin rim for smooth delivery to the palate, a well-balanced form that accentuates the true character of the beverage, while remaining aesthetically pleasing to the eye,” Zalto explains. The purity and clarity of glass or crystal will also influence the taste.

Oh, and be conservative when serving. “The less wine that is poured, the better the glass is able to demonstrate its qualities,” says the Austrian born and -based designer, who recommends stopping at the kink, or the place where the glass starts to narrow upward.

Each grape variety might be different but that’s not to say you need as many glasses as you have references in your cellar.

Enter the Josephine collection, designed by Zalto and entirely hand-blown, where the designer has put in the legwork — or rather, the glasswork — to create designs that are as versatile as they are efficient.

The glass artist’s family traces its roots back to the Veneto region in Northern Italy, where a thriving and quality industrial glass production, one that is hopefully completely climate-neutral in the near future.

As a young artisan, Zalto was captivated by the intricate process that turned sand, soda ash and limestone into a molten ball shaped in wooden molds by unwavering hands and precise gestures in his father’s atelier.

The sheer craftsmanship always held a special allure for me,” he tells WWD Weekend. By 11, he’d already sketched his first designs and in his 20s, his first designs under the family name were coming out.

Although his path with the business bearing his family name stopped in 2009, Zalto never stopped searching for the ideal shape.

In 2019, what he considers his best work so far, Josephinenhütte by Kurt Josef Zalto.

Nodding to an eponymous glass manufacture founded in 1852, the glass manufacturer was cofounded by Zalto, Matthias Düwel and Marcus Meyer, two entrepreneurs and longtime friends of the designer.

Beyond the oenological, the company aims to transform its base in Brand-Nagelberg, Austria, into a center for high-quality industrial glass production, one that is hopefully completely climate-neutral in the near future.

Four shapes for wines and Champagne, including the No. 2 “universal” all-rounder, a water glass for water, two sizes of decanters and a polishing kit comprise the Josephine collection.

Two more designs were introduced in November, including the No. 6 tall water glass and the Josephine carafe. Incorporating the golden ratio, it is meant to enhance water as well as wine but also fit in a standard refrigerator door.

Glasses in the range are all priced at $90 per piece, and prices go up to $290 for the decanter that can hold a magnum’s worth of wine. A fine dining set for six will set you back $2,100.

Five years in the making, Zalto’s Josephine collection was “a blend of intuition and testing,” involving extensive research into the way liquids behave in different shapes.

Although mathematics is as useful as wine knowledge in the development process, he says it’s “unshakable passion for the art of glassmaking, a strong dedication to creating glassware that heightens the pleasure of enjoying wine” that led him to these award-winning designs.

Nature is central to his work. “The organic shapes and structures found in the natural world have consistently showcased both form and function,” he says, naming this dichotomy as a major creative motivation.

The result is a glass that feels smooth in the hand, so thin the wine is nearly sitting in your hand, with a kink that makes the wine develop faster and more intensely to deliver all its aromas.

It’s not just Zalto who considers his Josephine collection the pinnacle of his work. Wine experts and enthusiasts consider them the ne plus ultra of wine glasses.

“Even water tastes better in them” for Cesar Ramirez, owner of three-Michelin-star Chef’s Table at Brooklyn Fare, one of a number of top tables that have started using Josephine glasses to present their beverages.

Another is Momofuku Ko in New York City, where New York’s Best Sommelier 2022 Nikita Malhotra officiates.

“Josephine No. 2 has even received design accolades that include a Red Dot award in 2022, and recognition from the expert panel at Vinum, a reputed wine guide and media who gave it 18 out of 20 and called it the best universal wine glass.

“When it’s enjoying fine wine with friends, experiencing different cultures through wine and cuisine or simply savoring a moment of tranquility with a glass of wine, these experiences reaffirm the importance of crafting exceptional glassware,” Zalto says.

For more on these wine glasses, go to Zalto Glassmakers at zzalto.com.

By Lily Templeton

Additional reporting by Nikita Malhotra

Design by Colin Nickle

DECEMBER 2023 / WWD WEEKEND
WHAT'S YOUR PRICING AND GO-TO-MARKET STRATEGY FOR 2024?
How will you land on the right price for the right product at the right time for all your SKUs—consistently? When you're a brand that stands by transparency and sharing the true cost of every product with customers, a strategy is mission critical. Join a timely discussion with Kelly Wang, Director of Merchandising at Everlane and Jade Huang, VP of Centric Market Intelligence at Centric Software. This engaging pair will discuss the methods used to transform the way Everlane works to be efficient and profitable while remaining true to their mission: a brand that's transparent, ethical and designed to last.
How Christofle Changed Its Image — by Looking Back

The French heritage silversmith’s president and CEO Émilie Viargues Metge talks identity refresh, seeing vintage as inventory and licking sauce off your cutlery. by LILY TEMPLETON

At Christofle, the silver lining is finally coming through. After lackluster decades and disaffection, the French heritage silversmith has emerged from the pandemic with a fresh identity, a cheeky take on table manners and even a whole new collection signed by designer Aurélie Bidermann.

What changed? Almost nothing, if its president and chief executive officer Émilie Viargues Metge is to be believed. “All we had to do was go back to the origins, to the history of the brand,” she says.

And going back to square one is what changed everything. When she took up the helm three years ago, the silversmith had “gone through three decades of disaffection for the arts of the table and silverware, which was perceived as old-fashioned — outdated, even,” she recalls.

Despite regular injections from Dubai-based Chalhoub group, its parent company of 15 years and an investor for decades prior, the French company was hanging by a thread, with one French factory left to its name. Even its branding had been “blanded” close to oblivion.

Plus the COVID-19 pandemic had hit and wasn’t quite gone yet, although that eventually turned out to be a blessing of sorts as consumers took a greater interest in their homes.

Self-acowed “branding buff” Viargues Metge knew she needed an edge far sharper than anything in the Christofle inventory to cut it.

Help came in the shape of Ramdane Touhami, of L’Officine Universelle Buly fame, an “extraordinary, brilliant type” who she considers no less than “the genius of our time,” she says.

