

BEAUTY / PRODUCTS

L'Occitane Incubator Takes Minority Stake in Le Rouge Français

The French lipstick brand is organic and vegan, with plant-based pigments.

By [Jennifer Weil](#) on December 4, 2019



Le Rouge Français lipstick.
Courtesy Photo/ALOIS MAILLET

PARIS — L'Occitane Group's start-up incubator Obratori has taken a minority stake in Le Rouge Français, an organic and vegan lipstick brand.

The undisclosed investment was made to help bolster Le Rouge Français' growth.

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Many multinational beauty companies are opening and running incubators to get closer to and glean know-how from entrepreneurs, who have been shaking up traditional business models — especially in hot categories such as natural beauty and tech. Among those in Europe to have launched such start-up studios are L'Oréal, Sephora and Puig.

Elodie Carpentier and her husband, Salem Ghezaili, launched Le Rouge Français, billed to be the first line of lipsticks made with plant pigments, in October 2018 after 18 months of research and development. The product formulations are natural, with organic and vegan certification.

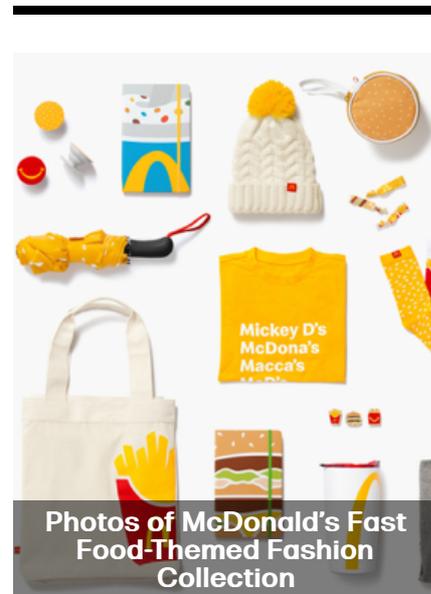
The “clean” lipsticks made in France were first introduced online and then rolled out to some selective brick-and-mortar stores in France. Le Rouge Français’ next step will be to broaden its commercial reach into more key sales points.

L'Occitane said in late September 2018 that it had opened the Obratori start-up incubator in Marseille, France, with a focus on cosmetics and wellbeing. It is located in the Cité de l'Innovation et des Savoirs Aix-Marseille, will include 12 start-ups and can hold up to 108 workstations.

In March, Obratori announced it and the Pharma & Beauty Group had taken a stake in the “healthy-aging” tech start-up Calysens, also based in Marseille.

“We support the development of cosmetics companies, wellness [companies] and retail-tech, which have proven efficacy in their products and solutions, as well as regulatory proof of so-called ‘clean’ products,” Amaury Godron, managing director of Obratori, said in a statement. “Le Rouge Français is based on strong innovations in formulation and cosmetic packaging, made with a very high degree of naturalness, of eco-responsibility and according to good manufacturing practices — all to propose a new offer demanded by consumers wanting beauty without compromise either for their health, [products’] sensuality or desirability.”

L'Occitane Group, a natural beauty maker and seller, has brands including L'Occitane en Provence, Melvita and Erborian. Its products are sold in more than 3,000 doors in 90 countries.



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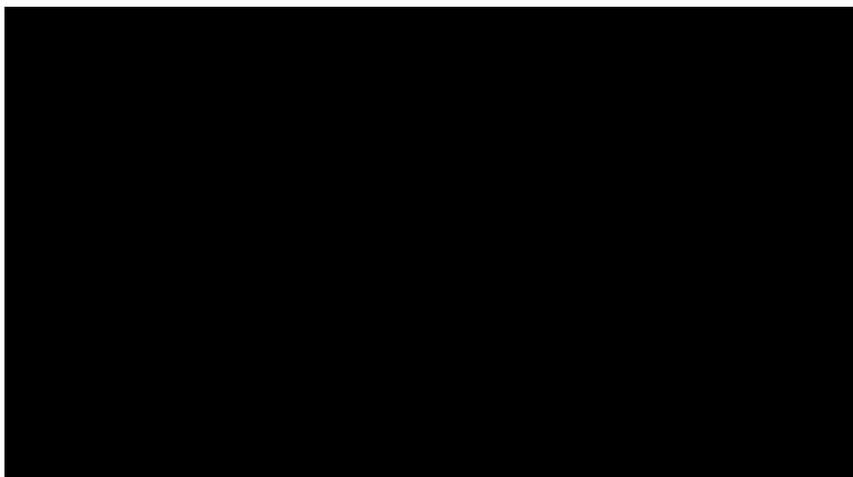


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L'Occitane International SA most recently reported net sales of 727 million euros for the first-half of its fiscal year, ended Sept. 30, representing a 22.1 percent increase versus the same prior-year period.

The group in January acquired British skin-care brand Elemis.

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