

Maison Francis Kurkdjian Launches \$28,000 Limited Edition of Baccarat Rouge 540

The brand is the latest in LVMH's portfolio to unveil an ultra-luxury fragrance.

By Liz Flora



Already at the high end of luxury fragrances, Maison Francis Kurkdjian's hero Baccarat Rouge 540 is getting a five-figure upgrade.

In mid-September, the perfume house will unveil a \$28,000 special-edition offering of the scent, complete with a crystal case and exclusive refill membership. The brand joins a wider range of LVMH labels unveiling fragrances at prices once reserved for handbags and jewellery as collectors' enthusiasm drives demand.

The Baccarat Rouge 540 Édition Millésime will be released in 54-product batches over the next decade, for a total of 540. With permanent collection bottles at \$695 for 6.8 ounces, its price premium comes partly from the addition of ambergris to its ingredient list. But its crystal packaging takes top billing. The brand's original bottle designer Fred Rawyler was enlisted to design a red crystal vessel. A crystal-compatible spray function was added to its 24-carat-gold cap, while 19 Baccarat artisans created a crystal display for the bottle that took 500 hours. The fragrance comes in a leather and beveled mirror-lined spruce box and a hand-stitched lambskin sleeve by Paris leather workshop Atelier Renard.

"When I create, I never begin by thinking about the client. I simply follow my creative vision, striving to bring beauty into the world through my fragrances," said Kurkdjian, the brand's perfumer and artistic director.

While Kurkdjian has long offered pricier bespoke fragrances for VIP clients, the launch is the label's first "exceptional piece" to be unveiled by the maison.

Owners will have access to what CEO Marc Chaya describes as "the ultimate customer journey," an exclusive members club called Les amis du Rouge, inclusive of up to five refill purchases a year. Club membership will also include curated brand experiences such as dinners, masterclasses with Kurkdjian, shows at the brand-partnered Vienna State Opera and a visit to the perfumer's upcoming Palais de Tokyo solo exhibition.

Ultra-high-end collectible fragrance launches, long a practice of fellow LVMH-owned perfumier Guerlain, have become more frequent at the luxury house as avid collectors have helped drive a high-end fragrance boom. Some of the most expensive perfumes have been Bulgari's Opera Prima launched for \$235,000 in 2014 and Dior's J'adore L'or Prestige Edition for \$75,000 in 2016.