Touhami of “art on the table,” which became a motto, “realized the extraordinary character given he was only 25,” she recalls.

Another brilliant move was the 1842 acquisition of patents for silver and gold metal electroplating, a more durable, safer and stable technique that allowed for production at scale, making Christofle the go-to brand for the rising bourgeois middle class of the Industrial Revolution who wanted to eat with silver-looking cutlery.

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And the crest surrounded by “Christofle, Orfèvre à Paris depuis 1830” combines the brand’s identity and history:

- scales used in the trade; two bees, marking it as a supplier of the French imperial court; three stars noting participation or wins at Universal Exhibitions, and “OC,” for Orfèvrerie Christofle (or “Christofle Silversmiths,” in English), the hallmark of the brand that signs each silver piece.

This took the house down a track that one could consider antithetic to the artisanal: NFTs. Another brilliant move was the 1842 acquisition of patents for silver and gold metal electroplating, a more durable, safer and stable technique that allowed for production at scale, making Christofle the go-to brand for the rising bourgeois middle class of the Industrial Revolution who wanted to eat with silver-looking cutlery.

In 1830, the jeweler, who was “probably quite the extraordinary character given he was only 25,” according to the executive, founded his workshop in the metalworking Arts et Métiers neighborhood of central Paris, making it one of the rare luxury houses still existing today that was actually born within Paris.

When Baron Hausmann redrew Paris’ cityscape, production moved outside of the French capital but Charles Christofle decided the smart move would be to set up shop on Rue Royale.

That brought him closer to his biggest client of the time, France’s Emperor Napoléon III and his wife Eugénie Bonaparte, “who was the foremost influencer of the time as all the European courts would envy and copy her style — and she knew how to spend,” says Viargues Metge. As Touhami put it, “good old Charles was darned smart,” she recalls.

Take the house’s latest visual identity. Unveiled in late 2022, it feels more tweaking than reinvention.

That sage-going-on-olive green packaging with a creamy border? It’s “Napoleonic green,” she says, a color that noddled to its most famous patron but is also the one that best brings out the gold and silver of its craft. The typeface with its curling Art Nouveau flavor riffs off the original signature of the house.

The strength of the house is not just its history but “retro-futurism,” she sums up. Case in point: The revamped Paris flagship on Rue Royale where new collections and reissues are set side by side in apothecary-style drawers.

Also built into the new era was the notion floated by Touhami of “art on the table,” which became a motto, rather than the traditional “arts of the table” tenets of entertaining.

This took the house down a track that one could consider antithetic to the artisanal: NFTs.

For a luxury house, “it’s a gamble that puts you in danger,” says Viargues Metge. But for a house whose archives include pieces by artists like Man Ray, Jean Cocteau, Alphonse Mucha and Pablo Picasso, it felt fitting.

After all, NFTs “are contemporary art. You may like it or leave it, but it exists,” and it’s too soon to say who is tomorrow’s Jean-Michel Basquiat or a flash in the pan.
With a genial shrug. "Let's face it, the best part of a fish who cares if it's bad manners to lick [cutlery]," she says. "As long as the object is beautiful and you're getting a kick out of it, child of a spoon and a knife," she describes. "As long as making it accessible, and that wasn't a matter of price."

"All in, things are looking up and the house is already looking at regaining retail ground, with the overhaul of its boutique at Place Vendôme to carry the refreshed identity after the Rue Royale flagship.

Children are underway to revamp its Beverly Hills, Dubai Mall, Hong Kong and Rue Saint-Honoré boutiques. Three new stores are slated to open in Asia in 2024, bringing the brand's number of doors to 92.

Even Charles Christofle's oil portrait seemed to be pulling its weight. "Once we brought him back down [to the store], sales picked up again," leasing a "never seen before" 52 percent in the space of two-and-a-half years," says Viargues Metge, although she declined to share sales figures. In 2017, the label had generated around 75 million euros in annual sales.

While the Europe, Middle East and Africa region remains in the lead, the U.S market comes a close second. "We were part of the first great movements toward the U.S. – on the Normandy, even on the Titanic," owing to the lightness of its silver-plated items, she reveals. According to the executive, most of the growth has come from new clients, while its historic client base has maintained itself. This has brought down the average age of the Christofle client from 50 plus years to a client between 35 and 38, who have been attracted to its jewelry lines, the new vintage offering but also gifting.

"Our accessibility is through gifts given or received, which proves the value of the brand. It adds something beyond the value of the item because you invest more in a gift, especially those around occasions," Viargues Metge says, reminding that younger consumers often rate "meaning" highly in their purchasing decisions. That's a point that also resonates with Bidermann, who says that "when you want to pass an item on, it means it's a quality object [imbued] with meaning" in tableware as in jewelry.

Being back on a growth track has also freed up headspace to think about what comes next.

First, there's production. Currently, Viargues Metge says that "when you want to pass an item on, it means it's a quality object [imbued] with meaning" in tableware as in jewelry.

Not to mention the alchemical, near-magical process of silversmithing itself to be interpreted digitally, "a bit like one of the Brothers Grimm's tales or Harry Potter," she says, describing how the egg-shaped Mood collection served as the launchpad for a dive into house crafts. That deep dive into the house archives also saw the return of the Galia and Fredingerud sets as well as the introduction of a new streamlined 15-piece cutlery set titled "Indien." In September came the Babylone collection, designed by Bidermann, who left her jewelry brand in late 2019 and now designs as an independent artist.

Given the sole brief of drawing up "a collection that would start with jewelry and continue on the table" with table decor and porcelain plates, the designer went for sensual roundness to evoke the generosity of food, soft volumes that evoke "a motif that unfurls like a ribbon," but also the idea that the cuff bracelet, her starting point, would never be able to follow — or so she was told in an interview of a new streamlined 15-piece cutlery set titled "Indien." In September came the Babylone collection, designed by Bidermann, who left her jewelry brand in late 2019 and now designs as an independent artist.

"I'm a cooking person," she says. "Just imagine the love child of a spoon and a knife," she describes. "As long as the object is beautiful and you're getting a kick out of it, who cares if it's bad manners to lick [cutlery]," she says with a genial shrug. "Let's face it, the best part of a fish dish is the sauce."

