

**Designed by Piero Lissoni as part of an international collaboration project which began in Istanbul and will continue in other major European cities**

**BENETTON'S NEW-LOOK PLACE DE L'OPERA STORE  
IN PARIS LOOKS TO THE FUTURE  
AND INTERACTS WITH THE PAST**

Ponzano, 09 September 2010. The Benetton megastore in Paris reopens on 16th September to reveal a new look designed by Piero Lissoni, where innovation goes hand-in-hand with history. Located in a Haussmann style 19th-century building overlooking Place de l'Opéra – a key destination for international shopping – the store rises through three floors. Its design concept successfully blends Benetton's innovation-driven identity, with the historical vibe of the French capital.

UNITED COLORS  
OF BENETTON.

The renovation of the Paris store marks a new stage in the Benetton/Lissoni alliance. This international journey into style and progressiveness was launched in Istanbul in 2009, with a flagship store entirely designed by Lissoni. It continued in London with the prestigious Oxford Circus store, and will include further stores in striking buildings in major European cities, from Frankfurt to Milan, each expressing and interpreting the local culture.

As in London, the Paris revamp started with a sensitive restoration of the building's original features, emphasising the arched windows of the neoclassical facade, and enhancing the sense of rapport between the exterior and the interior. The renovated spaces elegantly highlight the characteristics of the collections: the lower ground floor houses the Benetton kids' collection; the ground floor is for Benetton women's collections; and Benetton woman and man are on the first floor.

"For the Paris store, we wanted a clean and refined design using simple, understated mediums: natural light, plain materials, clean lines and shapes, black, white," said Piero Lissoni. "For me, light is an important structural element of the space, and is further emphasised by a palette that focuses on white, including the pure volumes of the perfectly technical, functional fittings. The materials chosen for the store fittings are deliberately simple, yet exude powerful, sober tactile and decorative qualities. The use of sheet-metal boxes is extended to the fittings and screens, used for the window displays. The drawn sheet metal entirely covers the ceilings, giving a sense of uniformity and depth."

All purposely designed by Lissoni (apart from the Bubble Rock sofa from Living Divani), the fittings take the shape of big metal or wooden boxes, wardrobes on castors, tables in natural shapes. Plus rail, shelf and hanging systems which resemble large, light, sophisticated 50s-style bookcases: a group of elements designed to present a neatly arranged

showcase of Benetton apparel and accessories, the true features of the interior.

References to colour, an essential element in the Benetton identity, are never far away: on the back wall of the store, the name of the city is emphasized in the words United Colors of Paris written in black sheet metal and highlighted in pink neon.

Communication and aesthetic language – two of Benetton's distinguishing traits – are an integral part of the installation designed by Piero Lissoni: four poems and a story are represented, all by classic French authors, including *Hymne à la Beauté* and *La Beauté* by Baudelaire, Verlaine's *l'Art Poétique* and *Marine*, and Saint-Exupéry's famous tale *The Little Prince*. The quotations hang by the stairs, on a double-height wall, in the form of a bright installation of pink LEDs, offering a visible, elegant manifestation of French spirit and culture.

The Benetton Paris megastore revamp and the brand's partnership with Lissoni are part of *Opening Soon...*, a programme of sales network-oriented investments aimed at implementing new architectural and design concepts in the retail spaces of the world's major cities and in a number of cities that are icons of the world's transformation. The "new frontier" of Benetton stores debuted in 2009 with the Istanbul flagship store.

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