



## Patou

“Joy always has a plan B,” said Patou’s artistic director Guillaume Henry, describing his fictional character of the season as an “outdoor woman” who is equally comfortable indoors.

That was a good thing given that the rain clouds looming over a post-heat wave Paris prompted a move of the show from the gardens of the Maison de la Chimie to the house’s oh-so-Parisian interiors, geometric parquet flooring, plaster mouldings and all.

As front row guest Susan Sarandon put it in a skit dropped on Instagram earlier in the day, “who the h-l is Joy?”

Despite sharing a name with the house’s historic bestselling scent, his fictional muse of the season doesn’t herald its imminent return, Henry said.

If the wardrobe the designer imagined is anything to go by, she’s a busy bee who doesn’t have time for outfit changes, expecting her sporty chic looks to work overtime from dawn to dusk.

The opening look, a straight black pinafore minidress with a pair of roomy patch pockets on the front, certainly fit the bill.

In pursuit of “fresh air, breathing room

and lightness,” the designer imagined an encounter with house founder Jean Patou and his love of Art Deco lines and Christian Lacroix, who filled the house with feminine shapes and polka dots during his six-year tenure that began in 1981.

Cue a fusion with his proclivity for sporty knits, cropped proportions and utilitarian jackets that yielded long collarless styles with a gentle hourglass outline and versions with plunging trapeze necklines; shift dresses that could be dressed up or down with a canny change in accessories, and puffy skirts that came in anything from fine gray suiting to layered lace and exuberant peony prints – with pockets, of course.

A final trio gave a then-and-now vision of evening glamour, between floor-length bustier dresses and a lace bodysuit nodding to Sabrina Carpenter’s custom Patou look during her “Short n’ Sweet Tour.”

While continuing to build on the unfussy chic direction of the Henry era, the collection was in step with the dressier direction that emerged from June’s coed runways. – *Lily Templeton*





► 7 juillet 2025 - N°07 07 2025





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