

DESIGN & INTERIORS

## Discover the new RH Paris Gallery: design, dining, drama

In a grand setting on the Champs-Élysées, the new RH Paris gallery merges Parisian splendour with contemporary interventions by Foster + Partners, presenting the American company's unique blend of design, art and hospitality



(Image credit: Courtesy RH)

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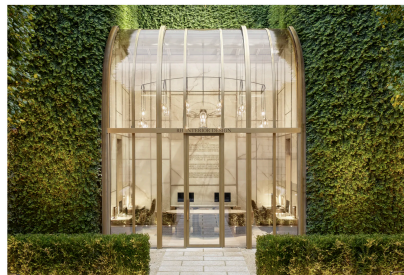
Where better for RH to make its grand Parisian entrance than the Avenue des Champs-Élysées. [After transforming a majestic 17th-century Cotswolds estate for its European debut](#), the American luxury furniture store has set its sights even higher for its long-awaited Parisian gallery.

### Inside RH Paris



(Image credit: Courtesy RH)

Housed in a 1983 building commissioned by aviation engineer Marcel Dassault, and once home to Abercrombie & Fitch, the new 3,900 sq m indoor and outdoor space blends RH's signature understated elegance with a respect for French heritage. Rather than enter directly from the avenue, guests first step through the property's original gilded, wrought-iron gate, which, fittingly for RH, feels more like arriving at a private Parisian home. A 150ft-long limestone, hedge-lined path leads to a secret garden and the RH Interior Design Studio, a newly built glass-encased pavilion designed by [Foster + Partners](#). Inside, the space has been luxuriously dressed in head-to-toe white onyx, with a bespoke lighting installation by [Los Angeles](#)-based glass designer Alison Berger, who drew inspiration from the pavilion's curved profile and French apothecary bell jars (she has previously created a [raindrop-inspired work for RH's NYC flagship](#), as well as [furniture for the brand](#)).



(Image credit: Courtesy RH)



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Opposite, the gallery's entrance is marked by the building's original monumental bronze and brass doors, which were found by Daussalt's son on his world travels and provided the starting point for the building's design. Visitors are rather impressively welcomed by a presentation case framed by a custom white onyx floor installation and holding one of the first modern printings of Vitruvius' *De Architectura*, dated circa 1521, whose principles of balance, symmetry and perfect proportions are at the foundation of RH's own design ethos. To the left, the Architecture and Design Bibliothèque contains more rare tomes by the most influential names in design of the last 2,000 years, including Da Vinci, Haussmann, and Blondel.

The rest of the ground, lower ground and first floor showcase RH furnishings, antiques, artifacts and art. For Paris, the brand has eschewed its traditional, intimately domestic gallery layouts and respected the store's open plan to create a continuous flow of designs and movement around the central atrium and its original ornate brass medallion balustrades and staircase, now updated with backlit frosted glass steps to create a floating effect in between each level. Mirrored columns and bronze soffits reflect the staircase's golden hues, while above, a gold leaf ceiling has been hand-gilded by Ateliers Gohard.



(Image credit: Courtesy RH)



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In another RH first, each floor is dedicated to a different artist, each of whom has created a collection of bespoke works that complement the quiet elegance of RH furnishings, such as the abstract nudes by German painter Thomas Junghans on level one. Other artistic works on show include a late 19th-century bronze female figure attributed to Louis-Félix Chabaud, known for his decorative sculptures at the Louvre and the Palais Garnier, and in another homage to Paris, a copy of the Louvre's *Winged Victory of Samothrace* sculpture in the garden.

Up on the second floor is where RH introduces its flair for hospitality. Le Jardin RH, also designed by Foster + Partners, is the first of two restaurants; the architects drew inspiration from the nearby Grand Palais to close the previously open space with soaring curved glass panels and steelwork that mirror the RH Interior Design Studio below. Like the outdoor pavilion, the restaurant has been entirely clad in luminous white onyx, from the sculpted bar right through to the bathrooms, as though crafted from one single slab of stone.



(Image credit: Courtesy RH)



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On the fourth level, second restaurant Le Petit RH features half-moon banquettes topped with more smooth white onyx and crowned by the RH Chiara Chandelier, designed in a bespoke size of 7,200 individually handblown glass polyhedrons. Sitting in between the two is The World of RH Bar & Lounge, where guests can discover RH beyond Paris, with a cocktail in hand by ex-Ritz head bartender Colin Field, through architectural drawings and photography of RH Galleries around the world, as well as video installations showcasing the latest RH happenings, including new products, places and services.

But the best is saved for last: Le Petit RH Rooftop, which sits on a space that's never been used before. It's also home to Paris' only public pop-up lift, designed all in glass and brass and cleverly conceived by Foster + Partners to almost magically appear before disappearing again, without disturbing the gallery's *pièce de résistance*, a very Parisian view of the Eiffel Tower, Le Grand Palais, Nôtre-Dame, and the world-famous avenue below.

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