



50 Years On, Bottega Veneta's IYKYK Accessories Remain The Ultimate Status Symbol

By Mahoro Seward



While the distinguishing marks of most luxury houses are the insignia stamped on their flagship products – whether monogrammed canvases or symbol-shaped clasps – that's never quite been the case for Bottega Veneta. The instant recognisability of the Veneto-born, Milan-based maison's über-luxe leather goods is due to a proprietary technique: the Intrecciato weave.

Woven by hand from long, thin straps of buttery leather by Bottega Veneta's artisans, the supple *tissage* has become one of fashion's most familiar – not to mention most sought-after – material textures in the half-century since its introduction. Understated yet unmistakable, its launch prompted the now iconic “When you're own initials are enough” campaign (almost a good 50 years before “quiet luxury” was the eyeroll-inducing buzz word it now is, mind you), laying the foundation for the philosophy of rigorous, craft-driven luxury that has informed the house's direction ever since.

Since the appearance of an Intrecciato clutch in the crook of Lauren Hutton's arm in *American Gigolo* (1980), the weave has also figured as a fixture of pop culture. Tina Turner, Princess Diana, Jacob Elordi, Rihanna... the roll call of A-listers who've proudly flaunted Intrecciato accessories as part of some of their most iconic looks is too long to list here (trust us, it is *long*). In itself, though, it is an irrefutable testament to the aspirational cachet of the leather weaving method.

Of course, the big 5-0 always warrants lavish commemoration, but few have marked reaching the half-century mark quite like Bottega Veneta. To toast one of its more significant contributions to the contemporary luxury vernacular, the house has expanded its footprint at one of the world's great luxury emporiums, with a month-long takeover of the exhibition windows at London's Harrods.

Centred on La Tavola – an architectural concept that evokes the communal workbenches used by the brand's artisans in the very ateliers where the Intrecciato is woven – the centrepiece showcases leather accessories and jewellery pieces, along with Bottega Veneta's lip-bitingly chic fragrance offering (yes, the ones that come in the Murano-esque glass bottles with the little marble plinths), and a selection of pop-up-exclusive stationery, to be gifted with purchases made there.





Naturally, the leather weaving technique also serves as the primary inspiration for the space's design – from the concrete and Italian walnut fixtures, which also nod to the Modernist design heritage of the *maison*'s home region, through to ultra-luxe furniture objects upholstered in Intrecciato.

The crowning glory of the takeover, though, is the exclusive capsule of iconic Intrecciato bag styles and accessories – the Andiamo, the Knot clutch and the Riva mule among them – reimagined in Harrods's emblematic pine hue and a deep maroon. You'll also find a selection of exclusive ready-to-wear pieces fashioned in the leather weave – first seen in Jack Davison's poignant *Craft Is Our Language* campaign for the house – and a preview sniff of Mezzanote, a collection of three sexily sombre scents in the Bottega Veneta fragrance line.

A trip to Harrods hardly ever needs an excuse, but with the pop-up running until 28 September, we can't think of a better one to get yourself to Knightsbridge this month.

