

RH Paris is a love letter to the French capital city

The new RH gallery in the French capital draws inspiration from and pays tribute to Paris' architectural heritage and urban landscape

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The gilded wrought iron gates are an original feature welcoming visitors to the only property on the Champs-Élysées that doesn't open immediately onto the avenue Courtesy Of RH

It makes perfect sense that [Paris](#) would be the setting for RH's grand French debut. And not just anywhere in Paris, but on the Champs-Élysées, that famously gilded avenue where [architecture](#), commerce and spectacle have long consorted. The American luxury furniture brand, formerly Restoration Hardware, has also become known for its grand architectural gestures, and its latest gallery, which opened in September, is no exception.

Visitors approach RH Paris not through a conventional doorway but through tall, gilded wrought-iron gates and along a hedge-lined path. At the end stands the Interior Design Studio, a gleaming glass pavilion designed, as the whole project has been, by British international architecture firm [Foster + Partners](#).



The Architecture and Design library at RH Paris features contemporary and rare books including a 16th century edition of Vitruvius' 'De Architectura' Courtesy Of RH

A pair of huge medallion-stamped bronze doors welcome visitors into the gallery itself, an almost a huge space originally built in 1983. Inside, visitors are greeted by the architecture and design library. A circa 1521 edition of Vitruvius's 'De Architectura' takes pride of place beside works by [art](#) and design giants. This dedication to scholarship and craftsmanship is central to RH's self-presentation: design as intellectual pursuit.

The building is wrapped around a central [staircase](#) that rises dramatically through the atrium, a feature which is not only a feat of engineering but feels like an act of generosity, as the uppermost level of the building in its former iterations (it was also once an Abercrombie and Fitch store) were inaccessible to the public.



The atrium at RH Paris with the floating staircase and brass and glass elevator Courtesy Of RH

Across the lower levels, RH Paris's luxurious furniture collections are shown alongside specially commissioned works of art. On the second floor, visitors looking to enjoy RH's famous hospitality will find one of its restaurants, [Le Jardin](#). Its sweeping curved glass cover was inspired by the nearby Grand Palais. Walk to the end of the restaurant and one will see not only the perfectly manicured garden, but a copy of the Winged Victory (Nike) of Samothrace, a nod to the treasures of the Louvre about a mile and half away.



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Courtesy Of RH

On the very top of the building, on a terrace once inaccessible by the public, is the restaurant Le Petit RH Rooftop. You reach it by a brass-and-glass elevator that silently glides upward and out through a theatrical though elegant hatch that opens directly onto the rooftop. There one is met by one of the best views in Paris. It is yet another element that demonstrates the gallery to be more than a retail venture, but rather an earnest love letter to the city itself.



Le Petit RH, the restaurant on the rooftop of the new RH Paris gallery which offers breathtaking views of the city Courtesy Of RH

The new RH arrives at a time when heritage, research and craftsmanship are reasserting their cultural value and where brands considering their cultural legacy as much as the objects they sell. RH's new gallery on the Champs-Élysées, opening in the year when [Art Deco's](#) casts a spotlight on Paris as a design mecca, sees the brand position itself not simply as a purveyor of luxury furniture, but with a long lineage of practitioners of architectural ambition.