

PRESS RELEASE

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HERMÈS OPENS A NEW LEATHER GOODS WORKSHOP IN LOUVIERS (EURE, FRANCE), ULTIMATELY CREATING 280 JOBS, IN A HIGH ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE BUILDING

The Maroquinerie de Louviers, the second site in Hermès' Normandy hub, perpetuates the house's artisanal and human culture, the spirit of passing on its exceptional know-how, and the group's environmental ambitions. The workshop will welcome 260 artisans trained at the Louviers *École Hermès des savoir-faire*, its own apprenticeship training centre (CFA) accredited by the French Education Department which delivers the CAP vocational diploma in leatherworking.

This manufacture also includes a saddlery workshop to support the dynamic equestrian *métier*, historically located at 24 rue du Faubourg-Saint-Honoré, in Paris.

A dynamic boost for employment and training with a strong local anchoring

The Maroquinerie de Louviers, which joins the Maroquinerie de Val-de-Reuil to form the Hermès Normandy leather goods hub, strengthens the house's local anchoring and its commitment to creating sustainable jobs, training in *métiers* of excellence and developing its artisanal know-how.

The leather goods workshop will ultimately employ 260 leatherworkers and saddlers as well as staff in management, logistics and human resources roles, among others. Inside the workshop, the artisans will produce bags, small leather goods, saddles, and bridles. It is the first equestrian workshop to be established outside of Paris. As the oldest of Hermès' *métiers*, saddlery has been placed at the heart of the site.

Hermès is pursuing a recruitment and training strategy in close collaboration with the *Pôle emploi* employment service, the *Greta de l'Eure* adult education service, the Lycée Augustin-Boismard high school in Brionne, and the Haras national du Pin stud. The Louviers *École Hermès des savoir-faire*, opened in 2022, trains artisans for excellence in the fields of cutting and table work and develops their versatility.

The new manufacture is in line with the house's artisanal model: a source of quality, sustainability, creativity, agility and innovation. With this twenty-first leather workshop, Hermès is strengthening its role as a socially responsible company, creating high-quality jobs and reaffirming its desire to make a sustainable contribution to regional development.

An architecture that combines bold gestures with environmental performance

The 6,200 m² workshop is a living space for artisans. Its unique design was entrusted to French Lebanese architect Lina Ghotmeh, whose work is rooted in what she calls "the archaeology of the future", or how a building emerges in its environment and from the memory of its location. This quest focused both on the architecture of the manufacture and on the way in which it enhances and preserves its site, in line with the house's values.

The workshop is thus a true technical achievement serving Hermès' environmental goals. It is, to date, the first industrial building to have earned the French E₄C₂ label.

The wooden-framed building was constructed on an industrial brownfield site using more than 500,000 bricks, produced 70 kilometres from Louviers to minimise the impact of construction while showcasing the know-how of Normandy's brick-makers. As the main material used, the brick attests of the local embedding of the project in its environment and offers a palette of red and violet tones that vary according to daylight and the time of the year. Its position in the space takes full advantage of natural light and ventilation to limit the need for artificial lighting, heating, and air conditioning.

These needs are met by geothermal energy (with 13 probes at a depth of 150 metres) and more than 2,300 m² of solar panels, which combine to ensure the manufacture's energy autonomy. Using the soil excavated from the site and the expertise of the Belgian landscape architect Erik Dhont, three hectares of undulating gardens have been created, retaining most of the site's original trees. Designed to preserve local biodiversity, these gardens are equipped with a system for recovering and directing rainwater into the water table.

The E₄C₂ label

The E+C- label assesses the performance of a new building according to two criteria: energy (E) and carbon (C). Level E₄, the highest level, means that the Louviers leather goods workshop is a positive energy building. Level C₂, also the highest, denotes the most efficient operation for carbon footprint reduction.

An innovative design that celebrates Hermès' artisanal excellence

From its construction to its day-to-day operation, everything has been designed to ensure that the building embraces, extends and complements its natural environment. This "archaeology of the future" approach also permeates its appearance: echoing the motifs dear to Hermès, the square shape of the workshop is reminiscent of the house's silk *carré*, while its graceful arches evoke the trajectory of a jumping horse. This innovative and timeless form, thought of from the smallest scale of the brick and as a new layer in the landscape, also recalls the gestures of artisans, the precision of the hand and the constant pursuit of excellence and beauty in their leather work. The gardens' gentle undulations recall the arches of a manufacture that blends into its landscape, down to the materials used to construct it.

It was in this precise and harmonious setting that the artist Emmanuel Saulnier was invited to design a piece of art for the "village square", the manufacture's courtyard and meeting place. Inspired by *The Epsom Derby*, a painting by Théodore Géricault from 1821, the work consists of seven stainless steel needles suspended by leather stirrup straps custom-made by the house's bridle-makers. These horizontal lines evoke the movement of horses beneath a light-filled stormy sky and connect it to the artisanal gesture of the expert hand.

The Maroquinerie de Louviers thus embodies the house's sustainable development ambitions as well as its appreciation of beautiful things and the well-being of its employees.

Since 2010, Hermès has opened ten leather goods workshops in France, bringing the number of saddler-leatherworkers employed by the group to more than 4,700. Four further workshops are currently being developed: in Tournes-Cliron (Ardennes), Riom (Puy de Dôme), L'Isle-d'Espagnac (Charente) and Loupes (Gironde), for which recruitment and training are ongoing.

Archaeological discoveries echoing the artisan's gesture

The pre-construction archaeological excavations carried out on the site by INRAP archaeologists revealed a wide range of flint tools dating back to the Palaeolithic period, which attest to the leather work carried out in this prehistoric community. A horse's jawbone was also found, adding to the symbolic links that connect the history of the site to the history of Hermès.

Since 1837, Hermès has remained faithful to its artisan model and its humanist values. The freedom to create, the spirit of innovation, the constant search for beautiful materials, the transmission of *savoir-faire* of excellence, and the aesthetic of functionality all forge the singularity of Hermès, a house of objects created to last. An independent, family-owned company which encompasses 16 métiers, Hermès is dedicated to keeping the majority of its production in France through its 54 workshops and production sites and to developing its network of more than 300 stores in 45 countries. The group employs more than 19,700 people worldwide, including more than 12,400 in France, among whom more than 7,000 are craftsmen*.

Axel Dumas, a sixth-generation family member, has been Hermès CEO since 2013. Founded in 2008, the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès supports projects in the areas of artistic creation, training and the transmission of *savoir-faire*, biodiversity, and the preservation of the environment.

* As of 31st December 2022