

La Samaritaine makes up for lost time & celebrates milestone birthday



Samaritaine Paris Pont-Neuf by DFS will feature a calendar of events, gourmet exclusives, collaborations, pop-ups and performances lasting for two months from September 2 - October 31 to celebrate its 150+1 birthday

The historic Samaritaine building, which re-opened in the French capital in June with a 20,000-sqm department store called Samaritaine Paris Pont-Neuf by DFS, is celebrating its 150th birthday after a year-long delay caused by the pandemic. To make up for lost time and ensure that this milestone birthday is truly one to remember, the store, operated by luxury travel retailer DFS, will feature a calendar of events, gourmet exclusives, collaborations, pop-ups and performances lasting for two months from September 2 - October 31.

A dramatic unveiling of the department store's windows kicked off the festivities on September 2. On the Rivoli side, the windows feature multi-colored neon displays. On the Pont Neuf side, new light installations are part of an exclusive collaboration with Prada.

Inside the store, the Prada Glow installation is an exclusive and interactive experience brought to life through light and color. The four showcases feature a three-dimensional trompe-l'oeil displaying views of the set from the Prada Fall/Winter 2021 show, enriched with neon lights. A video floor connected to a lantern inspired by the geometry of the Prada triangle rises up through the floors, its changing colors visible from all directions. A selection of exclusive items from the brand's ready-to-wear, leather goods and women's accessories ranges also feature throughout the installation.

Each weekend, troupes of artists bring to life the spirit of Samaritaine's famous advertisements of the past with a combination of burlesque acts from performers dressed as peacocks, town-criers, balloon-girls and majorettes.

For Samaritaine, the artist Elsa Muse has designed a towering cake modeled on an early animation device known as a zoetrope. The cake slowly turns, telling the history of the store through sugar figurines representing its emblematic yellow shopping bags, spirited sales staff and even the King Kong gorilla himself. Topping the cake are the store's proud and benevolent founders Ernest and Marie-Louise Cognacq-Jaÿ who first opened the store in 1870. Edible versions of the cake will also be offered to customers each Saturday at 4pm.

The celebration will also feature digitally, as art historian Margaux Brugvin will take over the store's YouTube channel to highlight moments in the store's history and discuss its artistic elements with contemporary artist Antonin Hako.

Michelin-starred chefs, pâtissiers, mixologists, baristas and bakers, have all come together to celebrate Samaritaine's 150+1 birthday with an abundance of flavors. Matthias Giroud from the Voyage restaurant-bar and Jérémy Del Val from Maison Dalloyau together will unveil an original box set of cocktails and "haute couture pastry" to delight the senses.

Last but not least, the quirky Loulou Boutique will feature iconic products from jewelry to fashion to bicycles and skateboards, while a wheel of fortune will be spun each day to reward shoppers with gifts and treasures to share in the bounty of Samaritaine's birthday.

“La Samaritaine has brought joy, excitement and discovery to Parisians for over 150 years, so it is fitting that we celebrate this wonderful store’s birthday with the same abundance that she has shared with us. We look forward to celebrating again when our customers around the world are able to visit Samaritaine in person,” says Benjamin Vuchot, DFS Group Chairman and CEO.

The following is a collection of snapshots of the festivities:

