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Renewal of the premier ULTIMATE series from SENSAI SENSAI opens flagship store in Shanghai to strengthen Asia operations

The next step in brand globalization

Kao Corporation is set to launch an enhanced edition of ULTIMATE, the top skincare line from the SENSAI global prestige brand sold by Kanebo Cosmetics, in pursuit of ULTIMATE beauty*¹. The renewed ULTIMATE will be sold in more than 40 countries, including Japan, from September 2023 (four products, five items, priced from 26,000 to 78,000 yen (28,600 to 85,800 yen, including tax).

SENSAI has established a position in Europe as a uniquely Japanese luxury brand with a large following. The brand has planned out several steps to grow its presence in China and the rest of Asia, starting with the opening of a flagship store in Shanghai this year followed by expanding sales in mainland China.

As the global expansion takes place, Kao will be further strengthening their globally focused “G11”^{*2} beauty brands spearheaded by SENSAI.

*1 Within the SENSAI portfolio

*2 Brands that Kao is focusing on globally in the cosmetics business

Background

SENSAI is the flagship brand in a strategic portfolio of 11 global brands responsible for the ongoing growth of Kao Corporation’s cosmetics operations. Sold in over 40 countries, mainly in Europe, the brand is renowned for premium products made exclusively in Japan and formulated with Koishimaru silk, a rare and ancient silk once reserved only for the imperial family. SENSAI advocates a unique and precise skincare ritual, “Saho,”^{*3} inspired by the mindful routine of the Japanese tea ceremony. In another move to further distinguish itself as a luxury brand, SENSAI is launching the renewed ULTIMATE Series, a premier skincare line to celebrate the 10th anniversary of ULTIMATE.

SENSAI will also be opening a flagship store in Shanghai this year to establish a luxury business model unique to the brand in China. For a deeper brand experience, SENSAI advisors at the store will be introducing a premier SENSAI treatment combining the *Sense and Science of Japan*. By providing a place to enjoy a unique and special SENSAI experience for high-end customers, SENSAI will be reinforcing the brand concept and creating synergies with the SENSAI e-commerce activities already underway.

*3 Double cleansing (a cleanser to remove makeup followed by a face wash) and double moisturizing (moisturizing lotion followed by an emulsion or cream) should be performed carefully to ensure gentleness on the skin.



The products

The ULTIMATE Series is the pinnacle skincare line from SENSAI, the pioneer in luxury beauty. The ULTIMATE renewal includes four products: SENSAI ULTIMATE THE LOTION I/II, SENSAI ULTIMATE THE EMULSION N, and SENSAI ULTIMATE THE CREAM N. All four are made with moisturizing ingredients Koishimaru Silk Infinite and Sakura Eternal Complex, a compound known for its remarkable vitality. With the advance of emulsification technology, the texture of each feels more pleasing than ever before, with greater smoothness and rich textures that melt and blend with the skin. The floral bouquets of the fragrances are adored for their elegance and euphoric qualities. The newest package designs for the ULTIMATE series evoke a lightness that is both profound and modern. Natural and recycled packaging materials are adopted for reduced impacts on the environment.

Japanese Sustainable Luxury

SENSAI has long been committed to sustainable practices, including the use of chemical-recycled PET and ingredients grown in regenerative farms. This year SENSAI is fully embracing the Japanese Sustainable Luxury concept and actively cherishing the earth's resources. The Japanese Sustainable Luxury concept stresses relationships with the environment and people as key elements of the brand's approach to sustainability.

The renewed SENSAI ULTIMATE THE CRERAM N is now also available as a refill. In addition, to celebrate the spirit of Japanese craftsmanship, SENSAI has been collaborating with Kaikado^{*4}, a traditional maker of handmade tea caddies, to launch a limited-edition version of THE CREAM in Europe and Japan. In a separate project, SENSAI has partnered with the renowned architect Shigeru Ban to design a reusable, assembly-type booth that can be flexibly set up and customized for any venue, and was built under maximal reduction of waste material. The pop-up space is being used at SENSAI events in various countries. After the launch, the parts will be donated to the cultural institution to be used for children's exhibitions and libraries, such as Centre Pompidou-Metz (France).

