

Première partie de l'épreuve**Harrods will reopen tomorrow after closing for the first time in 170 years amid the COVID-19 crisis**

World-famous department store Harrods is set to reopen tomorrow after closing for the first time in its 170-year history amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The Knightsbridge stalwart, which stayed open during the Blitz, closed on March 23 with all other non-essential retailers.

- 5 Speaking to the Sunday Times, the managing director Michael Ward revealed their plans to reopen - including hand sanitiser on the walls, shoe coverings and a one-way route around the store.

- 10 While the Prime Minister has allowed all shops to re-open from June 15, the two-metre social distancing rule means the seven-floor store will only be able to have 4,500 customers a day, compared to 80,000 they would usually see at peak times.

Michael went on to say signs will be put up in the building to read 'browse with your eyes only,' while there will be no samples available in grand beauty counters - instead being replaced by plastic colour charts on display.

- 15 'Beauty is the worst possible world, as it's all about touch,' said Michael, speaking to the publication. 'If a customer wants to try anything on, they will be given single-use pods to apply to their own skin. The whole ritual has been spun around 180 degrees.'

- 20 There will be no more fragrance samples, but staff with gloves on will spray perfume on a scent card and pass it to customers on a silver tray - and music will play throughout the store. Harrods customers will be able to try on clothes - unlike in some shops - but shoppers will be asked to sanitise themselves, while clothes not bought will be bagged up and sanitised for 72 hours before being returned to sale.

Staff at the Qatar-owned company have also been trained to only touch the corners of clothes when bagging them, to stop any cross-infection.

- 25 Those who want to try on shoes will be given disposable socks to wear, and unwanted items will be sanitised and quarantined for 24 hours.

This applies for items that are touched and not bought throughout the shop - including books, which will face a 72-hour quarantine period.

30 For now, the beauty salon and wellness centre remain closed, meaning the days of high-society meet ups for a blow-dry and shop are still on hold.

Michael went on to reveal the food hall will also reopen, but a limited capacity, and customers will be told to come back later if it's busy.

35 'Big shops are much better prepared — at Harrods we even have our own fire department, the biggest private security force and our own health and safety department', he added.

'We started preparing even before we closed. Our crisis management team started meeting daily in February when we saw what happened in China'.

40 Any excess stock will be moved to a new outlet store, in Westfield's centre in Shepherd's Bush, in what is the first ever store designed for socially distanced shopping.

In the meantime, Harrods opening hours have been reduced to 11am-7pm so that staff avoid peak travel times.

Only 800 employees will be returning to work, while 3,000 remain furloughed.

Adapted from www.dailymail.co.uk, 14 June 2020