

The *global* storefront: travel retail.

POSSIBLE • IDEAS
MADE

Retail *highlights*.

ISSUE No:

0024.

DATE:

08.09.2025.

READ TIME:

15 mins.

CATEGORIES:

Brand home / Pop-up / Product
launch/ Brand activation.

TOP HIGHLIGHT:

Lancôme Génifique pop-up.



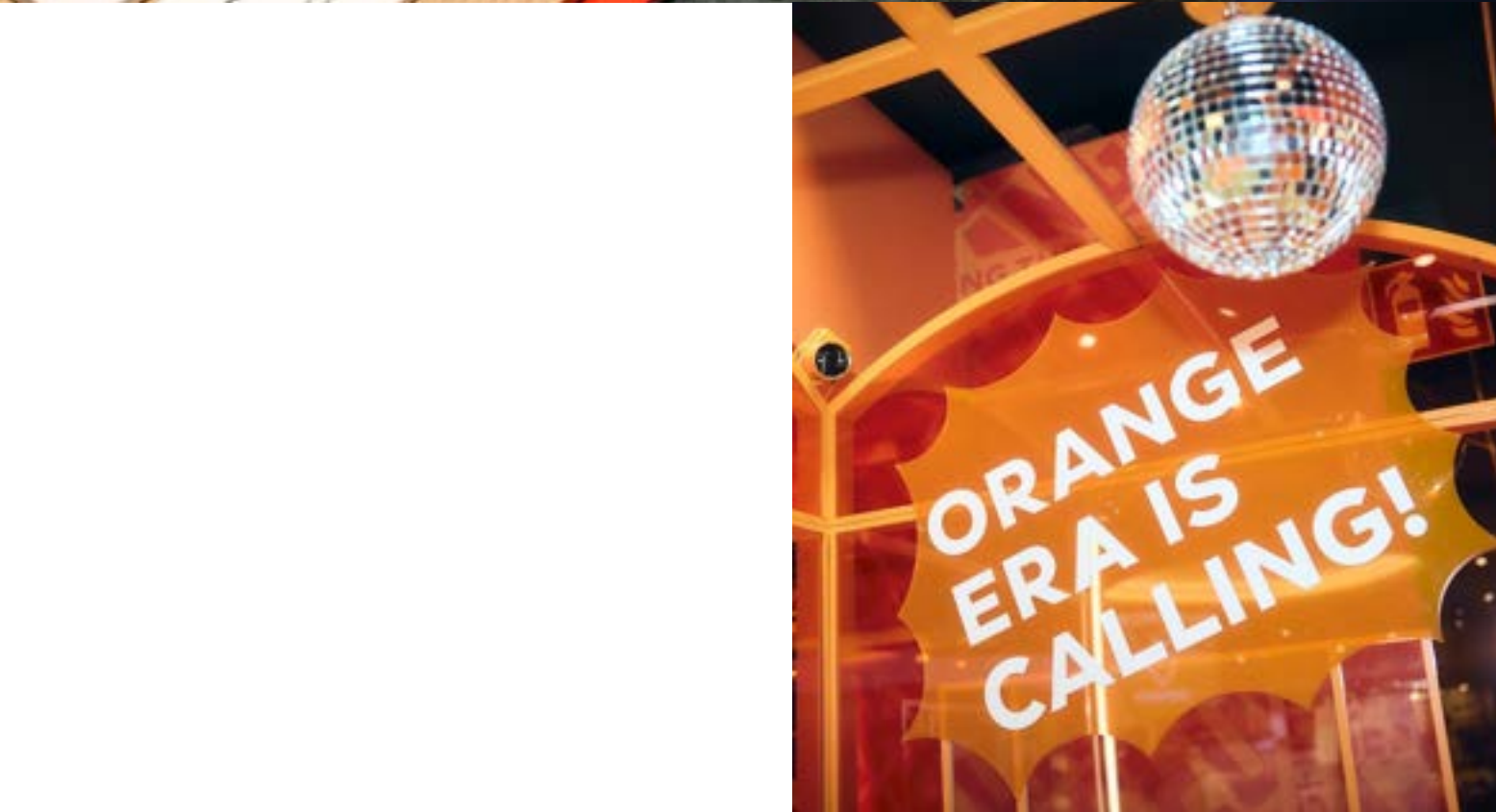
Retail *highlights*.

