



Louis Vuitton Opens Cruise Ship Style Store The Louis In Shanghai

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The newly-opened Louis Vuitton store shaped like a cruise ship in Shanghai, China.
Photographer: ... More Raul Ariano/Bloomberg
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Luxury retail group Louis Vuitton has really pushed the boat out this time. The French company has unveiled a huge cruise ship installation, called The Louis, at Taikoo Hui in Shanghai's Nanjing West Road business district in its latest bid to make a splash.

Standing nearly 100 feet tall, the ship-inspired structure has been designed to pay homage to the luxury brand's 19th-century heritage of crafting hard-sided travel trunks, with the installation's exterior featuring a cabin constructed from classic Louis Vuitton cases, while the hull has been adorned with the brand's iconic monogram.

Spanning three levels and over 17,000-square-feet, The Louis combines retail, exhibition and hospitality spaces. The interior comprises three floors, the first two are dedicated to an exhibition that showcases the brand's culture and history, with a cafe sitting at the top.

According to Louis Vuitton's in-house design team, the boat shape pays homage to Shanghai's port culture as the 'Gateway to the East', while also offering acknowledgement of the brand's history of crafting trunks for transoceanic voyages.

It was designed to "create a new cultural landmark" within Shanghai's central business district, the team said.

Interactive features include live demonstrations by artisans in the 'workshop and testing' areas. Meantime, on the top floor the Le Café Louis Vuitton offers a "curated menu that blends local Shanghai flavours with Western culinary influences".

The Louis Vuitton Extraordinary Journey exhibition explores the maison's connection to



maritime culture, featuring a Perfume Room with vintage toiletry items, a Book Room featuring works by Gaston-Louis Vuitton, and a Sports Room displaying merchandise connected with events such as Formula 1 and the Olympics.

The exhibition ends with a gift shop, where a selection of leather goods, accessories, shoes and travel items is available for purchase.

Louis Vuitton Makes A Splash

LVMH Greater China president Wu Yue said that The Louis reflects both Shanghai's maritime spirit and the brand's storied history in travel.

"This ship-shaped decoration echoes Shanghai's urban spirit of 'embracing all rivers and seas' and showcases its international outlook of innovation and forward momentum," he said.

Louis Vuitton Chairman and CEO Pietro Beccari added that the concept represents a new chapter in the brand's cultural evolution.

"The shop embodies the brand's 'spirit of travelling' through ideas, emotions and inspiration, in a joyful way," he said of the opening.

Visitors take photographs near the newly-opened Louis Vuitton store shaped like a cruise ship. ... More Photographer: Raul Ariano/Bloomberg

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The luxury brand opened the installation on June 28 and has used trunks as a design motif for facade design in recent years, concealing its under-renovation New York flagship store with a luggage facade. In Paris, it recently decorated its store with an inflatable replica of artist Yayoi Kusama peering over the roof.

In December 2023, Forbes reported that parent company LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton had sold a majority stake in its little-known cruise retail business to a group of four investors led by Florida-based real estate magnate Jim Gissy, to form a joint-venture company called Global Travel Retail Holdings.

LVMH's cruise business had consisted of cruise retailer Starboard Cruise Services and Onboard Media, a multimedia solutions business for the global travel and hospitality industry.

LVMH had always kept Starboard as a low-profile business unit within its retail portfolio including flagship Louis Vuitton brand, rarely, if ever, mentioning the cruise operation in its quarterly results.