Also on the cards is a cleaning product that could make putting Christofle silverware through the dishwasher easy. But if putting Christofle on today's table is a priority, "OK, if we can't make enough product, then we're not pulling our weight. "Once we brought him back down [to the store], sales picked up again," leasing a "never seen before" 52 percent in the space of two-and-a-half years, says Viargues Metge, although she declined to share sales figures. In 2017, the label had generated around 75 million euros in annual sales.

For Viargues Metge, revitalizing the brand also means making it accessible, and that wasn't a matter of price. It is high time for silverware to jump off its Sunday best and come out every day.

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"At the end of the day, what matters is what we are transmitting to future generations," continues Viargues Metge, "the 17th president of Christofle and second woman" in the position. "I came for a job; I came away with a mission."
Now Boarding on France’s Highest-flying Embassy

For 90 years, Air France “accompanied the evolution of France in terms of fashion, arts of the table and gastronomy,” says global brand and marketing communication vice president Sylvie Tarbouriech.

Think an Air France flight is just a way to get to your next destination? When setting foot on one of the airline’s planes, you’re in fact entering an embassy of all things Gallic, meant to showcase “the best of France,” Benjamin Smith, chief executive officer of parent group Air France-KLM, said in 2019.

And this is as much strategy as a style throughline for the 90-year-old company, born in 1933 from the fusion of five airlines, including the famous Aéropostale.

On board is also what Sylvie Tarbouriech, the airline’s global brand and marketing communication vice president, defines as a condensate of France’s history. “We have also accompanied the evolution of France in terms of fashion, arts of the table and gastronomy, for which it is practically the most reputed country in the world,” says the executive.

During Paris Fashion Week, the airline took over the windows of the Galeries Lafayette on Boulevard Haussmann, showcasing items drawn from its archives alongside five fantastical silhouettes epitomizing the various facets of the company imagined by costume designer Xavier Ronze, who also heads the Paris Opera Ballet’s costume workshops.

And it’s in fashion that Air France is “taking elegance to new heights,” the slogan in its latest brand film, which features a model in a flowing red gown by Paris-based couturier Rabih Kayrouz.

Its crew is no less than “a part of national patrimony,” designer Olivier Rousteing recently told the airline’s inflight magazine Envols, after showing Balmain’s fall 2021 collection in the airline’s maintenance hangars. “No other company has worked with the greatest fashion designers [of their time],” claims Tarbouriech.

Although cabin crew were male in the first decade — pilots wore military-style garb and cabin crew wore barmen suits — once women came on board at the end of World War II, competition as far as outfitting the crew would indeed be hard-pressed to compare with a roster that includes Dior under Marc Bohan’s tenure, Cristóbal Balenciaga, Patou, Nina Ricci and Christian Lacroix. as well as a slew of other designers and postwar couture houses.

Even four decades ago, Air France’s aura was such that the uniforms designed by Balenciaga in 1968 were the “only time he ever did ready-to-wear,” says Tarbouriech. “He had decided to close his couture house in 1968 and that was the year he created the uniforms for Air France that were worn until the mid-’70s.”

Not that they were exactly off-the-rack, either. “Ahead of the 90th-anniversary celebrations, we wanted to recreate some [for events at Galeries Lafayette] but after looking at them for their patterns, our current manufacturer ended up telling us that jackets had been adapted to the morphology of whoever had owned that jacket, so it was almost demi-couture,” Tarbouriech points out.

Throughout the years, signature details emerge, such as the bow that jumps from the belt of a Dior outfit to a hat and returns as the lavaliere of a Patou silk dress onboard the Concorde, or a topositching that starts on a jaunty hat from the 1960s and returns on the lapel of the current Lacroix-designed overcoats, part of the uniforms he designed in 2005 and still used today. ►

24H Air France

Photographer Karl Hab may be best known for his 24-hour ramblings through destinations like Paris, Hong Kong or Los Angeles, but the Frenchman is also a certified aeronautical engineer.

Describing Air France as “a unique symbol of French style and hospitality in the skies,” he captured a voyage through the nine decades of style in a volume published in December. “I wanted to highlight the interesting contrast between today’s modernity, with the new planes and the technology, combined with the richness of the uniforms from the past and today,” Hab tells WWD. “The myth has the power to captivate the imagination for years on end.”

176 pages, 50 euros; Available exclusively through Air France Shopping and Karl Hab’s website.
The palette has likewise revolved around the blue, white and red of the French flag, going from youthful air hostesses to more mature models. The palette has similarly revolved around the blue, white and red of the French flag, going from demure pastels in the early days — in business and first class, albeit economy class.

It’s about great sauces, which really round out any dish — and can cause flavors to be perceived differently and feel less vivid, so it is also fuel for the long haul since one “can’t ‘be’ without knowing what was done before.” ■
François-Joseph Graf can conjure a universe from the ground up, which he’s just done on a tree-lined street a few steps from Sloane Square.

His interiors for the new hotel, At Sloane, are a ticket back to the age of Arts and Crafts, when designers cast off the clunky shackles of Victorian design and embraced the sensual colors and patterns of nature with a lightness of touch.

So precise was Graf’s vision for At Sloane that he chose every replica of Greek and Chinese vase — there are hundreds of them on display here — and called in Ateliers Loize, the storied stained glassmaker in Chartes, France, to create the window panes of the six-floor hotel, a co-production of Cadogan Estates, hotelier Jean-Louis Costes and Graf.

So evocative are these interiors, it’s easy to imagine Virginia Woolf reading in the large bay window seat that faces Sloane Gardens, or William Morris having a cup of tea at the newspaper-strewn dining room table that doubles as the hotel’s front desk.

At Sloane was an unusual project for Graf, an architect, interior designer, collector and expert on late 19th and early 20th century decorative arts, who is more accustomed to working for private clients.