Discovering *innovation* and *immersion* that stands out in the airport environment.

This report highlights some of the most interesting retail occurring in GTR now. Those that are redefining how travellers engage with brands; turning transit spaces into destinations in their own right.

- In this report we look at:
- Leveraging locality specificity
 - Connecting with tired senses
 - The vernacular of travel
 - How to engage the audience





D4R VIEW

Travel retail 3.0

RETHINKING HOW BRANDS SHOW UP
ACROSS THE TRAVEL JOURNEY.

CRAFTING CONNECTION

Travel retail today is no longer just about tax-free bargains- it has transformed into a technology-rich, luxury-focused ecosystem.

The modern traveller doesn't see an airport store as a mere convenience; they see it as a reflection of their lifestyle, values, and aspirations. Shopping in transit has become less about duty-free deals and more about self-expression—choosing products, brands, and experiences that affirm a sense of identity.

At the same time, the values shaping retail outside the airport walls are also shaping it within. Shoppers are drawn to authenticity, sustainability, and transparency. They want their brands to deliver eco-friendly design, feature local sourcing stories, and create immersive experiences that go beyond the transaction.

Retailers are tapping into this by curating spaces that feel tailored, immersive, and aspirational. In this sense, travel retail has evolved into a stage where global brands and local voices meet the traveller's desire not just to shop, but to belong, indulge, and define themselves in the fleeting moments between departure and arrival.

“it’s not about where you are anymore - it’s about who you are when you travel..”

ANDREA ROBINETT,
DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE & STRATEGY



01

Authentic evocation.

L'ATELIER MARTELL. SHENZHEN

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MORE THAN JUST A SHOP: A MUST-SEE DESTINATION

This beautiful evocation of provenance and prestige was created as a destination and a brand home to invite luxury customers into Martell's world. The space blends craftsmanship, digital innovation, and exclusive products, in an envelope inspired by the Maison's Cellar Master's Workshop. The boutique integrates authentic elements from the Cognac crafting process, including oak barrels, copper, and over 200 glass sampling bottles, showcasing Martell's heritage in a contemporary way.

Strong local ties are reflected through a Shenzhen-exclusive Martell Noblige collector's edition and collaborations with local artist collective Jiu Society. Visitors can enjoy immersive experiences,

more usually found at the cellar, such as "Cognac from the Cask", olfactory journeys, and interactive blending sessions. Digital features, from interactive screens and tasting tables to audio experiences and WeChat integration, ensure the physical and digital seamlessly connect, enriching the customer journey.

“Physical and digital dimensions complement each other harmoniously to accompany customers in their discovery of Maison Martell.”

LUXSURE.FR



02

Consistently *different.*

AESOP GLOBAL TRAVEL RETAIL ESTATE.

Aesop are known for their varied, yet totally harmonious, approach to retail design; and their appearances at travel retail are not different. Each store is conceived to deliver a consistent, resonant experience, carefully crafted to evoke the same distinctive atmosphere while attuned to the nuances of local contexts. Every space remains unmistakably Aesop.

Minimalism, and visually and sensorially immersive experiences are key cues from the Aesop vernacular- with hand-washing rituals and curated scents offering travellers a moment of tranquillity while reflecting the brand’s design codes. Collaboration with local architects and artists enables bold, boundary-pushing projects- such as the algae installation in Hainan- bringing Aesop’s distinctive aesthetic to life in innovative, locally resonant ways.



