



musée
international
 de la **PARFUMERIE**

Press release

After four years of work, the new International Perfume Museum will reopen its doors in Grasse on October 18th 2008. The City of Grasse, in order to meet market demand and perpetuate the art of perfume, undertook a major renovation and expansion project for the International Perfume Museum, at a total cost of 11,3 million Euros.

Created in 1989, this **one-of-a-kind museum** is found in the highly symbolic City of Grasse, the cradle of the luxury perfume trade that began in France. Dedicated to one of **the most prestigious traditional French businesses**, the International Perfume Museum, a public institution devoted to safeguarding and promoting the **international heritage of scents, aromas and perfumes**, allows visitors to discover the unique history of the great perfume Houses and producers.

Bearing witness to the international technical, aesthetic, social and cultural history of the tradition of using scents, the museum covers every aspect of the history of fragrance through an anthropological approach: raw materials, manufacture, industry, innovation, business, design,



customs, and through very diverse forms (decorative arts, textiles, archaeological finds, unique industrial pieces or forms).

The museum is a living repertory of the social events that marked an era.

Extraordinary collections

Following a Western historic chronology – ancient times, the Middle Ages, modern and contemporary periods – it is organised into five sections, each representing a continent, and contemporary themes: elegance and Classicism, magic and dynamism, frivolity and hygiene. In every civilisation, perfumes have given rise to an incredible production of precious, elegant objects made of rare materials: **alabaster, enamel earthenware, ceramics, glass, wrought metals**.

Through extraordinary collections of objects and simulations of the various industrial techniques, the museum traces the history of perfumes as well as of soaps, makeup and cosmetics over the last four thousand years.

More than 5,000 objects make up the museum's collection, with flasks from Egypt, Greece and Rome and all five continents, including Marie Antoinette's famous « nécessaire ».

The International Perfume Museum features objects representing the decorative arts, botany, industry, ethnography and sociology, ranging from the extraordinary masterpiece to everyday mass-produced wares that nonetheless bear witness to their time.

This 21st century museum looks at the past but also at the present, and even the future if we consider the section on the era of globalisation, marketing and communication, and the new markets.

New International Perfume Museum

With this renovation, **the museum has doubled its size** and now offers visitors **3,500 m²**, having annexed adjoining buildings (the Pontevès Hotel, the current museum and the Pélissier building) by means of a **grand transparent nave**.

Architect **Frédéric Jung** was put in charge of the architectural design, which centres on a 14th century rampart : exposure of the fortification by means of a Griffith flaw freeing up the exhibition and traffic areas, creation of a glass nave protecting the fortification's axis, reconstruction of the old Pélissier building, and outdoor development with gardens and terraces...

Visitors will be charmed by a townhouse freed from all its past additions and restored to its original appearance, especially the inner courtyard and facades, which have been completely restored.

New rooms will be created : a temporary exhibition room, an 80-seat lecture hall, a restaurant, the IPM Café that looks out onto the garden, two classrooms for school events, two classrooms for adult workshops, and a reception room for children, IPM Ateliers.

A reference

Constantly seeking to enrich its collections, the International Perfume Museum has considerably expanded its activities : themed exhibits, school and extramural events, involvement in annual national events, participation in trade shows.

IPM Doc, the documentation centre/library, will be developed and be more easily accessible to researchers.

There will be themed and educational visits for very diverse audiences, miscellaneous experiments (olfactory and gustatory events), tourist receptions, and meetings of professionals and researchers will be offered.

These **outreach efforts aimed at various audiences** promote individual creation and an awareness of our senses: touch, sight, and of course smell.

At the same time, the museum team is creating **various forms of outreach** that will appear in the new museum in collaboration with the architect and the museographers (databases from all perfumery-related collections in all French museums, and in the IPM's collections, synopses of the various audio guides and videos, the Internet site...). As part of this expansion, and together with the main visit route, the museum is starting a complementary reading focus, to open up discussion about **an artistic vision of the world of perfume**.

This will both question and move the visitor as well as providing answers, in order to **make a visit here a multisensory experience**.

The museum and contemporary art

The museum has called upon renowned artists such as **Berdaguer & Pejus, Downsborough, Collin Thiebaud, Brigitte Nahon, Jean-Michel Othoniel, Giuseppe Penone, Dominique Thévenin** (...) to decorate certain indoor and outdoor spaces.

The works created will form an overview of contemporary art within the museum, associated with topics from the world of perfumery: the poetry of the raw plant materials, smell and the awakening of the senses, luxury and design, glasswork and transparency, industry and its materials... At the same time, the museum will be presenting scheduled events associated with contemporary art: temporary exhibits, installations, performances, live shows, lectures presenting the work of certain artists associated with perfume.

The people behind the project

From 1989 on, the museum experienced increasing success, putting it in **7th place among museums in the Alpes-Maritimes**, under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture and Communication (55,000 visitors a year).

This success very quickly justified its expansion and remodelling in order to **make it accessible to more diverse audiences and to enable it to contribute more to the success of cultural tourism**.

France's Office of Museums approved the scientific and cultural project for the new museum, drawn up by the curator appointed in 1989 and carried forward by **Jean-Pierre Leleux** (Mayor of Grasse, Vice-President of the Conseil Général des Alpes-Maritimes, President of the Pôle Azur Provence with support from Mrs **Dominique Bourret** (Deputy Mayor of Grasse, Youth & Cultural Affairs Delegate, Vice-Presidente for the Pôle Azur Provence) and **Marie-Christine Grasse**, (Chief curator of the museums of Grasse).

This project is part of the PASS (Perfumes, Aromas, Savours, Scents) competitiveness centre approach, which was awarded to the PACA region in 2005.

Partners of the International Perfume Museum



International Perfume Museum, Grasse - © MIP Jacques Penon

THE INTERNATIONAL PERFUME MUSEM RECEIVES SUPPORT FROM :

- MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE ET DE LA COMMUNICATION
- DIRECTION RÉGIONALE DES AFFAIRES CULTURELLES PROVENCE-ALPES-CÔTE D'AZUR
- CONSEIL RÉGIONAL PROVENCE-ALPES-CÔTE D'AZUR
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- FRAGRANCE FOUNDATION
- SOCIÉTÉ FRANÇAISE DES PARFUMEURS

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PRESS CONTACTS

Heymann, Renoult associées - Press relations - Tél. 00 33 (0)1 44 61 76 76 - Email : lgillion@heyman-renoult.com - www.heyman-renoult.com

Visuals and files downloadable on the site

Musée International de la Parfumerie - Brigitte Lamielle - Chargée de la communication - Tél. 00 33 (0)4 97 05 58 12

Email : communication@museesdegrasse.com - www.museesdegrasse.com

