



Botanical Beauty

Lighting designers at Nulty helped create a luxurious retail experience for L'Occitane at its new flagship Regent Street location, emphasising and enhancing the brand's colour palette and natural aesthetic.

PROJECT DETAILS

L'Occitane Flagship Store, London, UK
 Client: L'Occitane UK
 Lighting Design: Nulty, UK
 Interior Design: FutureBrand Uxus, UK

Pics: Michael Franke



Twenty years after opening its boutique shop on London's Regent Street, French natural beauty, skincare and fragrance brand L'Occitane en Provence has moved to a new, 6,450sqft flagship store. In creating this new store, also located on Regent Street, L'Occitane commissioned lighting designers Nulty, alongside interior designers FutureBrand Uxus, to create a retail experience in fitting with the brand's luxury, natural aesthetic. Uxus was briefed to create a new, immersive experience that offered customers a luxurious and sensorial exploration of L'Occitane's full range of

natural beauty products, all inspired by the south of France art de vivre and Provençal beauty secrets. Its vision for the space was an enchanting retail experience with education and trial at the core, sharing L'Occitane's 'beauty of life' philosophy. "The region of Provence is at the soul of L'Occitane so we wanted to transport the customer there," said Olivier Termijtelen, Senior Designer at FutureBrand Uxus. "We incorporated real roses and showers of lavender in the interiors, and used tiles in warm yellow hues reminiscent of sunnier climes." The decision to use real flowers for the stunning centrepiece caused Uxus some issues, as Termijtelen explained: "The main challenge was to find fresh ingredients used in L'Occitane products that can also be used in a dry form to ensure longevity of the display, but not compromise the look. "Using fake ingredients was not an option, as it didn't speak to the originality of the botanical enrichment story we conveyed in the store, so we worked with a drying process that didn't discolour or damage the ingredients, and we were able to create a strong focal point." On entering the store, customers are taken on a journey from garden to table – the store is intended to be "an enrichment for all the senses", with sunshine yellows and rose gold accents flooding the space with a warm glow.

Previous Page FutureBrand Uxus created a special floral centrepiece featuring real roses and lavender, complementing the brand's "botanical enrichment story" throughout the store.
Above Light Flex tape from MJ Lighting gently illuminates the staircase to the first floor, gently pulling customers upstairs to continue their retail journey through the store.
Below Alongside the standard retail offering, this new flagship location includes a Pierre Hermé Paris macaron bar, handcare station, an abundant harvest table, a living beauty bar a wild scented garden and a sunshine fountain, making it an enrichment for all the senses.





Top Left The store boasts a warm colour palette throughout, with the yellow hue of the tiles reminiscent of sunnier climes.

Top Right Applelec LED Light Sheet adds a simple yet effective backlighting to signs throughout the store.

Above Fixtures from Flos, supplied by Atrium, add a decorative element to the store, complementing the ambient lighting from the perimeter joinery displays, provided by MJ Lighting, and task lighting, courtesy of Lucent Lighting's adjustable downlights.

According to Anna Sandgren, Associate Lighting Designer at Nulty, L'Occitane wanted the colours throughout to “emulate the ‘golden hour’ that you get before and after sunset, emphasising the warmth and natural ethos of the brand, and to complement the materials used within the interior design”.

Nulty has a strong working relationship with Uxus, having worked with them on the lighting scheme for Bloomingdales Kuwait, and this relationship proved beneficial for L'Occitane. Sandgren explained: “Having worked together previously meant that the relationships had been nurtured and lots of trust and confidence in our working relationship was apparent throughout the design process, and I think this translated into the scheme.”

The two companies ran design workshops in the early stages of the project, enabling Nulty to create a lighting scheme that worked well with the interiors, complementing the varied material palette by using LED technology to bring out the colours and textures within the interior, helping the products to stand out.

“We used high quality LEDs that pick up the true colours of all the materials used within the store,” continued Sandgren. “The brand’s palette is naturally warm and the lighting chosen reinforces this, making the space feel sunny, warm and inviting to customers.”