Graf redid Valentino Garavani’s Holland Park home in London; created multiple interiors for the Kravis family, and 50 custom made fabrics, from 21 carpet designs, 19 curtain designs of colors and textures to achieve the same air as the outside. Otherwise, the interiors just become ‘decor.’ When you step inside you have to have to feel that the house is alive. The idea here was to give the impression that everything already existed. Instead, it was all new.

“We built everything — the floors, the ceilings, the stained glass. I put stained glass everywhere — in the bar downstairs, the lobby, the restaurant and the rooms because it’s so cozy, so English. It means you don’t have to use those chiffon curtains, which are terrible,” Graf says. He focused specifically on Arts and Crafts because the period “was so imaginative, so inventive. The earlier Victorian period was all heavy mahogany” by contrast, Graf says.

To illustrate that point, he pulls up a picture of a sleek black commode made in 1866 by E.W. Godwin, the English architect-designer whose creations were angular, linear — and radical for their time.

Graf, who’s dressed in a blue striped shirt, silk tie, navy shacket and half-frame glasses, chose everything for the hotel: the colored glass; books, lamps, and revo Greek or Chinese vases clustered on top of the lobby’s library, or stacked into the bookcases of the chic, black, white and russet dining room.

Like a painter, Graf used a palette of colors and textures to achieve the right mood in each room. There are 21 carpet designs, 19 curtain designs and 50 custom made fabrics, from companies including Love Piana.

Although the bedrooms are seemingly less colorful than the lobby and bar, they are filled with a rainbow of muted shades. What looks like a cozy white suite is actually filled with 26 colors, multiple shades of beige “and a little pale red. Red is very cheerful,” says Graf, adding the carpets in some of those rooms are made from six different shades of beige and off-white.

He’s obsessed with lighting and installed more than 700 lamps, spots, chandeliers and sconces across the hotel. Some of them are original W.A.S. Benson Arts and Crafts lamps, while others are reproductions. There is also a sprinkling of tiny, recessed spotlights of Graf’s own design that cast a warm, gentle aura over the rooms.

“Light is the most important thing” in interior design, he says. “It’s better not to spend one penny on the walls and to have the proper light. It’s better to buy sconces and a great chandelier than to decorate all around. If you decorate nicely with average light, everything will collapse.”

Those spotlights are for the public areas only. Graf points out there are none in the bedrooms, bathrooms or toilets. He says it drives him nuts when he’s taking a bath at a hotel, looks up at the ceiling and sees spotlights.

“Would you want spotlights in your eyes?” asks Graf, who has stayed in luxury hotels worldwide and has a lot to say about how they — and their in-house restaurants — are designed and managed.

The restaurant he designed on the sixth floor is pepped up by the Peacock Room, created in 1876 by James McNiel Whistler and Thomas Jeckyll. (The original was eventually relocated to the Smithsonian’s Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.)

The restaurant’s cupola has an octagonal space fit for one table, and even more gorgeous views across Chelsea.

Graf worked closely with Costes on all aspects of the interior and says the Parisian hotelier is as detail-oriented and stubborn as he is.

Costes, he says with a smile, is “a genius, a very nice guy and it’s easy to create things with him, although it’s not too easy to work with him. He trusts you and he gives you ideas. He also knows what the table heights should be and he did the layout for the restaurant. He has a great attention to detail,” Graf says.

Hugh Seaborn, chief executive officer at Cadogan, says it’s “a joy to see so much of Chelsea’s architecture and heritage reflected and celebrated” throughout the hotel.

“We have been working closely as a team for six years to realize [Costes’ and Graf’s] exquisite vision for their first London property, and it is inspiring to see the artisanship involved at every stage.”

Although At Sloane is only his second hotel, Graf knew exactly how he wanted guests to feel as soon as they stepped through the door.

“You create a dream for three or four nights, you surround people with the design, and you give them pleasure. I would love to do more hotels,” says Graf, whose ambition is to redo a “grand hotel in London” with intimate, sensual interiors similar to those at At Sloane.

Graf says he likes the idea of transforming the historic, luxury architecture of grand hotels and designing something that appeals to a new-generation clientele. His ambition is always to create an atmosphere that speaks to good taste, rather than loads of money, a space that “gives people the idea they’ve been invited.”

Graf’s own home in Paris is filled with historical furniture, objects and, of course, good lighting. He fantasizes, he says, about living in a white box of a room with a rotating series of objects that he can focus on, and enjoy, for a short period of time.

“I’m dreaming of a room with nothing, just a bed and one piece that I could change according to my mood — a painting, a sculpture or a book. You ideas. He also knows what the table heights should be and he did the layout for the restaurant. He has a great attention to detail,” Graf says.

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How Calico Wallpaper Has Transformed Home Decor Into High Art

As they mark 10 years, Nick and Rachel Cope are continuously pushing creative boundaries with new collaborations and techniques. BY MARISA GUTHRIE

Wallpaper does not fare well in literature. Oscar Wilde, dying of meningitis in a dingy hotel room in Paris’ Latin Quarter, cursed the revolving paper on the walls. “My wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death...” he is said to have written. In Elizabeth Perkins Gilman’s 1892 short story “The Yellow Wallpaper,” the female narrator, suffering from what her physician husband describes as “a temporary nervous depression,” is confined to a room in their home with peeling yellow wallpaper. In her hallucinatory descent into madness, she imagines that she’s become trapped behind the wallpaper.

Both of them could have benefited from therapy — and much nicer wallpaper.

Rachel and Nick Cope — she an artist and art therapist, he a builder and former contractor who has hung his share of wallpaper — are intimately acquainted with the restorative potential, on rooms and moods, of well-designed wallpaper. Their New York-based wallpaper company Calico Wallpaper — which they birthed 10 years ago in the eerie five-foot-wide marshes of Amsterdam’s Fairway Market, had filled with five feet of water, they were dry. Serendipitously, a few weeks before the storm made landfall, Nick brought home several sheets of marbleized paper that he found at a curiosity shop on the Lower East Side. He showed them to Rachel with the idea of creating a large custom wall mural.

“I started experimenting with a Turkish marbleing technique,” says Rachel, who first learned paper marbling from her mother, a textile artist. “I became very quickly obsessed with it. I love the process. I loved seeing the paint moving on the surface of the bath. I made hundreds of different tests using paints that I had in the house. And then Nick started to scan them and Photoshop them.”

