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By Pamcyła Cambe

HOW LONGCHAMP'S SOPHIE DELAFONTAINE IS KEEPING CRAFT AT THE HEART OF THE BRAND

Delafontaine shares how French craftsmanship inspired Longchamp's Fall/Winter 2025 collection and its first furniture styles debuting at Milan Design Week



Sophie Delafontaine, the creative director of Longchamp, tells GRAZIA Singapore about the inspirations behind Longchamp's Fall/Winter 2025 collection and the French brand's first furniture designs, showcased at Milan Design Week (Photo: Longchamp)

You cannot talk about Longchamp without talking about craft. Throughout its illustrious, nearly 80-year history, the French brand has been in the business of making things—and doing it well.

That includes men's leather goods, passport cases and luggage, which were sold in the 1950s and 1960s, Longchamp's early years. The brand began offering women's bags from the 1970s, which eventually gave rise to Le Pliage, one of the world's most recognisable bags. In 2006, not too long after Longchamp artistic director Sophie Delafontaine joined the brand, she transformed it into a full-fledged fashion house with the launch of its women's ready-to-wear line. With each foray it makes into another product category, Longchamp counts on its team of skilled artisans to bring its beautiful goods to life.

This appreciation for craftsmanship sparked the idea for Longchamp's Fall/Winter 2025 collection, "From Paris To London", which was unveiled at Paris Fashion Week in March. "From Paris to London is a love letter to *savoir-faire*," says Delafontaine. "From our capsule with Parisian artist Constantin Riant to our collaboration with Gloverall of London, we wanted this season to celebrate different forms of craftsmanship from a contemporary viewpoint."

For Longchamp's new collection, Delafontaine put a fresh spin on timeless outerwear pieces, as seen in jackets and trench coats that come in bright orange and red hues, or a puffer constructed like a kimono jacket. Delafontaine also tapped British luxury outerwear brand, Gloverall, to create Longchamp's first duffle coat—a classic British garment that has a surprising connection with the French brand's Le Roseau bag. Speaking of which, the beloved bag is reimagined as a large tote for the upcoming season, while new iterations of Le Foulonné bag have been introduced.



Above: Longchamp's Fall/Winter 2025 presentation at Paris Fashion Week

But that's not all that is new in the world of Longchamp: the French lifestyle brand has also announced its first furniture collection, made in collaboration with designer Pierre Renart. The collection, comprising a custom bench and a set of eight chairs made from leather and wood, will be unveiled at the 2025 Milan Design Week this April.

Clearly, Longchamp has come a long way from offering small leather goods. Ahead, Sophie Delafontaine tells GRAZIA Singapore how the French brand remains committed to the art of craftsmanship, even as it explores new designs and ideas that speak to the modern woman.

How would you say the Longchamp woman has evolved since you joined the brand in 1995?

Sophie Delafontaine (SD): Women are looking for products that make them feel confident and that give them ease in their daily lives. They go to work, they have dinner, they travel. They need to feel like strong, confident women because they are active in their lives and do several things at the same time. And they like products that are like best friends on their journeys. I think this desire has not evolved. Of course, when I started, everyone had a big calendar and a notebook in their bags; today you have everything in your phone. Our way of life has changed, but that mentality has not really changed.



For Longchamp's Fall/Winter 2025 collection, the French brand collaborates with Gloverall to create functional yet fashionable duffel coats. Longchamp's Le Foulonné bag is also refreshed with soft curves

Who are some real-life women who have shaped your idea of the Longchamp woman?

SD: So many women! Of course, as a woman myself, I also live with our products. I know what I need when I travel, or go to the office, so maybe it's also easier for me [as a designer]. My mum and my daughter have been a huge source of inspiration to me. My mum [the late Michèle Cassegrain, Longchamp's former director of boutiques] was always super elegant, super chic and very dynamic. My daughter [Juliette Poupard Delafontaine] knows how to put things together in a very cool way. But I am also inspired by the many women that I have met in my life, be it a woman I come across on the street, or even an icon like Kate Moss, whom I had the opportunity to work with.

Are there any trends or lifestyles among Gen Z women that interest you, as a designer?

SD: Gen Z women are really looking for products that mean something to them. This is very interesting to me because I am very product-oriented [as a designer]. I am happy to see that the younger generation is paying more attention to the product itself, including its quality, how it is made, or if it is something that they can keep for a long time. The younger generation is also taking the bags of their mothers, because they like that those accessories have already had a life. 10 or 15 years ago, it was a big fashion trend to always have the It-bag of the season. Now, we are back to wanting something more authentic and timeless.

Longchamp's collections have drawn upon some interesting themes, like university life, or countryside living. How did you arrive at the theme for Longchamp's Fall/Winter 2025 collection?