"Each Aesop store takes inspiration from local design elements while offering a sanctuary of quietude and aromatic respite amid the chaotic airport environment."



03

Scientific spectacular.

LANCÔME GÉNIFIQUE POP-UP. CHANGI AIRPORT

“A destination for discovery, care, and connection. Bringing scientific provenance and tactile wellness experience together.”

ANDREA ROBINETT. DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE & STRATEGY

WHERE ART MEETS SCIENCE.

Lancôme brought the breakthroughs of Génifique Ultimate to life with a striking five-week takeover at Changi Airport showing their leadership in beauty technology with an omni-channel journey that linked physical experience with cutting edge digital, all wrapped in a hyper- futuristic aesthetic.

Interactive, motion-sensor RFID displays illuminate the brand’s ingredient story in a tactile, engaging way, then a menu of complimentary services offers tangible experience. Time-pressed passengers can benefit from a fast Skin Screen analysis, while those with more time can indulge in a rejuvenating Pro Radiance Booster facial.

Personalised, tactile touch-points punctuate the experience through the entire journey; with every detail designed to elevate the traveller’s journey. Purchasers received bespoke, Changi-exclusive luggage tags, and visitors are offered a nutrient-rich repair shot; ensuring they leave not only with radiant skin, but also refreshed for the onward journey.





04

Colour *drench.*

JAGERMEISTER ORANGE LAUNCH.

PANTONE
Jägermeister
Culture Orange

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A BURST OF CITRUS VITALITY

Jägermeister's Orange Era global travel retail campaign reimagines the brand's energy through music, vibrant visuals, and interactive experiences.

Designed to introduce Jägermeister Orange, a lighter, citrus-forward twist on the original, the campaign immerses travellers in eye-catching orange-toned spaces that invite participation rather than passive browsing.

The campaign's strategy leans heavily into music and community, core cultural touch-points for Gen Z and female shoppers. At Ibiza Airport, for example, a dedicated DJ provides a live soundtrack for travellers, while Avolta Club members can scan a



QR code to play the Mix, Spin & Win game and even step into the booth as guest DJs themselves. By blending night-life culture with travel-retail exclusivity, Jägermeister reinforces its positioning as a bold, youthful lifestyle brand rather than just a drink.

“Orange era is calling! Purposely designed to resonate with Gen Z's appetite for shareable, visually stimulating brand encounters”

MOODIE DAVITT REPORT

05

Celebrating *locality.*

MACALLAN. SPIRIT OF HONG KONG.

Hong Kong is a city in constant motion, where tradition meets modernity. Inspired by this spirit, The Macallan collaborated with world-renowned chefs, artists, and designers, setting out on a sensorial journey, capturing the city's pulse through whisky, art, and cuisine. Their collaboration crafted a locality specific travel retail exclusive that reflects the energy, creativity, and harmony that define Hong Kong.

Enhanced by striking visuals and local artistry, the project distils Hong Kong's essence into a celebration of taste, culture, and community.

High-net-worth travellers increasingly seek to experience brands and products the love, in new ways, through the lens of the local culture, valuing authenticity and a sense of place in every destination when they travel.



"Hong Kong is a city of contrast...with many layers, to be returned to again and again to find more stories to tell. The whiskey's incredible complexity transporting you on a journey of Flavour and memory."

EUAN KENNEDY
WHISKEY MASTERY LEAD



06

Nurtured by nature.