“We were still young. We didn’t have kids. We were kind of isolated in Red Hook, she continues. “And instead of just hanging out, we felt like this is it. This is the moment, let’s move on the surface of the bath. I made hundreds of different tests using paints that I had in the house. And then Nick started to scan them and Photoshop them.”

“We were still young. We didn’t have kids. We were kind of isolated in Red Hook, she continues. “And instead of just hanging out, we felt like this is it. This is the moment, let’s move on the surface of the bath. I made hundreds of different tests using paints that I had in the house. And then Nick started to scan them and Photoshop them.”

“But we wanted it to look as realistic as possible, like the real thing,” Rachel says. “It was something new to us. We had never done digital printing before. So Hoyt created a series of ceramic discs — which he took to calling “pizzas” — in varying sizes and colors. Some are as big as a large pizza, others smaller as a dime. What we decided that these flat discs would be the best way to transfer my source material to their digitization process.”

“Hoyt explained that they first shot the discs and covered them all with sorts of varieties of colors and shapes, flowers and leaves and ephemera and then ‘photographed’ them, edge to edge. When they were all in the computer, we went back and composited, collaged, stuck them together. That part was the most fun for me. I usually do that with clay on my table, but they were able to do it on the computer. Admittedly, it was probably really daunting.”

“Adding Rachel: “It was quite a challenge to create a mural digitally in the size that we needed and with these incredibly intricate, some very small, ceramic pieces. But we wanted to transfer to something that resembled the surface of one of his sculptural vessels. That was really important to me.”

The entire collaboration — from the earliest discussions to the finished product — took about two years, Hoyt says.

“I love how this collection feels very true to our beginnings,” Rachel says. “It’s about serendipity, because of how the original process is so hands on, and also a kind of ancient craft technique.”

Calico has more than 600 collections, so far, most coming in six to eight colorways. Tapestry, its newest collection, was inspired by the mosaics of Gaudi. They are printed at three mills — in California, North Carolina and Connecticut — and all made-to-order, so there is no waste.

On Dec. 12, it will introduce a new streamlined ordering system that allows customers to order panels for their spaces directly, without needing to submit specs or approve layouts. The Murals by Panel have an average quick-ship turnaround of four weeks, compared to eight to ten weeks for Calico’s custom layout process.

Last summer, the company opened a 4,000-square-foot flagship showroom, along with furniture and lighting designs from Stellar Works, in the former Pearl Pots building in TriBeCa in Manhattan. Next year, Calico will open a showroom in Los Angeles. In 2017, they started developing company WideWall, which specializes in digitally printed fabric, pillows and tea towels, as well as a complementary selection of wallpaper. And someday soon the Copes hope to expand their design team.

“I think it would be a very seamless process,” Rachel says. “We’ve been doing sketches and working on rug designs. They are the large scale prints, but they’re just endless, the dimensionality, different shapes and heights of tufting. There’s so much sophistication now, you can achieve so much detail. I would love to do rugs, it’s just a matter of timing and finding the right partners.”

Perhaps Calico’s rugs will become the new therapy couches?
When artist and designer Josh Young moved from Chicago to the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Washington, D.C., with his husband during the pandemic, their new home, an 1888 town house, oozed original charm from nearly every corner — except the fireplace mantels.

“At some point, whether it be in the late ’90s or early 2000s, they were swapped out for faux Victorian mantels,” says Young, who runs Josh Young Design House and works as a full-time fine artist as well as a product designer and on the occasional public-facing interior design project.

One day Young went to check out a mirror from fellow Capitol Hill resident Molly Acorn. He didn’t buy the mirror — but when he got to her home, he complimented her antique mantel. Acorn, who had recently sourced, transported and installed the mantel, offered to help Young find options for his home.

For months the two worked together to source three mantels — one for his lower-level art studio and two for his parlor level. “It’s very open,” he says. “The living room kind of bleeds into the dining room, and it all can be seen from the entry vestibule. I knew when we went to go put two mantels in there they had to look like they belonged historically, but that [they also matched] in a way, which is really hard to do.

“Finally, we found a pair — one was from New Jersey, and the other was from like, Wisconsin. They’re a pretty close match,” Young says, down to the coloring of the marble, the veining, the thickness of the shelf, and the height. “We put those in and they really transformed the entire space,” says Young, who often displays his Neoclassical style on Instagram account @jyoungdesignhouse.

Soon, the mantels will make their way into his first Rizzoli book, due out in 2024. Shooting recently wrapped and the photographer and designer “thought they were original mantels to the space, which was kind of the goal,” Young says.

It makes sense: Young’s mantels are from the 1880s, the same period the home was built. And now, neighbors are caching on to. 150 months ago, when Young went to look at his neighbor’s townhouse — which is also mid-restoration — they mentioned Acorn, saying “there’s this amazing girl in the neighborhood who sells mantels, Young says.

“She’s definitely getting around.”

Acorn’s services are niche and her customers receive fully bespoke mantel-project management.

She provides everything from sourcing to fabrication of missing pieces to design help (she is also a graphic designer), transport, contractor recommendations and more. After growing out of several storage units, she set up shop inside a local marble business called Marmara Corp., which gives her the option to custom create keystones or missing pieces, often from antique marble she’s collected over the years.

What is now a full-fledged company — Mantel House LLC — started from her own need. Acorn says she, like Young, had moved into a Capitol Hill home with fireplaces that needed some work. She’d seen beautiful marble mantels in Anthropologie and CRQ catalog, or in videos of Jenna Lyons’ apartment, but “didn’t think it was attainable” for her own home, she says.

“Then, when I realized that it did match the style of home we had, which is a Queen Anne Victorian, I went into this rabbit hole of trying to find where I would find one,” Acorn, a fragrance industry veteran, says.

She started with architectural salvage yards and Facebook Marketplace, but transporting the multiple, heavy pieces proved to be a challenge. The mantels weigh 200 to 600 pounds, and often, parts were missing.

