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Sylvie de France interview: Designing the perfect perfume bottle

What makes a good perfume bottle design? Its shape? The materials used? Or the fact that it starts a whole new trend? Packaging designer Sylvie de France – currently creating a range of Q-Line perfume bottles for Quadpack – explains how she incorporates that certain 'je ne sais quoi' that makes her designs so special.

What makes a perfect perfume bottle? Is there a magic formula?

A perfume bottle is a container that enhances the content: the fragrance.

It also serves to seduce. As such, it must attract the eye and tempt you to discover the fragrance inside. Altogether, it should be elegant, magical and ergonomic.

Where do you start? Where does the initial inspiration come from?

The inspiration comes from a specific universe and from the message it has to deliver. It is male or female, classic or modern, sensual or magical, tender or confident, poetic, prestige... It stems from a world of words that will turn into a form, with lines and a distinct style. If you want to express tenderness and sensuality, for example, the shape 'language' will be different from a pure prestige expression.

How do you ensure the design fits the brand?

It is important to analyse the brand's guidelines, its background and its objectives, in order to keep consist with the style and the universe that has been created around it. The secret of success is to find that balance between the brand DNA and the surprise of something new and original. This is the conceptual part of creating a bottle, its box and the story that they will communicate. Next comes the design itself, the research of the shape.

Designing a bottle is also an exchange with the brand and its marketing representatives. I can design the most beautiful bottle but, if the client does not feel it is a good fit, we continue to research, until we find DNA consistency with the story we want to tell.

Is bespoke design always best in the fragrance sector?

A tailored design allows the brand to have a unique bottle and therefore full ownership of the model. Nevertheless, there are a great many successes in perfumery made with standard bottles. In these cases, the art consists of applying a signature through personalisation – decoration, colours, materials, etc – to make the bottle belong to the brand.

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How important is secondary packaging?

The box is very important in perfumery. It is there to protect the bottle, but also to communicate in store the brand values and the story it wants to tell. Together, the box and bottle transmit the message and explain the perfume. We must not forget that the objective is to sell a fragrance, a scent!

So what is trending now in perfume bottles?

Right now, there is a trend and even a requirement among brands to have a beautiful bottle on the inside as well as the outside. This explains the current focus on glass thicknesses to optimise the beauty of the inner wall of the bottle.

Can you tell us a little about the new Q-Line range you are designing? What can we expect?

The new Q-Line range will be elegant, timeless and, above all, adapt to different worlds. We must find that perfect place between having style and leaving plenty of room for customisation.

The most important thing for me in a perfume bottle is to attract the largest number of people and to convey emotion. Strong, direct and positive emotion. In the fragrance sector, we speak of love, pleasure, beauty... This is a place where we need to dream.

The Q-Line perfume bottles, exclusive to Quadpack's portfolio, will be launched in 2016.

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About Quadpack Industries SA

Quadpack Industries is an international manufacturer and a provider of enhanced packaging solutions for beauty brand owners and contract fillers. With offices and production facilities in Europe, North America, and the Asia Pacific region and a strategic network of manufacturing partners, Quadpack develops bespoke and customised packs for prestige, masstige and mass market customers. For more information, please visit www.quadpack.com.

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