MACALLAN BOUTIQUE. LOS ANGELES LAX

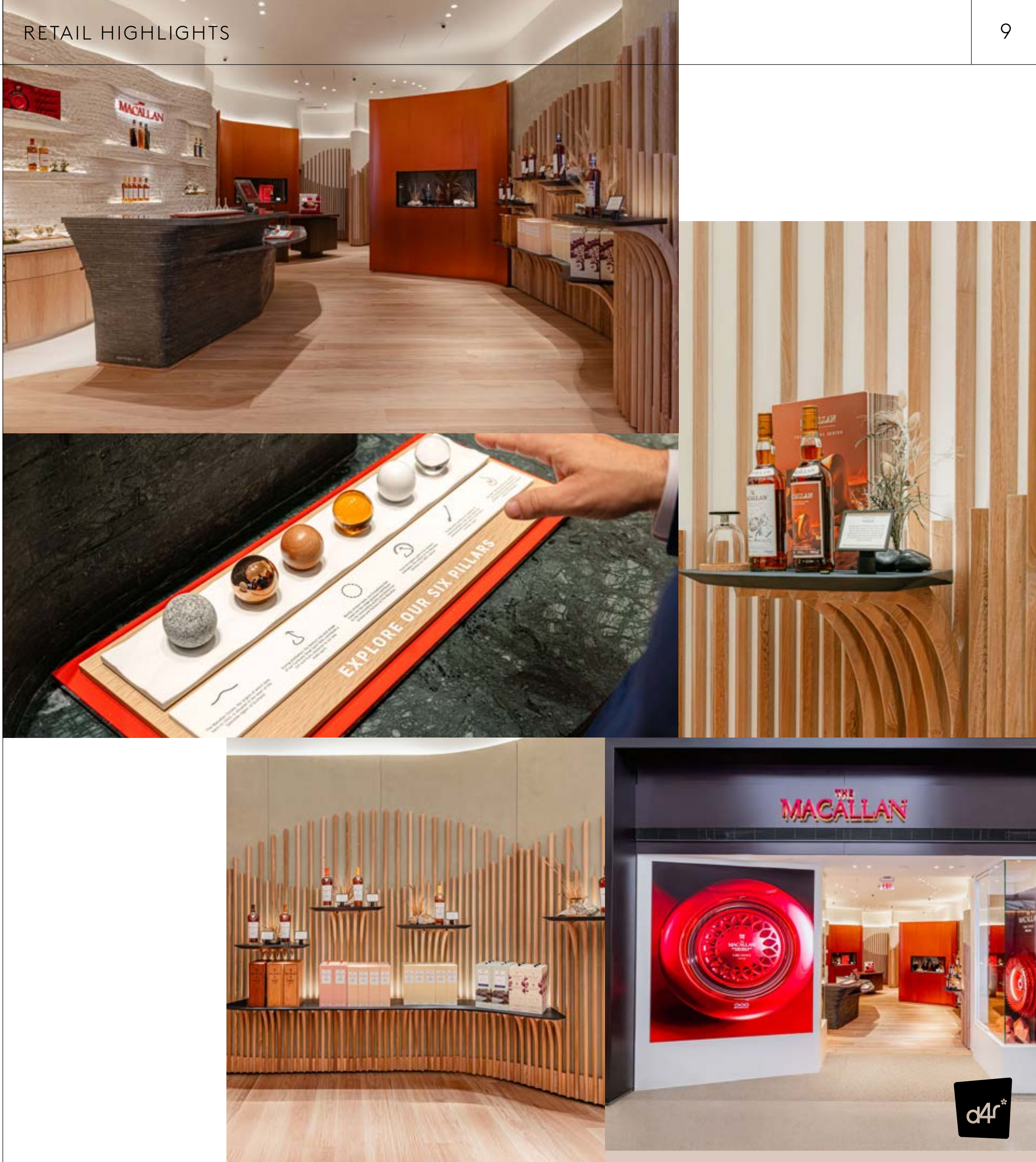
“The experience allows travellers not only to see and touch, but to feel and hear the spirit of Speyside itself.”

STORYTELLING THROUGH MATERIALITY

Designed in collaboration with acclaimed architect Jamie Fobert, to represent the brand’s newest retail philosophy- ‘Nurtured by Nature’- where every element is crafted to tell the story of The Macallan Estate and its Six Pillars. Stepping inside, visitors are enveloped in a narrative of craftsmanship and place: oak wood and copper accents speak to the whiskey’s soul, evoking the mastery of its signature casks and the character imparted by its uniquely small stills.

