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# A perfect setting



Tiffany celebrates 175 years  
as the house of design with  
an opulent gem in SoHo

By Jenny Schrank

Hand-forged metal  
screens by Michele Oka  
Doner serve as a gateway  
into the Semi-Private  
Sales Area at Tiffany's  
SoHo showroom.









Left: The Tiffany Blue awnings provide a sense of familiarity at the entrance to the SoHo store.

Above: On the Archival Wall, customers can explore the brand's history in a living room setting.

Invention, discovery and surprise are at the heart of the Tiffany & Co. brand promise, and are the perfect words to represent the company's new retail experience in New York's SoHo neighborhood. When celebrating a rich 175-year history, there is no better place to honor that heritage than a location amid the cobblestone streets where the legacy began.

SoHo provides the nostalgic setting, and while the design inspiration digs into the archives of America's house of design, the end result is a brand journey, an homage that communicates a distinct forward-focused company mission and unexpected retail experience.

"This store is an exploration of our legendary brand," says Tiffany Store Director Michelle Butler. "We are showing customers a Tiffany & Co. they haven't seen before, in a way that demonstrates there is so much the customer doesn't know about us, and so much more coming in the future."

As with any brand, it is important to create a sense of familiarity from one location to the next. Design elements and impressions from the world-renowned Tiffany flagship store on Fifth Avenue

in New York provided the team with a palette of inspiration. Due to the grandeur achieved by the column-free layout on Fifth Avenue, the team used classical planning principles to create the same sense of dignity in the long, narrow SoHo space that extends between two historic buildings.

The resulting floorplan offers two entrance points that welcome customers on both Greene and Wooster streets, each with "Tiffany Blue"-hued awnings and signature door hardware—familiar elements that begin this brand journey.

Each space carved within the store is a unique destination with distinct interpretations of the brand that leave the customer in awe, yet encourage them to explore with a glimpse of the next intriguing space.









Left: The Private Sales area proves you can never have too many Tiffany magnolias.



Above: An abstraction of the iconic Tiffany ribbon dances across the ceiling, creating a sense of playfulness.

The Fine Salon embraces visitors with a sea of Amazonite, a Tiffany Blue stone that covers the walls. This cube-shaped room is clad with exotic stonework and is grounded with the warmth of reclaimed wood floors. A custom chandelier, designed by Michele Oka Doner, is a sparkling interpretation of budding magnolias, a signature brand element created by Louis Comfort Tiffany (the artist son of founder Charles Lewis Tiffany). A sense of purity is achieved in this space, the perfect setting for the fine jewelry collection.

More than 30 artists and artisans, like the local talent of Oka Doner, were used to create parts of the signature retail experience. This commitment to artisans pays homage to the design roots of Tiffany & Co.—America's house of design—and is an important aspect of the store design.

While the intricate details of the design leave visitors wide-eyed and amazed, the product displays maintain simple, clean lines that are elegantly placed within the luxurious settings. The display strategy allows the detail and quality of the product to shine. A combination of horizontal and vertical displays—clean, classic cases—provides a simple background.

Lighting was carefully considered to provide a purist illumination and to let the quality of the merchandise speak for itself. The lighting plan is designed to highlight a range of product and look

natural. "We use a modulation of light at both high and low levels in order to avoid a uniform brightness," says Anthony Robins, group vice president, global real estate and store development, Tiffany.

The team spent a lot of time analyzing the lighting to make sure the color temperature and highlights worked well with a range of products, taking into consideration what is needed to properly display diamonds, colorful stones, gold, etc. But the ultimate effect appears effortless. "We don't want people to think about the lighting," Robins says.

As customers journey through the store, they encounter gallery-type spaces, such as corridors lined with history, art and inspiration, as well as carefully placed product displays. These areas provide moments to experience the Tiffany legacy while leading guests to the next surprise. Details, such as a wall finished in a white-lacquered relief of the Tiffany wheat leaf motif, continue the artistic expression of the brand.

The elliptical shape of the Fine and Engagement Salon introduces the elegance of the Louis Comfort Tiffany magnolia, as well as his Favrite glass in another artistic display. Hand-lacquered walls inset with hundreds of mother-of-pearl magnolias, created by New York artisan John Opella, add a shimmering effect. Thanks to a courtyard located above, the team infused the space with daylight through a milk-glass





Above: In the Fine and Engagement Salon, mother-of-pearl magnolias shimmer along the hand-lacquered walls.

Opposite, bottom: Gallery-type spaces lined with history, art and inspiration connect the distinct Salon destinations.

Opposite, top: Product displays maintain simple, clean lines within the luxurious settings.

transom, and completed the experience with a full-length mirror and statement vitrines surrounded by cold-pressed glass shrouds.

Hand-forged Tiffany magnolia screens by Oka Doner serve as a gateway into the Semi-Private Sales Area. This dreamy blue setting incorporates the signature Tiffany color with coordinating peacock blue. Luxurious silk velvet framed by glossy lacquer creates a distinct wall paneling detail, which is accented by Aubusson tapestry on the chairs and custom Amazonite stone lamps on the consultation desks.

The Private Sales Area shows what a powerful design statement the magnolia can make. Doors with glass magnolia insets by Opella and a silk carpet in Tiffany Blue with magnolia vines, a hand-painted glass feature wall and magnolia sconces by Oka Doner create a luxurious homage to Tiffany.

The wall treatments in the Fashion Salon alternate between sections of custom, handmade

wallcovering by Callidus Guild with a pattern of white gold fading down the walls, rich wood panels and two glass feature walls. The glass walls highlight the Tiffany dragonfly pattern with a soft Tiffany Blue glow. The dragonfly motif finds a special place throughout this space as an accent on consultation chairs and in the flooring.

It is the Tiffany Archival Wall that truly sets this space—and this store—apart from other locations. This is where the homage to SoHo and a celebration of the creative process is truly evident. A luxurious 14-ft. peacock-blue sofa invites customers in, where they can explore the brand and its history by looking at sketches and drawings on the large pin-up wall, marvel at prototype displays or indulge in shelves and coffee tables full of books on Tiffany, New York, architecture, art and all things inspiring.

And, just like a Tiffany Blue box, this space is tied up with a ribbon. A clever abstract ribbon





element made from a luminous material weaves in and out of the ceiling, creating a sense of playfulness throughout the salon.

"This store is such a departure for us, but [it's] really exciting," Butler says. "It is so different, yet so right and comfortable."

The Tiffany SoHo journey is designed to entice customers to spend equal time exploring the space and admiring the merchandise. "It was important to honor the legacy and enrich the legend," Robins says. "We needed to be respectful of the rich history, but it is our obligation to contribute to it and make it better. In one time and place we wanted to celebrate our heritage, and yet look forward. Here, the product is the jewel and the store is the setting." **DDI**

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#### project file

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Information in the project file is provided by the retailer and/or design firm.