Eventually, she found a winner from an antiques dealer via Facebook Marketplace. It came out of a New York brownstone and Acorn had it transported and installed in her living room parlor. In total, she’s installed three fireplaces for her family — two in the Queen Anne Victorian, and one in her Beaux Arts Kalorama condo.

She started helping local clients and gradually her business picked up, especially once Young’s project was posted online. “It was like everything he touched turned to gold or sold,” she says.

Now she’s had more than 150 clients, many of whom are restoring historic homes, while others are opting to add architectural interest through decorative mantels, Acorn says. Her antique mantels tend to cost between $5,000 and $10,000, and the full installation process (including mantel purchase) can range from $7,000 to $15,000, she says. New finds are featured on her Instagram account @mdmantelhouse.

Mantel House specializes in antique Victorian styles that were made in the U.S. between 1850 and 1880, often at Philadelphia Keystone Marble Works. Today’s customers are looking for shades of white, she says. “Colors don’t work.”

For new clients, she starts with the budget, size and goals (wood burning, gas, decorative), and then helps the buyer visualize the mantel in the space, often through renderings. Then she sets them up with a local installation crew.

“There’s a lot of moving parts,” Acorn says. “It’s something that’s very intimidating because marble is such a heavy but fragile material. And they’re so old — every time you move it, I say a prayer.”

Sometimes she sources mantels from people’s basements, and gently peels through the layers of grime until the original marble is revealed.

Acorn, who was adopted when she was five, says the process is often emotional and nostalgic. “You just have to see beyond the dirt and the brokenness,” she says. “I think it’s a calling. I’m taking these pieces and rehoming them, preparing them to be adopted.”

For clients, including artist Josh Young, Molly Acorn sources, restores and guides people through the delicate mantel installation process.

By Allison Collins
Ultimate travel doesn’t have to mean ultimate hassle, as luxury travel company Essentialist has launched a mobile app to put curated experiences at clients’ fingertips.

The November debut is the latest touchpoint for the private membership-based luxury travel platform, a service that prides itself on being “very bespoke, very personal,” Joan Roca, chief executive officer and founder, says.

Essentialist was founded in 2017 to address a particular challenge in the digital era: While there may be plenty of tools that can arrange airfare, hotel, transportation, excursions and more, the effort is typically frustrating and resulting trips tend to be fragmented. “Travel, particularly luxury travel, is the most complex lifestyle service in the world,” he continues. “Different families will travel differently, with different people, passions and interests.”

The journey begins with the company learning about each of its members. The process is reminiscent of the way fashion platforms get acquainted with shoppers, with their unique interests and tastes informing recommendations. The difference is that, instead of personalizing outfits, Essentialist offers made-to-measure travel experiences, with members’ love of museums, shopping, farm-to-table dining or other activities informing the itineraries, which are crafted from among more than 950 global destinations.

These aren’t everyday tourist stops, according to Roca, but highly selective lists of rarified experiences. The roster runs the gamut: Art lovers can arrange to meet the great nephew of Pablo Picasso, while foodies may delight in meeting chef Julien Royer and dining at his Michelin-starred restaurant Odette in Singapore. Fashionistas can connect with a milliner commissioned by celebrities from Meghan Markle to Lady Gaga, or even score a seat at fashion week in Milan, depending on the timing.

The notable journeys range from refined experiences to exclusive, off-the-beaten-path excursions. The goal is to deliver the ultimate luxury travel experience, whatever that means for the individual client. “If you like cycling, we can connect you to someone who used to run the Tour de France,” Roca says. “It’s going to be amazing.”

Ultimate Travel: Essentialist Now Puts Bespoke Travel at Your Fingertips

With the launch of its new mobile app, Essentialist’s private, members-only luxury travel service is just a download away. BY ADRIANA LEE

Essentialist, an AI-driven platform that showcases and arranges curated experiences for the luxury traveler, launched a new mobile app in November.
This was a big year for personal computing. Some devices impressed the public with their advanced hardware or style, while others brought some of the biggest macro-trends in technology to people’s wrists, faces and pockets. The results were a plethora of artificial intelligence features, better spatial audio and more immersive experiences.

From a crowded field of personal gadgets that offer more speed and futuristic utility in increasingly sophisticated fashion, here’s what landed on WWD Weekend’s radar in 2023.

Apple

iPhone 15 Pro RIP lightning — Apple finally pulled the plug on its proprietary port and joined the rest of the mobile and consumer electronics world by bringing USB-C to its iPhone. Of course, there’s more to this new titanium model than that: The device is zippier, lasts longer with more battery life and somehow crams in a 48-megapixel camera, complete with larger sensors and a magnified 5x telephoto zoom. Even with a customizable new action button, it still manages to fit all that into a lighter, yet durable package.

This is clearly the best iPhone that Apple has made to date and it has room to evolve. The A17 processor’s neural engine was built for tasks like image and audio recognition, as well as language processing. The iPhone 15 Pro will test its mettle even before that, as it’s also the first Apple smartphone capable of capturing spatial video, an immersive form that changes perspective as the viewer moves. In other words, this is the smartphone Apple built for its Vision Pro mixed reality headset. Anyone acquiring the latter will want to seriously consider the former.

New AirPods Pro 2. What’s spatial video without spatial audio? Apple knows that realistic, directional sound is key to immersive experiences, which is why it has been developing 3D audio across its earbuds and both support spatial audio. The crucial difference between the 2022 edition and the recently launched model is that the latter supports lossless audio for the Vision Pro, with ultra-low latency and less interference. Even in

regular usage, the buds still offer an improvement, thanks to better noise cancellation, and like the entire iPhone lineup, the battery case features USB-C in addition to wireless charging.

Apple Watch S9/Ultra 2 iPhone owners in search of the ultimate smartwatch have an obvious choice in the Apple Watch, and the Ultra 2 stands out from the latest arrivals as the most powerful model. But that doesn’t mean it’s the only option or even the best one, considering its debut alongside the Apple Watch Series 9 this fall.

