



KaDeWe is a fixture on the Berlin landscape – and in Berliners' hearts. However, the luxury department store is determined to stay at the forefront of beauty retail and has remodelled its beauty department

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KaDeWe offers a new vision of beauty

- KaDeWe has been a key figure in Berlin's luxury beauty landscape since 1907
- Its parent company, Karstadt Warenhaus, is restaging its department stores in an effort to restore its fortunes
- The revamp of KaDeWe's beauty department is a key element of this strategy

KaDeWe faces up to its beauty future

KaDeWe is arguably the most famous luxury department store in Berlin as well as one of the top 10 tourist attractions in the city.

The store is located in the Western part of Berlin, right on Tauentzienstraße, the road that becomes legendary Kurfürstendamm shopping boulevard just a few blocks further down.



Built in 1907 and destroyed in 1943 during WWII, KaDeWe was restored in 1950 and became a symbol of the city's rebirth, occupying a special place in Berliners' hearts ever since. Expanded and renovated over the following decades, today the store occupies 60,000sqm of retail space.

New and improved

This month, the latest incarnation of KaDeWe includes a completely remodelled beauty hall. The Beautyworld department now features bigger counters, different brand groupings and a whole new collection of premium and niche labels. Among the new arrivals are fragrance labels Jo Malone, Agonist, Diptyque and Blood Concept as well as Eve Lom skin care, nail polish brand Deborah Lippmann and hair care label miriamquevedo. Altogether, the perfumery department now offers more than 400 beauty brands.



Colour and care

To the right of Beautyworld are the big international luxury labels, starting with MAC, Estée Lauder, La Prairie, La Mer and Tom Ford Cosmetics, the last of which is exclusive to KaDeWe. These are flanked by heavyweights Dior, Givenchy, YSL, Chanel, Shiseido and Bobbi Brown.



Further inside the store, there are Lancôme, Helena Rubinstein, Biotherm and Guerlain as well as Clarins, Clinique and Kiehl's. More niche premium skin care collections are organised along the back wall, including the likes of QMS, Payot, Dermalogica, Glominerals, Rodial, SBT Skin Biology Therapy, Decléor, A4 and Lancaster.

The Chanel and Dior areas each occupy 70 sq m and house the brands' exclusive fragrance collections, Les Exclusifs de Chanel and Dior's La Collection Privée, as well as their standard colour and skincare ranges.

Surrounded by scent

In the middle of the store, the Fragrance Archway gathers together niche fragrance brands such as Bond, Creed and Loewe. New arrivals Maison de Guerlain – one of the few Guerlain fragrance boutiques in Germany – and the expanded Hermès boutique are also located here, along with Byredo and by Kilian.

To the left of the archway, mainstream fragrance players such as Prada, Eli Saab, Comme des Garçons, Cartier, Hugo Boss, Giorgio Armani and Gucci are on show, along with a counter run by Sahling, the German distributor of Annick Goutal, Lalique, Penhaligon's and Amouage.



On the left hand side of the store things become a little more individualistic. Here, there are independent brands such as Rituals, L'Occitane and Korres, as well as Molton Brown and Bareminerals. German stalwarts also have a presence, led by Dr. Hauschka, Santa Verde, Artdeco, Alessandro, Biodroga and Annemarie Börlind.



KaDeWe is keen to make men feel welcome too, offering skincare and shaving preps as well as the store's assortment of mass market products and accessories.



The retailer is also following the current trend of providing pampering and professional services to its visitors. It houses six different beauty treatment lounges, three in Beautyworld and three on the third floor. Each is run by a separate brand, namely Shiseido, Estée Lauder, Dr. Hauschka, La Prairie, La Mer and Kanebo.



What's next

KaDeWe is determined to maintain its position as Berlin's leading luxury department store, so it will need to constantly refresh its beauty offer with new brands and services

KaDeWe is in a strong position to benefit from Berlin's growing number of international visitors and thus to improve its own international standing.

Many of these overseas visitors come from the Middle East and China, so KaDeWe would benefit from a selection of brands and exclusives that directly target these visitors. The addition of a mini-day spa would also play well with these guests, while male pampering services would help keep men occupied and entertained as their partners shop the store and try out the treatment menus. The provision of Chinese and Arab-speaking personal beauty shoppers would maximise the store's appeal.

The beauty department may also provide a useful blueprint for the rest of the Karstadt group, which is currently being redeveloped in an attempt to turn its fortunes round. The group went perilously close to disappearing altogether when its then parent, Arcandor, went bankrupt in 2009. Finding a point of difference will be key to the stores' complete survival, and that's where a coherent beauty and treatment strategy comes in.

Upmarket own label ranges will also boost the retailer's bottom line. The Kartstadt chain plans to launch an own label range called She, and a similar, but more upscale fragrance, cosmetics and gifting range would fit well with KaDeWe's beauty offer.

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