Due to the nature of the brand’s warm colour palette, there was no need for Sandgren to add any additional warmth in the way of colour temperature. Instead she specified high CRI LEDs, lit at 3000k. However, the store features a number of digital screens throughout, which could have had an impact on the lighting scheme.

“We had to control the amount of light emitted from them and balance that with other elements to ensure that the retail space didn’t feel over illuminated,” she explained. “The lighting scheme within the ceiling was clean and uncluttered, which meant careful consideration of the placement of the downlights, keeping the quantity to a minimum whilst ensuring the correct amount of light coverage was achieved on all products below.”

Nulty has an extensive portfolio of retail projects



“The unique concept design creates a truly multi-sensorial experience.”

Jamie Taylor, Retail, Wholesale and Property Director at L'Occitane UK

from around the world, and as such has a sound knowledge of what constitutes successful retail lighting. With this in mind, Sandgren felt it was important to incorporate layers of light throughout the store. “Ambient lighting was achieved from the perimeter joinery displays, whilst task lighting featured from the adjustable downlights, illuminating the merchandise on sale,” she explained. “The interior displays, such as the flower installations, were lit as feature elements together with the architectural coffers, adding additional visual interest within the store and catching the attention of passing customers.” The shop floor is divided into beauty zones; a sunshine fountain with an array of soaps, a wild scented garden allowing customers to explore and find their fragrance, a pampering handcare

bar, an abundant harvest table and a living beauty bar. Holistic treatments are provided upstairs, with refreshments and Pierre Hermé Paris macarons served while customers relax. As such, Sandgren believes that it was an “ambitious design with a limited timeframe” to achieve and coordinate all the different elements, but she added that Nulty achieved this by “working in close collaboration with the client, while our existing relationship with Uxus allowed us to work quickly and effectively”. The new Regent Street store is unlike any other L'Occitane shop, from arrival to exit, FutureBrand Uxus and Nulty have created a restorative oasis of calm on the busy London shopping street, and Sandgren believes that L'Occitane's firm idea of what they wanted

helped to make it such a success. “The history and story behind a brand always help a designer when creating a vision for a store,” she said. “L'Occitane knew exactly what they wanted to achieve from the new flagship retail space while really understanding their well-established customer base. Altogether this meant that the brief was steady – which isn't always the case in retail.” Jamie Taylor, Retail, Wholesale and Property Director at L'Occitane UK, is delighted with the new location. “We are thrilled to secure our first UK flagship store on Regent Street,” he said. “This new store sets our customers at the heart of an unforgettable retail experience, with personalisation and customisation at the core. “The unique concept design creates a truly multi-sensorial experience. Memory creation

through inspirational storytelling was our vision for this Flagship Experience Store, providing an immersive exploration true to our deep Provençal roots.” Sandgren agrees with Taylor's sentiment, and she feels that the lighting greatly adds to the aesthetic that L'Occitane were trying to achieve in their new flagship location. “The lighting doesn't take over from either the brand or the interior designer's vision – it works with it and reinforces it,” she said. “Although not warm in its nature, the lighting helps reinforce and celebrate the brand's colour palette. “It is all about understanding the brand and what it wants to communicate, and using light as an emotional tool helps to connect the customer with this brand identity.” ■ www.nultylighting.co.uk

■ LIGHTING SPECIFIED

- Applelec LED Light Sheet
- Flos IC Light S1 & S2
- Flos IC F2 by Michael Anastassiades
- Lucent Lighting Accent trimless downlight
- Lucent Lighting Prospex Axis Midi trimless downlight
- Lucent Lighting Prospex 50 accent
- Lucent Lighting Prospex 90 fixed trimless downlight
- MJ Lighting Light Flex E Curve
- MJ Lighting Light Flex 120
- MJ Lighting LightLine Grande
- MJ Lighting LightLine Mini Square