They share a number of similarities — including the S9 SiP processor, the latest Ultra Wideband chip, an always-on Retina display and BP/ECG beat resistance, among others — but were designed for different types of users. The Ultra 2 was built for adventurers — its titanium encasement doubles the water resistance to 100 meters and can even withstand recreational dives up to 40 meters. Unlike the Series 9, it comes with a customizable action button and offers more precise GPS, a brighter display, fuller sound across two speakers (instead of one) and more battery life of 36 hours, which stretches to 72 hours in low-power mode.

However, style-minded consumers should also note that the Ultra 2 is a thicker, heavier device with a larger, flatter screen than the curved display of the Series 9, and for its $799 price, it only comes in natural titanium. The latter, at $3,999, offers a choice of aluminum or stainless steel in a range of colors, in addition to Nike and Hermès editions.

In terms of everyday functionality, Apple’s most notable new trick is the one-handed double-tap gesture, which works well on both devices.

Meta

Meta Quest 3 When Meta unveiled the Quest Pro in October 2022, VR fans were up in arms over the hefty $1,500 price tag. Did anyone know that Apple would eventually introduce its own $5,000 face gear? But a year later, Meta is selling the device for a third less, and while its latest Quest 3 gives it a little competition.

The Quest 3 costs half as much, but matches the pro-level device across some key areas and beats it in others. Both work as virtual and mixed reality devices, with full-color passthrough to view the real world, and rely on the same hardware lenses and software app catalog. But the Q3’s newer and more powerful processor makes it faster, and its display boasts nearly a third more pixels, a higher refresh rate (60 Hz versus 90 Hz) and a field of view that’s a tad roomier.

The QPro’s winning aspects lie in the nuances. It’s slimmer with a more open design and balanced weight, allowing for more comfort, and its sensors for eye- and face-tracking enable facial expressions in chats. It also comes with a charging dock and better controllers, which make up some of the cost. The pricing and extra undoubtedly earn the premium billing — and yet, in terms of performance and visual quality, the more affordable Quest 3 could give it a run for its money.

Ray-Ban Meta Smart Glasses: These might be the smart glasses that validate this category: Style — check. Photo, video and audio quality — check. Simple photo syncing, and better controllers, which make up some of the cost. The pricing and extra undoubtedly earn the premium billing — and yet, in terms of performance and visual quality, the more affordable Quest 3 could give it a run for its money.

Two styles, Ray-Ban’s classic Wayfarer or an attractive on-trend rectangular shape. The new ultra-wide camera bumps the megapixels up to 5 to 12, and videos at 1080p can record up to 60 seconds at 30 FPS or livestream to Facebook and Instagram. With three more mics, totaling five now, call quality won’t torture friends, and the wee speakers add bass and volume, plus spatial audio.

Two styles, Ray-Ban’s classic Wayfarer or an attractive new option called Headliner, come in a range of lenses and frame color options — including translucent — with sunglasses, transition or prescription lenses. LenSentry, a Luxottica optical chain, offers replacement prescription lenses.
Samsung

Galaxy S23 Ultra Samsung released the S23 Ultra at the top of 2023, which feels like ages ago — because in mobile technology terms, it is. But this sizable device still casts a long, glossy shadow as this year’s leading Android smartphone.

In some ways, it is a gentle giant, with subtle tweaks to its physical lines sitting nicely in the hand. In other ways, the 6.8-inch phone is a monster, with a powerful Snapdragon 8 Gen 2 for Galaxy and a camera system with telephoto at 3x and 10x on an ultrawide camera capable of 200 megapixels — even if it does have the occasional color or HDR disaster, and the so-called “Space Zoom” can make a mess.

The S23 Ultra also includes support for 8K video capture, deep levels of settings to fiddle with, a winning 8-Pen for the stylus-inclined, the inexplicable decision to foist two app stores on users with Google Play and Samsung’s own store and battery life that’s a bit better than its predecessor, even with an always-on display, but not by that much. Naturally, the company’s custom OneUI 6 interface governs the phone, which helps with one-handed operation on a big screen, but it still grapples with issues like layout quirks and memory hogging.

The biggest downside of this device is that its next generation is due in a mere few months. But that’s also a benefit, as deals for a fraction of the original $1,200 price can be had now.

Galaxy Z Fold5 The merits of Samsung’s Fold series will only appeal to certain types of power users — those looking for a tablet experience in a pocketable footprint of a smartphone. Of course, there’s a literal wrinkle there or, rather, a crease running the center of the screen. This is the physical reality of the foldable smartphone market, as users of the Galaxy S Flip 5 can attest.

However, fans of the Fold5’s design can’t seem to live without the extra screen real estate and the crease is hardly noticeable when the device is open and in use. It’s an unusual device at a 6.5:1 ratio when fully open, with multiple AMOLED screens and orientations. However, this can be a huge plus for reading or visually oriented tasks, and it’s constructed well, performs admirably, looks sharp and offers a 50-megapixel camera and 12 GB of memory.

Galaxy Watch6 Classic Samsung was one of the first tech makers to embrace the smartwatch, and its latest Watch6 is among those leading the way for Android wearables, particularly among Galaxy smartphone owners looking for tight integration between their phone and wrist gadget.

The device has a faster processor and bigger battery still casts a long, glossy shadow as this year’s leading Android smartphone. So depending on the watchface, it could easily read as a tactical watch or an elegant dress watch.

As for the software, Wear OS runs the show with an overlay of the OneUI 5 interface. The experience should feel familiar to previous Galaxy Watch owners, and newcomers will likely find it intuitive to use. However, during WWDC’s testing period, some of the actual readings for sleep metrics and steps differed a bit from other tracking devices used simultaneously during the testing period. But with its overall performance, speed, features and hardware, the Watch6 validated the Galaxy brand’s enduring popularity in smartwatches.

