

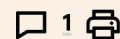
A first look at RH in Paris

The billion-dollar lifestyle brand has arrived on the Élysées. It's set on seducing the French



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"I mean, pinch me. When I sit here and think back to being a stock boy at The Gap as a kid..." RH's fast-talking chairman and CEO Gary Friedman is discussing the opening party of his latest "gallerie" ahead of Paris Design Week. "I had never even been to Europe until I was 35 and the first time I saw Paris, I thought it was the most beautiful city. So for me to sit here now we're opening a store in Paris, what we call our *Mona Lisa*, is really something. It's our best work yet."

The American luxury [home furnishings](#) company has a simple strategy: take over grand buildings in the world's global hubs and turn the buying experience on its head, creating a curated lifestyle within a framework of

spectacular architecture that visitors can find themselves immersed in.

[RH Paris](#) is the most anticipated opening since the company (formerly known as Restoration Hardware) began its expansion into Europe, with [RH England](#), in 2023. That opening party at Aynhoe Park, a 17th-century, 73-acre Cotswolds estate, was a celebrity-studded affair; Idris Elba DJed as Ellen DeGeneres partied with Portia de Rossi (whose art curation company General Public partners with RH). Last year the expansion went into full swing with openings in Brussels and Madrid and the launch of the RH Düsseldorf and RH Munich galleries in Germany.



The atrium of the new store, designed by Foster + Partners

Some have described RH's strategy as risky, but it announced revenues of \$814mn in the quarter ending 3 May 2025, with 11.97 per cent growth. This brings the company's revenue in the past 12 months to \$3.27bn amid the most challenging US housing market for decades. "People have been scratching their heads asking what's the secret sauce," says StocksToTrade's lead trainer Tim Bohen. "They seem to have their strategy hat on – implementing tactics that manage risks of tariffs, shifting their production lines [away from China] and enhancing revenue streams."

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Can you believe we are opening a showroom

Friedman started as a stock boy and rose to become the youngest regional manager at

that doesn't have a front door?

RH CEO Gary Friedman

[Gap](#) before taking [Pottery Barn](#) from a \$50mn tableware business to a \$1bn-plus furniture brand as its president. RH was on the

brink of bankruptcy before he took over in 2001. "We are probably one of the least understood stories on Wall Street with one of the most volatile stocks," says the 67-year-old. "And we go through periods where people will say, 'What the heck are they doing?' and then all of a sudden it comes together and we take another leapfrog... despite the fact Trump has just announced tariffs on furniture. Necessity is the mother of invention and any obstacles that come our way generally lead to invention and innovation."

He describes the multi-year restoration of the Paris building on the [Champs-Élysées](#), in partnership with [Foster + Partners](#), as a jewel box. "Can you believe we are opening a showroom that doesn't have a front door?" he says. "Instead there are these incredible 18ft golden gates that open into a hedge-lined walkway that sweeps around to a rear garden. On one side we've built this glass-framed structure for our interior design studio and on the other side are gigantic carved medallion doors. It's an experience just walking to the front door."



The Le Jardin 3 restaurant

Through those gilded doors one steps into a design and architecture library. The backlit bookshelves, which will hold rare editions related to architecture, are already in situ while, at the centre of this vestibule, workmen are busy marking out custom onyx flooring at the spot where visitors will find an air-conditioned glass museum presentation case. “We’ve acquired a second printing of *De Architectura* – we also have one in the Cotswolds – which is the original 10 books on architecture by Marcus Vitruvius Pollio and one of the first modern printings from 1521,” Friedman explains. “The company’s guiding principles are taken from Vitruvius: balance, symmetry and perfect proportion.”

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Architecturally, it’s like it dropped from heaven into our laps

Gary Friedman

A galleried atrium cuts through the centre of the building. On one side is a jaw-dropping staircase lined by brass medallion balustrades, with treads of white onyx that will be backlit to create the

illusion of suspension. The staircase is original to the building but has been replicated and extended on the upper floors of what was formerly an Abercrombie & Fitch store. “We didn’t keep anything from Abercrombie because they didn’t let any light in,” Friedman explains. “So we made it a shell but left the atrium and opened all the windows.”

Looking down from here, you will see a circa 1870 Louis-Félix Chabaud statue of a woman sourced on one of chief product curator Gary Spain’s many antiques trips. “She is so magnificent I wanted her for my swimming pool at my house in the Napa Valley because I have this 86ft pool that looks like it falls into the vineyards,” says Friedman. “I wanted to put her at the end of the pool and light her up. But she was perfect for this space.”



Furniture on display in the Paris showroom

The building was only conceived in 1983. “It’s next door to the offices of the Dassault family of the aviation empire and was commissioned by Marcel Dassault,” says Friedman. “This is a smaller space than we would normally have in a city location, and it will show the least amount of furniture because the floors around the atrium only have one wall, but architecturally it’s like it dropped from heaven into our laps.”

Despite Friedman’s jokes about not seeing any furniture for the first 150 feet, there are several striking pieces being uncovered from their wrapping. The furniture offering also extends to lighting and textiles, bathware, outdoor and garden pieces (there is also an interior design studio), will include a new coffee table by French interior architect Thierry Lemaire.

Art is used to elevate the mood throughout the building. On the lower level will be the work of Argentine abstract artist Karina Gentinetta, while Yugoslavian-born neoexpressionist Vladimir Prodanovich’s painting of dancing figures hangs on the ground floor. The upper-floor restaurants also feature art: in the second-floor entrance of Le Jardin RH is the work of Swedish artist Sara Bergman and paintings by Jean-Marc Louis hang in the fourth-floor restaurant Le Petit RH.



Le Petit RH, the fourth-floor and rooftop restaurant

Hospitality is a key part of the RH machine and although not all of its destinations have restaurants, here the discovery of an unused rooftop with views of the Eiffel Tower made it essential. “Nobody thought we could use the rooftop because it didn’t have an elevator — and no one thought we could build an elevator because you would have to create a 15ft shaft for it that would block people’s view of the Tower,” Friedman says. “Credit to Foster + Partners, which came up with the idea of a brass-and-glass elevator that pops out from a hatch on the floor and then disappears again. Now we have one of the most beautiful rooftops in the city.”

They tiptoed around the idea of serving French fare. “Our French chef said ‘No, Paris does not need another place to get French onion soup. Do your American-Mediterranean classics.’” Friedman says. “So on the top floor we have Le Petit RH, which connects to the rooftop, for champagne and caviar but will also serve side plates.”



Fridge cabinets loaded with champagne in the top-floor restaurant Le Petit RH

“Is there a road map for this kind of store?” says Friedman. “No, but there is a lot of logic behind it. We know how much traffic a restaurant drives to a home store, and we know that if we express our design ethos on every floor and in every hospitality experience it’s all elevating the brand and rendering it more valuable,” Friedman says. “There are things that don’t work all the time but that doesn’t frighten us. We don’t hide from it, we learn from it.”

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He is already looking forward to the opening of a store in Mayfair in spring 2026. “Wait until you see what Anouska Hempel did. It’s unbelievable. She designed the rooftop and it is like walking into *Alice in*

Wonderland,” says Friedman. They will also open RH Milan during Design Week in April 2026. But for now Friedman is all about Paris. “I wrote an introduction letter to our store and yes it’s a kind of love letter to Paris,” he says. “I think we will make Parisians proud.”