French lingerie brand Etam enters US market

By Marion Deslandes - March 29, 2022

Lingerie brand Etam had been exploring the US market for a number of years, assessing the possibility of establishing a foothold there by tapping its French expertise. Etam has now taken the plunge, starting with an online and department store presence, ahead of opening its own stores. On March 28, the French brand, founded in 1916, began to sell its underwear via department store chain Nordstrom.

Etam has opened 10 concessions at Nordstrom branches in, among other cities, New York, Washington, Seattle, San Francisco and Miami. Enough to test local consumer demand in different parts of the country. Etam products are also available on the Nordstrom e-shop, and on Etam's US e-shop.

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To mark its US launch, Etam has launched a marketing operation in New York, featuring a van decked out in Etam colours that will travel around the city from March 30 to April 3, distributing flower bouquets and shopping vouchers.

“We are very proud to be establishing our brand on this continent, in what is a key strategic turning point for the group,” said Laurent Milchior, joint head of the Etam group. “We look forward to demonstrating and sharing our engagement and French lingerie expertise on the American market,” he added.

The Etam group, which also owns Undiz, Maison 123 and Ysé, plus a stake in Livy, has ambitious plans for the USA, where it said it wants to open 24 Etam monobrand stores by 2025. To appeal to American consumers, Etam is relying on its “romantic, comfortable French stretch lace,” its affordable positioning and flair for events. Etam has been staging an annual show since 2008, an event initially inspired by the lingerie extravaganza organised every year by US lingerie giant Victoria’s Secret, now faltering slightly, some of whose market share Etam is aiming to grab.

Etam was one of the Fashion Pact’s signatories in 2020, and is also keen to highlight its sustainability efforts. Just over half of its products are currently made with sustainable materials (either bio or recycled), and the goal is for this part of Etam’s range to reach an 80% share by 2025.

Etam operates 860 monobrand stores in more than 50 countries. Its CEO Patricia Tranvouëz recently left the company, to take the helm of the Inula group, an aromatherapy specialist. Her replacement has not yet been announced.

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