



Saint Laurent's Paris fashion week show takes audience on a holiday to Fire Island

Sunglasses and bright colours dominated a beach-ready collection, as director Anthony Vaccarello namechecked artists who documented LGBTQ+ life

Lauren Cochrane



Fire Island, the holiday destination near New York, has been associated with the LGBTQ+ community since the 30s. It has inspired books (Edmund White's 1973 novel, *Forgetting Elena*), a 2022 eponymous romcom and now, a fashion show for Saint Laurent.

Taking place at Paris fashion week in 30C heat more suited to a vacation, the show notes named the beach spot as a reference for the creative director, Anthony Vaccarello. They placed the show "somewhere between Paris and Fire Island, where escape becomes elegance, and desire becomes a language".

The collection started with this mood: the first look was a pair of short shorts worn with a silk shirt and sunglasses. There's little doubt this shape will be on trend for men next year, with Prada also showing it in their show in Milan last week.

But as well as beach-ready items, the detail of shorts found their way on to the waistband of tailoring and pastel colours ideal for summer. There was a lot of workwear too, but rather than the more relaxed kind found in most offices in 2025, these designs committed to the same extreme 80s power-dressing shoulders seen in Vaccarello's hit womenswear collection shown earlier this year.

Striped shirts and ties, trenchcoats and suits were included, often in the jewel tones associated with the brand. Every model wore sunglasses. As well as complementing the holiday feel and the weather outside, there was also a commercial angle: these are the entry-level designs customers can purchase before they can afford a suit.

The show took place in the grand Bourse de Commerce, an former stock exchange where the art collection of François Pinault – the original owner of Saint Laurent's parent company, Kering – has been housed since 2021. The models walked around an installation called *Clinamen* by Céleste Boursier-Mougenot, which resembled the kind of swimming pool found on holidays.

Although the text clarified that the collection was not nostalgic – "not homage. Not memory. Continuity" – it was coupled with an image of a young Yves Saint Laurent wearing short shorts on a tennis court in Oran in Algeria, taken in about 1950, when the designer was a teenager. It also namechecked artists Stanton, Angus and Ellis – presumably Larry Stanton, Patrick Angus and Darrel Ellis – all of whom documented LGBTQ+ life in the 70s and 80s, with Stanton a regular on Fire Island.





If this collection had a subtle tribute to a time and place, Vaccarello's Saint Laurent also excels at the kind of splashy moments that fuel the internet, and keep a brand in the fashion conversation in 2025. This month alone, 82-year-old Christopher Walken appeared in their advertising campaign – a clever move at a time when older legends are appreciated in fashion – and Rihanna, forever influential for her style, was spotted wearing the brand's clothes. The thigh-high patent waders that were in the January men's shows have also caused something of a sensation – with both Pedro Pascal and designer Marc Jacobs wearing them recently.

Even with this profile, the brand – like many luxury brands – is seeing a decline in sales. A report of financial results across the Kering group for the first quarter of 2025 shows revenue was down 9%. This figure puts it in the middle of its stablemates, with Gucci's revenue down 25% and Bottega Veneta's revenue up by 4%. Kering announced Luca de Meo as the new CEO this month, and the man now charged with improving brand performances. Unusually for fashion, de Meo's experience is from a different sector – he was previously CEO of Renault cars. However, the industry seems to approve of the appointment. In the run-up to the announcement, the group's stock rose by 13%.

