Balenciaga’s It-bag ‘Le Cagole’ extends range, stars in 12 pop-up stores

By Dominique Muret - 22 April 2022

After Bangkok, it is now London’s turn to host, until May 8, the Balenciaga pop-up store dedicated to the ‘Cagole’ handbag, at the label’s Mount Street shop. The ‘Cagole’ pop-up store will continue on its round-the-world tour in 10 more cities after London until July 15, from China to Macau, the USA and Dubai, each celebrating the ‘it bag’ of the moment, the choice of many leading influencers and celebrities including Kim Kardashian, who became a Balenciaga brand ambassador in a recent advertising campaign.

A shaggily creative ambience to host ‘Le Cagole’ and its family - Balenciaga

Ever since making its maiden appearance in the Fall 2021 pre-collection, ‘Le Cagole’, named after a slang term used in Marseilles to describe a vulgar, provocative woman, has enjoyed unprecedented success. Tapping this enthusiasm, Balenciaga has introduced ‘Le Cagole’ in a range of formats, colours and leather types, and has created around it a line featuring a variety of products like wallets, clutches, sandals, boots and more, all of them showcased in the ‘Cagole’ pop-up stores.

The latter are completely upholstered in shaggy pink fake fur - from shelves to display cases to the floor, chairs and walls - in a quintessentially ‘cagole’ style. At the stores, customers have the opportunity to personalise their ‘Cagole’ products, as Kering-owned Balenciaga indicated in a press release. ‘Le Cagole’ is priced between €950 and €1,950.

‘Le Cagole’ is a crescent-shaped shoulder bag made in soft leather. There is no logo in plain view, and the bag is studded and decorated with biker-style details such as mini pockets, leather straps, zips, eyelets and metal buckles. It is also distinctive for the two gimmicky accessories attached to one of its eyelets: a leather card-holder/purse and a small heart-shaped mirror.

With the ‘Cagole’, Balenciaga’s creative director Demna has revamped the famous ‘Motorcycle Bag’ designed in 2001 by Nicolas de Ghesquière, then in charge of style at Balenciaga. The ‘Motorcycle Bag’ was larger and softer.
2001 by Nicolas de Ghesquière, then in charge of style at Balenciaga. The ‘Motorcycle Bag’ was larger and rather shapeless, clearly inspired by 1980s design. Its introduction had initially been opposed by the label’s top hierarchy, because it did not fit with the style prevailing at the time. Yet it was quite a hit in the 2000s. What better way to capture the current Y2K trend, a kind of nostalgia that seems to have gripped Gen Z consumers for the rather naff, expressive style in vogue at the turn of the century?

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