SD: I always start with the story and I try to create a collection that matches the story. For Fall/Winter 2025, I really wanted to talk about craftsmanship and the know-how of artisans. In Paris, we have a lot of artisans, like those that work at the florist, the bakery, or cafés. I think that Longchamp, with its leather goods, is also a [house of] artisans. I also wanted to talk about Le Roseau, our iconic bag. The inspiration for its bamboo toggle is the duffel coat button. For many years, I have wanted to create our own duffel coat to match with the story of our Le Roseau bag. That's why, this season, I went to London to work with Gloverall. They have been making duffel coats with their signature materials for more than 70 years. They are very focused on their craft. They manufacture everything in their workshop in London. With this collection, I had the opportunity to think about the know-how in Paris and London.



Longchamp's Fall/Winter 2025 collection offers fresh takes on classic outerwear—like this puffer inspired by a kimono jacket

What are some special craft techniques that went into creating Longchamp's Fall/Winter 2025 collection?

SD: The fact that we collaborated with [French artist] Constantin Riant. He does painting on ceramics. The idea of our collaboration was not only to introduce his paintings [to our customers], but also to talk about ceramics and the craftsmanship that goes into them. I wanted to have a collection with a little bit of shape, something more organic. It's also how we have designed the new Le Foulonné bag, with a very round and organic shape.

How did you encounter Constantin's work?

SD: Constantin has been a friend of my daughter for many years. I knew his work and wanted to work with him, but for a collaboration to happen, it has to be at the right moment and on the right project. [With Longchamp's new collection] we are talking about artisans in Paris—and he's really a part of that scene.

What is your favourite iteration of the Le Roseau bag from the Fall/Winter 2025 collection?

SD: My favourite is the Le Roseau tote bag that comes in beautiful, supple calfskin. The size is much bigger than we had before. I wanted something that is very cool in attitude, but super chic and elegant at the same time. I think because of its proportions, the leather, the colour and the trims, the bag is very refined. It really expresses the idea of the Parisian woman.



Longchamp introduces the Le Roseau tote in supple leather—which creative director Sophie Delafontaine picks as her favourite



Longchamp Le Roseau tote bag from the Fall/Winter 2025 collection

The Le Roseau bag has quickly become one of Longchamp's most beloved offerings since you reintroduced it. Why do you think it is so popular among women today?

SD: I think it's because every woman can find a Le Roseau bag that fits her. There are styles in several sizes, colours and leather materials. It's really the kind of bag through which you can express your own personality and adapt to [your style] very easily. It is simple but at the same time, it has a lot of character.

There is a playful and vibrant energy that runs through Longchamp's collections. Do you have fun designing each collection?

SD: My team and I have a lot of fun. As soon as I have the story of the collection, so many ideas start coming. For example, for Longchamp's Summer 2025 collection, we were inspired by the vegetable garden. We designed an eggplant clutch and an artichoke bag. We designed gingham prints inspired by the clothes you wear in the countryside. We also have the opportunity to work on several components—the materials, the shapes, the colours—and across several categories, like ready-to-wear, bags and shoes. It's really nice to try and take a 360-degree approach to storytelling.

Longchamp's business has evolved a lot over the years: it has offered leather goods, then women's bags, and women's fashion. How do you see the brand expanding in the next few years?

SD: Actually, we are launching a product category that we have never done before. We have collaborated with a French designer named Pierre Renart who creates wood furniture. We have been following his work for many years. His coffee tables are amazing; we have them in some of our Longchamp stores around the world. Pierre wanted to try to mix wood and leather, and so we worked on a project together. We're going to present it at Milan Design Week this April. We have eight chairs—unique pieces made with leather and wood. It's going to be the first time we sell some furniture.



The Wave bench from the Longchamp x Pierre Renart furniture collection



A Ruban chair from the Longchamp x Pierre Renart furniture collection

You've helped Longchamp embody a fresh energy that speaks to young women today. How do you think you have stayed true to the spirit of your grandfather, Jean Cassegrain, when he founded Longchamp over 70 years ago?

SD: I was born into Longchamp. I grew up with my grandfather and my grandmother. I had the great chance to work with my father [the late Philippe Cassegrain, the former president of Longchamp] and mother for a very long time, I think for some 20 or 25 years. I have learned so much from working with them. My two brothers [Jean and Olivier Cassegrain, the CEO and the managing director of Longchamp, respectively] share the same values as me. We share the same point of view and ideas for the company: to keep it as authentic as possible, to maintain the know-how of the house, to develop it in a responsible way, and to transmit it to the next generation. I learned all of this from my parents, so it comes naturally to me.

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🔑 *Topics: Bags, Constantin Riant, Fall Winter 2025, Furniture, FW25, Gloverall, interview, Longchamp, MILAN DESIGN WEEK, Milan Design Week 2025, Salone Del Mobile, Sophie Delafontaine*

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