SENSAI's Japanese Sustainable Luxury concept sets the brand and its customers on course to cherishing beautiful things with care for years to come.

*4 Established in Kyoto in 1875, the oldest maker for tinplate tea caddies in Japan





Case created in collaboration with Kaikado
SENSAI ULTIMATE THE CREAM N SPECIAL EDITION





Pop-up event space created in collaboration with
Shigeru Ban

Product Details

Product name	SENSAI ULTIMATE THE LOTION I/II (2 types)	
Content, price	125 mL・¥26,000 〈¥28,600 incl. tax〉	
Description	A lotion that instantly replenishes moisture and leaves the skin beautifully hydrated, plump, and supple. The rich, highly absorbent, mellow texture melts deep into the skin's stratum corneum. Formulated with a microemulsion of fine skin-nourishing oils. For a smooth, radiant beauty that glows from within.	

Product name	SENSAI ULTIMATE THE EMULSION N	
Content, price	100 mL・¥39,000 〈¥ 42,900 incl. tax〉	
Description	An emulsion that promotes silky, supple, pliant skin. Formulated with a light yet rich, milky texture that infuses the stratum corneum with an ample supply of moisture. Upon application, it envelops the skin like a delicate veil of silk, leaving it supple, refined, and luminous.	

Product name	SENSAI ULTIMATE THE CREAM N SENSAI ULTIMATE THE CREAM N (REFILL)	
Content, price	40 mL・¥78,000〈¥ 85,800〉 Refill 40 mL・¥70,000〈¥77,000 incl. tax〉	
Description	A supreme cream enriched with an exclusive formula of nourishing oils blended according to SENSAI's golden ratio. The richly textured cream melts slowly into the skin while nourishing and moisturizing the stratum corneum. A single application brings out silky beauty from the skin, leaving it rich, radiant, and firm.	

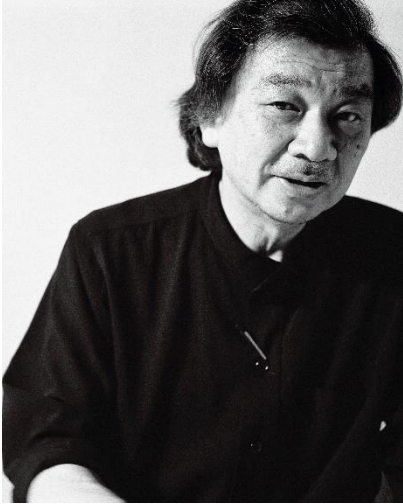
Product name	SENSAI ULTIMATE THE CREAM N SPECIAL EDITION	
Content, price	Kaikado Collaboration Chazutsu Case ×1 ULTIMATE THE CREAM N (REFILL) 40mL ×2 ¥148,000〈¥162,000 incl. tax〉	
Description	A special edition set including a case with a handcrafted <i>chazutsu</i> and two refills of the cream. The case is intended to be an everlasting collector's item to be cherished for life.	

Date of release/region

Japan: September 6, 2023 (Isetan Shinjuku, Hankyu Umeda, JR Nagoya Takashimaya)

International: Released in SENSAI markets in stages, starting from September 1, 2023

About Shigeru Ban



Shigeru Ban is a prize-winning Japanese architect known for his innovative use of paper and cardboard tubes in buildings. Ban founded Shigeru Ban Architects in 1985 and established a disaster relief organization called the Voluntary Architects Network (VAN) in 1995. He is also a member of the Japan Disaster Relief Association (JDRA), a non-profit organization that assists disaster victims in Japan. His firm has gained wide recognition for developing temporary houses for disaster victims using paper tubes. Ban has received many rewards, including the Pritzker Architecture Prize (2014), the Commandeur de la Ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France (2014), the Mother Teresa Social Justice Award (2017), and the Medal of Honor (Purple Ribbon, Japan) (2017).

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