

Macy's Reveals Renovated Beauty Floor of Herald Square Flagship

The landmarked location will dedicate more than 50,000 square feet to its beauty offering when the renovation's second phase concludes in 2026.



Main hall in the Macy's Herald Square renovated beauty floor.



Prada fragrances.



Guerlain's shop at the Macy's flagship.





Estée Lauder and La Prairie shops at the flagship.



Maison Francis Kurkdjian's shop.



Shiseido's shop at the Macy's Herald Square flagship.

BY JAMES MANSO PHOTOGRAPHS BY GEORGE CHINSEE

One of beauty's most storied points of sale has gotten a makeover.

The beauty floor of the Macy's Herald Square flagship, a landmarked building, has completed its first round of renovations, with the latter set to resume following the all-important holiday season.

"We will have almost 54,000 square feet of beauty," said Nicolette Bosco, vice president and divisional merchandise manager for beauty, Macy's. "Once the total is finished, we'll be bringing over 20 new beauty brand shops into the building, we'll have a total of five relaxation rooms, and you will see technology and service at the heart of every vendor shop."



That falls in line with parent company Macy's Inc. new mandate, led by chairman and chief executive officer Tony Spring, called "A Bold New Chapter," unveiled in 2024. As a part of that, 125 of the top stores are being "reimagined" with a luxury bend, while underperforming doors have closed, as reported.

So far, those investments are paying off.

For the second quarter, the parent company came in above expectations on the top and bottom lines, and refreshed Macy's doors outperformed the rest of the footprint.

"Beauty is a driver for Macy's and we're just excited to be a key tenet of the luxury push," said Amy Kocienda, vice president and divisional merchandise manager for fragrance at Macy's. "This is moving us into the future."

From the Herald Square entrance to the store, boutiques from Chanel and Christian Dior Parfums flank the entryway, followed by designer brands like L'Oréal-licensed Valentino Beauty, YSL Beauté, Prada and Armani. Though the Chanel and Dior shops are temporary, those are the final locations for the brands, Bosco said.

"If you can continue to envision the positioning, the fashion houses are up at the front, and then you continue in with the fragrance, and you get niche and luxury brands down the core aisle. Then, you get luxury skin care, and the discovery area for artistry and trendy beauty brands," she said.

Hermès also has a beauty shop with its offer of makeup and fragrance products.

"We are one of less than 20 locations in the U.S. to have it," Kocienda said. "We have it right on the main aisle."

Macy's still holds the largest share of fragrance sales in the U.S., and it's the market's hottest category, having grown 6 percent in the first half per Circana, driven by higher concentrations and luxury price points.

But it's not the only category that Bosco is bullish on, however.

"We want to have the tri-axis available to the consumer. It's not only about finding your perfect fragrance," Bosco said, nodding to the key category. "It's about finding your favorite fragrance and then your favorite lipstick. Our customer loves continuing to build on her overarching beauty wardrobe, and that's at the center of what we've tried to accomplish here."

Case in point, Valentino "existed on the fragrance side within the Macy's universe," Kocienda said. "But the shop and beauty are net-new. We brought in Anatomy of Dreams to push the customer toward luxury, and then we have this art of gifting bar where you can add custom bows and charms to your bottles. It takes the luxury service element to the next level."



"Macy's Herald Square is an iconic New York City retail landmark — a symbol of the city's energy, diversity, and ambition, as well as a vital showcase for L'Oréal Luxe's largest door," said Silvia Galfo, president of the Luxe division, L'Oréal USA. "In the Luxe division, this was the perfect opportunity to enter new brands like Armani, Valentino and Prada as well as launch our latest retail designs on our iconic Lancôme, YSL and Kiehl's."

Keeping the shops differentiated was key, Galfo continued, noting that while the Kiehl's space reflects the brand's apothecary roots, Lancôme plays up its Absolué fragrances and YSL is "a cultural stage as much as a point of sale. The brand has been growing nearly four times faster than the U.S. luxury market year-to-date, fueled by its ability to connect beauty with culture."

"From the 2025 Macy's Flower Show to immersive storytelling moments, our partnership celebrates that shared DNA: audacity, creativity and elevation. The upcoming renovation offers an opportunity to express our brand with even greater impact, reinforcing YSL Beauty's position as a modern cultural powerhouse in the heart of New York City," Galfo continued.

In addition to the heavy-hitting incumbents, a few brands are also entering the mix, from Maison Francis Kurkdjian and Parfums de Marly to Byredo. "We have over 200 fragrances in the building across 65 brands with more to come in 2026," Kocienda said. "On the fragrance side, the industry has advanced so much, and the customer has become so much more educated and aware of the extent of the offerings. The customer is looking for more newness, and it's not just about the core, top-five brands anymore. We're trying to push that for the customer."

The luxury appetite exists for other categories and brand types, too. "We see skin care being very strong for us, particularly in luxury," Bosco said. "The customer understands the value of the high efficacies and the brands that they're bringing the science behind it, and they're important to the customer, as well as to the beauty adviser they have a relationship with."

On the services front, Shiseido, for example, has an Artificial Intelligencepowered mirror that performs skin care diagnostics and makes productrecommendations, not dissimilar from Lancôme’s skin diagnostics tool in its own shop.

“We worked with Shiseido to bring a global design and cabine right into the center. Shiseido is really around their technique and service they bring to the clientele,” Bosco said, “So we put that in the center of their shop.”

For fragrances, Parfums de Marly boasts an AR headset that “takes you on a sensory experience back in time,”Kocienda said.



Despite the store’s landmark status and high foot traffic location, Bosco said only about 25 to 30 percent of its clientele are tourists. “We actually have quite a large local community,” she said. “This store is a balance of both, for sure, but it’s not only the global or even domestic traveler. We do have a very focused local consumer as well.”

In New York, the growth of beauty sales outpaces that of the U.S. overall, and the landscape is heating up. On the department store front, Nordstrom Inc. recently renovated their beauty floor of their Columbus Circle store, and prestige beauty also saw a new entrant with the debut of Violet Grey’s Upper East Side boutique earlier this year.

Service will be one of Macy’s differentiators, and those range from literal treatments to the open-sell beauty discovery zone. “This back space is where we will have an event space,” Bosco said, gesturing beyond skin care to the next phase of renovations. “We’ll be able to do different master classes, different pop-up events, all adjacent and within the environment.”

It all falls over a decade after the last time the floor was renovated. “The landscape continues to evolve and we want to stay front and forward with it,” Bosco said. “We believe we’re building what the future of beauty is, and we’re bringing it here, now, with this format, in an all-inclusive experience with brands having their moment as the true DNA of who they are. We know consumers love to discover, but this also gives them a world of experience.” ■