

Ben & Jerry's flagship store opens in Tokyo with new design



Ben & Jerry's will open its flagship store in Tokyo on April 14, on Omotesando Boulevard. The location will feature a 1960s-era design theme with a tech café feel.

Ben & Jerry's selected Tesser, a San Francisco-based branding company, to create the store design. Tesser designed the company's flagship store in Burlington, Vt., and was hired to recreate that success in Tokyo.

"It was like making a great flavor that's perfectly balanced," said Ellen Kresky, director of creativity at Ben & Jerry's, "Tesser was able to fold Ben & Jerry's history into contemporary culture to bring the Ben & Jerry's vibe alive."

Tesser's biggest challenge in designing the first Ben & Jerry's location in Japan was to build a brand presence in a visually stimulating city. The flagship store has a street-facing entrance framed by Tokyo's premiere shopping mall, Omotesando Hills, by architect Tadao Ando.

Tesser worked closely with Ben & Jerry's U.S. and Japanese marketing teams to understand the culture and preferences of Japanese consumers. Research led to the creation of a fun, inviting atmosphere where those consumers can have an authentic Ben & Jerry's experience.

"We focused on every touchpoint of the customer's journey to introduce Ben & Jerry's ice cream and its strong, voice and history," said Tré Musco, CEO and chief creative officer at Tesser.

The Tokyo store includes digital menu boards in Japanese and English, to inform customers about the popular U.S. flavors, as well as those exclusive to Japan.

Tesser and Ben & Jerry's also created a Flavor Lab with open views into the kitchen so customers can see how Ben & Jerry's creates its signature offerings.

In keeping with the U.S. flagship décor that pays homage to the founders' hippie days, Tesser installed the front end of a 1960s van on the wall with the windows replaced by video screens, a grass green couch with "rolling hills" backrest, funky milk bottle light fixtures and a "flavor curtain," made from actual ice cream pint lids.

Customers can read the company's three-part [Social, Product and Economic Missions](#) painted on the walls. Merchandise is displayed on a 5-foot ice cream cone structure with shelves for T-shirts, mugs and other Ben & Jerry's gift items.

Seating is comfortable and modern with galvanized bar stools and ottomans covered in vinyl cowhide fabric that mix a modern urban feel with a retro farmhouse vibe. Round and rectangular tables were installed to invite customers to linger and socialize.

Additionally, Tesser incorporated social media into the design to enhance the communal experience of eating ice cream. A live Twitter Ticker runs above the Flavor Lab window, encouraging customers to tweet and view posts from others while enjoying their ice cream.

Based in San Francisco, Tesser's clients also include Denny's, KFC, Chili's, Del Taco, Popeyes, Baja Fresh and more. Tesser also recently designed [Wendy's four new prototypes](#) as part of that chain's rejuvenation efforts.