

# Bloomingdale's Fetes Barbie's 50th

AT BLOOMINGDALE'S, BARBIE MIGHT AS WELL BE COUTURE LEGEND.

In conjunction with Barbie's 50th birthday, which is evolving into a global celebration, Bloomingdale's 59th Street on Feb. 11 will exhibit 120 Barbies through the decades in 60 vitrines on the third floor, with some first editions valued between \$25,000 and \$27,000.

From Feb. 11-22, Bloomingdale's Third Avenue windows will be dressed in Barbie under the theme "My Boyfriend Is Back" and inside the store, a 242-square-foot Barbie boutique will display Barbie T-shirts, accessories, jewelry, DC Super Hero Barbies, a Barbie Book by Assouline, and the dolls, among other merchandise. There will also will be an event with live Ken and Barbie models. Similarly, Bloomingdale's SoHo will have window displays and a Barbie shop. The Barbie fest concludes March 15.

"There's a wide spectrum to Bloomingdale's, a dichotomy. We can sell Chanel, Ralph Lauren and Canali, and we can also sell Beatles merchandise and Barbie," said Michael Gould, the store's chairman and chief executive. "At Bloomingdale's, we like to make people smile and Barbie is fun. There aren't that many females in America that didn't grow up with Barbie."



A rendering of the Barbie shop at Bloomingdale's.

"Bloomingdale's will really be the flagship retail partnership for Barbie's 50th," said Richard Dickson, senior vice president and general manager for the Barbie brand. Bloomingdale's Barbie exhibit, Dickson said, will be "the largest collection ever displayed in the U.S. It will be like a curated museum experience." In past years, Bloomingdale's has showcased Barbie dolls dressed by top designers such as Giorgio Armani and Donna Karan.

Elsewhere, Barbie is celebrating with window displays, shop concepts, exhibits and exclusive and limited edition products at Colette in Paris, La Rinascente in Milan and Fred Segal in Los Angeles, among about 20 stores. "We have a retail partnership in every fashion capital and over 20 major cities around the world," Dickson said.

For the first-ever Barbie runway show at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week on Feb. 14, Barbie's parent, Mattel Inc., has lassoed 50 designers, Diane Von Furstenberg and Anna Sui among them, to create looks inspired by the doll, some of which will be displayed at Bloomingdale's. In addition, the first-ever Barbie store is set to open in Shanghai on March 6 — an eight-story flagship in a former movie theater. Barbie art by Andy Warhol and Peter Max and others will be on view. There will also be a spa, a restaurant and, for older girls, a \$16,000 Vera Wang strapless wedding gown. For any woman who buys it, Mattel will create a doll in her likeness in a miniature version of the gown.

— David Moyn