Galaxy Tab S9 Ultra Sitting atop a trio of tablets, the Tab S9 Ultra is the largest model at 14.6 inches. It’s a heightened level of Samsung tablet tech, and it likely debuted this year to take on top-tier rivals like the iPad Pro. The device offers a widescreen AMOLED 2X display, at 2,960 by 1,848 pixels, that’s brilliant and crisp with an onboard generative AI

Pixel Fold The other notable new Pixel this year is the Pixel Fold, the tech giant’s first foldable phone. The reality of this device is that, as a phone, it works well, but just can’t compete with the Pixel 8 Pro. The AI-powered sibling beats the Fold in practically every spec that matters, except for one — screen real estate. That’s important, because all that space opens up split-screen multitasking, a coveted feature for productivity hunters. The better comparison then is the Galaxy Z Fold5, Samsung’s passport-style foldable phone.

Here, the edge goes to the Z Fold5 as well, with its superior specs and performance, from photo capture to display brightness. But once again, there’s one aspect of the Pixel Fold that wins, and that’s its physical dimensions. The Z Fold5, which is slim and tall when closed, is a bit awkward to hold, while the Google foldable is noticeably shorter, wider and thinner. Ultimately, it’s a choice between performance and comfort. But anyone looking for a combo phone and mini tablet, one that stands up on its own for viewing video or taking selfies, should be pleased with the options.
On New Bond Street among the French and Italian mega luxury brands quietly sits English heritage company Swaine in a 7,000-square-foot space that tends to the needs of the top 5 percent with its bridle leather goods, onsite bespoke services and a workshop with seven artisans inside the store.

“Quiet luxury is a new trend nowadays, but it’s something that Swaine has been a part of for more than 200 years. There are no big logos on our bags. Our clients have discerning taste and they don’t want to have big designers, they’re not looking for spaceships or statues. They want a quality that speaks for itself,” says Carine De Koenigswarter, chief executive officer and chair of the French textile firm Chargeurs.

In 2022, the firm acquired The Cambridge Satchel Company, Swaine and Herbert Johnson, three long-established British brands that typify the nation’s attitude toward luxury. The British wealthy classes have for centuries eschewed flash and dash – indeed, many gentlemen would cringe at the mere idea of putting one’s initials on one’s bespoke shirts. Instead they have opted for long-lasting products that are as sturdy as the iconic British stiff upper lip and that often are handed down from generation to generation.

As a result, De Koenigswarter’s mission at the group is clear yet tricky: She’s to promote British craftsmanship discreetly without any bells and whistles.

Since she joined the brand, the New Bond Street flagship has been at the heart of Swaine with three floors that showcase its full range of products – from its famed umbrellas to briefcases and scarves.

“Since we took over, we’ve decided to modernize a bit with our products and introduce new lines,” De Koenigswarter says of the company, formerly called Swaine, Adeney, Brig & dating back to the late 18th century. On the lower ground floor, customers can meet with the artisans to bring their own creations to life, with prices ranging from 3,500 pounds for a minimal briefcase going anywhere up to 20,000 pounds for a trunk.

The products are made by one artisan from start to finish, on average taking about 30 hours and involving 200 steps. Some items can take up to a year to finish, however, depending on the commission.

“That’s why our quantities are really, really low and the process is really slow because we just can’t rush something that takes so much time,” explains De Koenigswarter.

The majority of Swaine’s customers hail from the U.K. and U.S., attracted by the brand’s heritage and its subtle appearances throughout popular culture.

Throughout the James Bond franchise, Swaine’s Bond Attache, a rectangular black briefcase with gold hardware retailing at 3,200 pounds, makes cameo appearances in “From Russia with Love,” “Goldfinger,” and “Octopussy.” It also appears in other films, including “The Da Vinci Code” and “The Resistance Binman.”

In the 1964 classic “Mary Poppins,” Julie Andrews carries a Swaine parrot-headed novelty umbrella while other high-end umbrellas from the brand have been featured in “The Thomas Crown Affair” and “Kingsman: The Secret Service.”

Nor do the cameos stop there for Chargeurs’ new trio of British heritage labels. Herbert Johnson has provided hats for “My Fair Lady,” “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang” and the Indiana Jones franchise starring Harrison Ford.

The brand and Disney partnered on an Indiana Jones collection for the film “Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny.” The collaboration includes eight different styles of fedoras inspired by Jones’ hats, each one handcrafted, and with prices starting at 412 pounds.

“We really wanted to be part of this last movie with Harrison Ford because we’ve made so many hats for him,” says De Koenigswarter.

It’s a rarity for Herbert Johnson to participate in a collaboration since the brand keeps a low public profile given the majority of its work is with the armed forces, from the British Army and the Royal Navy to the Royal Air Force.

The brand has been making hats for military services since 1889 and generally has been worn by royalty, dignitaries, celebrities and the British upper class alike.

Being in the business of quiet luxury is a frustrating one that De Koenigswarter has mastered with the art of patience. She again emphasizes that Herbert Johnson, like Swaine, “is a niche brand, so we can’t make high volumes and promote big logos. It’s in the DNA of the brand to be niche and discreet with a really high standard for extraordinary products.”
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Imagine, 50 years ago, the cream of the social set and fashion coming together for a charity fashion show. Historically known as the “Battle of Versailles” to save the Palace of Versailles, it did more than unite American and Paris fashion on one stage. It was the perfect setting for fashion and food’s long love affair, inclusive of some of the most envied dinner parties, luncheons and cocktail moments fashion had seen at the time. WWD took in all the events, calling it “Versailles, the last hurrah,” citing the almost weeklong orgy of parties and fashion — dinner included.

BY TONYA BLAZIO-LICORISH

Dinner host David Mahoney greets Liza Minnelli, Halston and Marisa Berenson. Minnelli is wearing a Halston ensemble.

Thaddeus Klossowski, Loulou de la Falaise and Joe Eula at the Battle of Versailles pre-dinner event at Maxim’s on Nov. 26, 1973.

Hubert de Givenchy

Princess Grace of Monaco and Marie-Hélène de Rothschild attend the Battle of Versailles show at the Chateau of Versailles.

Eula, designer Halston (Ray Halston) friends, Oscar de la Renta and Bill Blass.

Designer Pierre Cardin, Marisa Pavan and guests.

Batti Catroux and Yves Saint Laurent.

Moda Fort Cleveland wearing Stephen Burrows at dinner with Cappy Badrutt and guests.

Andy Warhol and Kay Thompson.

Takeaway