

FASHION

Matchesfashion.com moves from e-commerce to a six storey retail space

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You've never enjoyed a retail experience like this before



Image: Cat Garcia

We all know [fashion](#) is cyclical. It's an industry that loves to dip into its own archives to find inspiration and then give it a fresh, new take. And that is exactly what London's *MatchesFashion.com* is doing.

31 years ago the first *Matches* store opened its doors in London's affluent residential area, [Wimbledon](#). Known for its edit of super cool and independent labels, the brand soon opened a second store in the very trendy Marylebone and started to work with the big brands too. In 2006, the brand decided it was time to go e-tail—and today *MatchesFashion.com* has become every fashion girl's go-to digital destination. It was one of the first brick-and-mortar stores to make that jump into e-commerce. And today, alongside *Moda Operandi* and *Farfetch*, it is where every young designer hopes to make its e-tail [home](#).

But in an interesting turn of events, it seems like the time has arrived for fashion [e-commerce](#) to look to the past to stay on top of the curve. While fashion customers may love the ease and convenience of e-tailing, they miss the touch and feel that physical locations allow you to have with clothes and accessories. "Customers like to connect, to engage," explains Jess Christie, chief brand officer. That's why when the brand turned 30 last year, they looked at pop-up concepts in [New York](#), [Los Angeles](#) and [Paris](#). And this system that has not only worked for *MatchesFashion.com*—*Moda Operandi* has embraced the concept too, and has a by-appointment showroom in New York and London. The success of the pop-ups prompted *MatchesFashion.com* to take things one step further, and open a space that takes experiential retail to a entirely new level.

Located at 5 Carlos Place in London's Mayfair, a stone's throw from Goyard's and Roland Mouret's flagship stores in London, this five-storied, 7000sq ft, 19th-century heritage townhouse building is very different to any other brick-and-mortar retail destination. Designed by the architect firm P Joseph, it is on the cutting edge of technology (with embedded QR codes all over the house), and all pieces can be delivered to you within 90 minutes, provided you are in London. It's almost like the store provides you with the convenience of online shopping, while also making you feel like you're part of a member's only club. And of course you can pre-reserve pieces through *MatchesFashion.com*. There are two floors of curated retail space and two floors of personal shopping suites, along with a broadcast hub, from where all events and collaborations held at the space will be broadcasted on their website. "We wanted to look after our existing customers [and] offer them a space which gives them the best," said Christie. "And at the same time, the Townhouse will allow new customers to discover and understand the world of *MatchesFashion.com*."

Even the art, curated by the non-profit [London](#) based gallery House of Voltaire, is shoppable. *MatchesFashion.com* is known for working very close with the art world. "It's very much lead by our clients, and art and food is a big part of their lives, and so it needs to be a part of our environment too," explains Christie. With its chic cafe, tropical garden and a calendar of events that includes a focus on new talent—right now French designer [Marine Serre](#)'s special capsule collection is on display on the ground floor, in an installation form that celebrates the label love for all things sporty. For the launch week, *MatchesFashion.com* worked with Prada on an installation that highlighted the 100-plus pieces that had been exclusively designed for the project.

The brand says that shopping is about more than just clothes. It's about a lifestyle. "It is an experience in story-telling," says Christie. It is bringing a personal touch back to fashion—one that is about touch, feel and emotions. "The pace of this very thing has become relentless, and perhaps there is need to slow things down, to remember to enjoy experiences." This clearly explains why the e-tailer is not only looking to the [traditional](#) retail at this point in time, but is also reinventing it to become something more than your regular shopping experience.

Scroll onwards for a look at the *MatchesFashion.com*'s new space.

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Image: Cat Garcia