Throughout charred oak petal shelves and sculptural podiums echo the very staves that nurture each whisky into depth and complexity. Botanical-inspired merchandising and olfactory displays awaken the senses, while the exclusive “Dancing Leaf” installation by local artist Sarah Ippolito brings the beauty and vitality of the Speyside landscape into the heart of the space. The experience is completed by an ambient sound-scape woven from field recordings captured on The Macallan Estate.

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07

An airport *in* an airport.

MAISON MARGIELA-
REPLICA POP-UP. HAINAN



ECHOING THE AIRPORT EXPERIENCE

Designed entirely around the evocative theme of travel memories. Travellers visiting the Maison Margiela pop up weren't just browsing fragrances; they were stepping into an immersive airport lounge experience.

The pop-up echoes the brand's minimalist design codes and features an all-white colour palette showcasing the maison's signature Bianchetto treatment (an aged painted used across its collections).

To invite the customer and ensure they remember the experience personalised boarding passes, the ability to add your name to the analogue departure board, and a giant screen showcasing travel



memories create a network of memorable moments. Even the photo booth, complete with luggage, encourages playful interaction.

This carefully crafted experience, capitalising on the brands' DNA and sense of place, was designed specifically for travel retail. It demonstrates how pop-ups can transform a simple transaction into a lasting memory, driving engagement, crafting visual moments, and adding a little whimsical distraction to the airport experience by playing with the expected visual tropes of the environment.



“Not just about selling fragrance, this space is about inviting people into The Replica universe, merging storytelling with sensory exploration.”



08

It's giving *summer*.

SOL DE JANEIRO. 'UNLEASH YOUR SUMMER SELF' CAMPAIGN



BRINGING BRAZILIAN SUNSHINE

Sol de Janeiro’s three-month global promotional tour transformed over 105 airports worldwide into vibrant hubs of Brazilian-style celebration, designed to immerse travellers in a joyful, summer-themed retail experience.

By transforming airport spaces into immersive, sensory-rich environments filled with sampling, giveaways, vibrant visuals, and upbeat energy, the brand turned travel routines into joyful, unforgettable experiences.

Engagement was built in at every turn—vintage Vespa photo booths, energetic music, and "Happy Holiday Dance" features where customers could see their moves



synced on giant screens drew attention, whilst products could be explored with a “jungle wall” of mist dispensers featuring Sol de Janeiro’s bestselling scents. Shoppers received “wish” bracelets with uplifting slogans and cheerful stickers for customizing their “funky jar” purchases—adding a playful, personal touch.

“Rather than a static display, the playful photo ops, lively music, and shareable moments, tapped into Gen Z’s desire for immersive, Instagrammable experiences.”

09

A biophilic oasis.

WILDMOOR WHISKEY LAUNCH. CHANGI AIRPORT.

Changi Airport passengers were invited to be the first in Asia to experience the WILDMOOR range with an immersive activation space that transports to the rugged landscapes of the Scottish countryside from which the whiskey takes its inspiration. The multi-sensory space invites travellers to escape into a biophilic oasis through sights, sounds and touch culminating in a whisky-tasting and food-pairing experience at the pop-up bar.

Travellers can nose the smells of the forest, coastal and mountain landscapes that have inspired the Wildmoor 23, 30, and 40 Year Old expressions respectively.

The range of seven, rare blended whiskies pay homage to dramatic Scottish landscapes- they're Scottish flavour maps in a glass and this launch activity brings this to life in a deeply sensorial and connected way.



“The space is an holistic combination of information layers through digital touch-points and traditional liquid-on-lips and sensorial flavour evocation.”





10

Sloooooow travel.

REVIVING LUXURY TRAIN TRAVEL.

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TIME TO SPEND AS A STATUS SYMBOL

Luxury rail is fast becoming a platform for cultural storytelling, sustainability, and soft power; reshaping the flow of tourism and elevating understanding of regions and local traditions at an unhurried pace. With the inclusion of Michelin-starred dining, wellness suites and private cabins, luxury trains now rival boutique hotels. Slow travel by train helps people to uphold their environmental values while fulfilling their desire for memorable experiences.

In April 2025, Accor launched La Dolce Vita, a tour of Italy in a 1960s- cinema- inspired sleep train; blending regional storytelling, art and gastronomy to immerse guests in the country’s culture.

Luxury train company Golden Eagle is reactivating its ultra-long-haul routes across China and central Asia’s ancient trade and pilgrimage paths. In the UK, this year, Belmond launched the 18-suite Britannic Explorer and a programme of luxury journeys featuring Michelin-starred dining and a wellness carriage.

“The re-emergence of luxury train journeys represents a vision of travel that blends heritage, indulgence, and exploration with narrative-rich experiences.”

LS:N GLOBAL





“
For modern luxe travellers,
rail journeys can be a
canvas for *atmospheric*
and evocative experiences,
tapping into a desire for
nostalgia and heritage.

As time to spend is now a
status symbol, slow travel
also provides an antidote
to the pace and burnout of
modern life.

”

LS:N GLOBAL



Airport Aesthetic.

BORROWING THE VERNACULAR OF TRAVEL



MAISON MARGIELA. SHANGHAI.

This temporary installation presents a travel-inspired fashion collection by adopting the vernacular of airport design through a 1970s retro-futurist lens. A suite of engaging activities build on the thematic enveloping to enrich the themed experience- in one area guests can craft and print personalised boarding passes adding a tangible and bespoke touch to their visit.

The exhibition smartly echoes Maison Margiela's design ideals- journey, memory, and the art of the unexpected- by immersing visitors in a fully realised environment. The space invites us to engage with fashion as a narrative experience, not just products.



“Stylised set-pieces that evoke retro-futurism and nostalgia. A master-class in finely balanced narrative and thematic design.”

ANDREA ROBINETT. DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE & STRATEGY

FORESIGHT

Retail without *borders.*

~~POINT OF EXIT~~
POINT OF EXPERIENCE.



RESPONDING TO CULTURAL SHIFTS

Traditionally, travel retail has been boxed into physical spaces tied to logistics- airports, cruise ships, border zones. But that view is rapidly becoming outdated.

Around the world, we’re seeing examples of travel retail moving into high-footfall, high-emotion environments, not just transit points. Think in-town, in-hotel, and en route. In Hainan and in neighbouring Hong Kong, duty-free has expanded into a comprehensive retail and lifestyle ecosystem, blending physical stores with digital redemption, international delivery, and mobile app ordering. In South Korea, travellers can unlock duty-free pricing while shopping downtown by using their

boarding pass for verification. These aren’t anomalies- they’re signals that travel retail is shifting from being tied to location to being driven by intent. The opportunity for brands lies in using travel retail not only to sell but also to build identity, loyalty, and cultural relevance in places where consumers are most receptive. Travellers are often in a discovery mindset. They’re more open to inspiration, more likely to engage, and increasingly motivated by experience over price.

Success requires viewing travellers as not just buyers but brand storytellers- ones who will post, share, and influence peers well beyond the purchase moment.

“A value-led luxury approach- where travellers seek premium experiences but demand justified indulgence through cultural depth, exclusive amenities, or unique local elements.- will challenge brands to emphasize experiential value over mere status positioning.”

Backed by insight, the D4R *difference*.

HELLO, WE'RE DESIGN4RETAIL

Our strategy teams stay up to date and tapped into culture, always keeping an eye on what’s happening. That way, we can create more meaningful experiences by using strategic insights to guide every step of the project.

OUR DISCIPLINES,

- Brand storytelling
- Customer experience
- Pop-ups & activations
- Retail identity
- Store design & fit out





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