

The Future of

# QUIET LUXURY

**Insights Report**  
Spring 2025



**SCADask**

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*Note.* Cover image generated using the prompt "A full-body editorial photograph of a woman standing in a softly lit, empty Parisian apartment. One hand is in a pocket, the other is hidden by the oversized sleeve. She wears an ivory cashmere oversized sweater tucked into a matching skirt. The space features white paneled walls, tall windows with natural light, and a muted neutral palette (ivory, taupe, ash). No visible branding. The mood is calm, refined, and introspective — evoking quiet luxury and timeless restraint. Shallow depth of field, natural shadows." by Adobe, *Adobe Firefly*, 2025.

The  
FUTURE OF  
QUIET LUXURY

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01

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# THE FUTURE OF QUIET LUXURY

## HUMAN CONNECTION THROUGH SYNERGY AND RESONANCE

Luxury is undergoing a profound transformation. As emerging consumers, especially Millennials and Gen Z, move away from status-driven consumption, a new paradigm is forming: one centered on authentic human connection. This shift reframes luxury as an alignment between brand behavior and personal values, where meaning matters more than visibility.

### RESONANCE

- Emotional Experience
- Purposeful Expression of Values and Interests
- Brand Cultural Heritage

#### Emerging Trends:

- **INTIMATE STORYTELLING**  
Founder-led, product-based, or community-driven narratives that invite consumer belonging
- **VALUE SIGNALING THROUGH SUBTLETY**  
Aesthetic restraint and informed taste replacing logo-centric status
- **QUIET SUSTAINABILITY**  
Subtle yet sincere commitment to ethics, durability, and operational integrity
- **EMOTIONAL DEPTH AND BELONGING**  
Brands that express values consistently foster lasting relationships based on trust and purpose

#### Action Guide:

- Practice Radical Transparency With Elegance and Intent
- Build Human-Centered Relationships
- Go Beyond Greenwashing: Make Sustainability Visible
- Tell the Brand Story Through Every Product and Experience

### SYNERGY

- Collaboration
- Innovation

#### Emerging Trends:

- **CO-CREATION AS CREATIVE LEADERSHIP**  
Cross-disciplinary partnerships that reinforce brand vision and cultural alignment
- **INNOVATION WITHOUT DISRUPTION**  
Quiet evolution that enhances daily life while preserving heritage
- **MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING AS RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING**  
Using media to deepen emotional bonds through culturally rich narratives
- **SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS AS SHARED RESPONSIBILITY**  
Innovating alongside consumers to promote longevity, circularity, and ethical practices

#### Action Guide:

- Collaborate with Cultural Relevance
- Embed Innovation Into Relationships
- Craft Stories That Blend Creation and Evolution
- Prioritize Lasting Impact Over Loud Launches

# INTRODUCTION

Developed and executed over the 10-week Spring 2025 academic quarter in RSCH 800 Future Lab, this research investigates the evolving dynamics of luxury branding. With a specific focus on quiet luxury, this study explores how emerging consumers' values — centered on emotional connection, personal meaning, and intimacy — reshape and guide the future of quiet luxury brands.



## Loudness

The brand's expression of luxury is bold and visible.

**BALENCIAGA**

**BURBERRY**

**LOUIS VUITTON**

**DOLCE & GABBANA**

**GUCCI**



**CELINE**

**RALPH LAUREN**

**LOEWE**

**MaxMara**

**JILSANDER**



**BOTTEGA VENETA**



**BRUNELLO CUCINELLI**

**GABRIELA HEARST**

**THE ROW**

## Quietness

The brand's expression of luxury is subtle and refined.



**ALTUZARRA**

In today's evolving luxury landscape, loud and quiet are no longer just stylistic choices — they represent two fundamentally different philosophies of value, identity, and status.

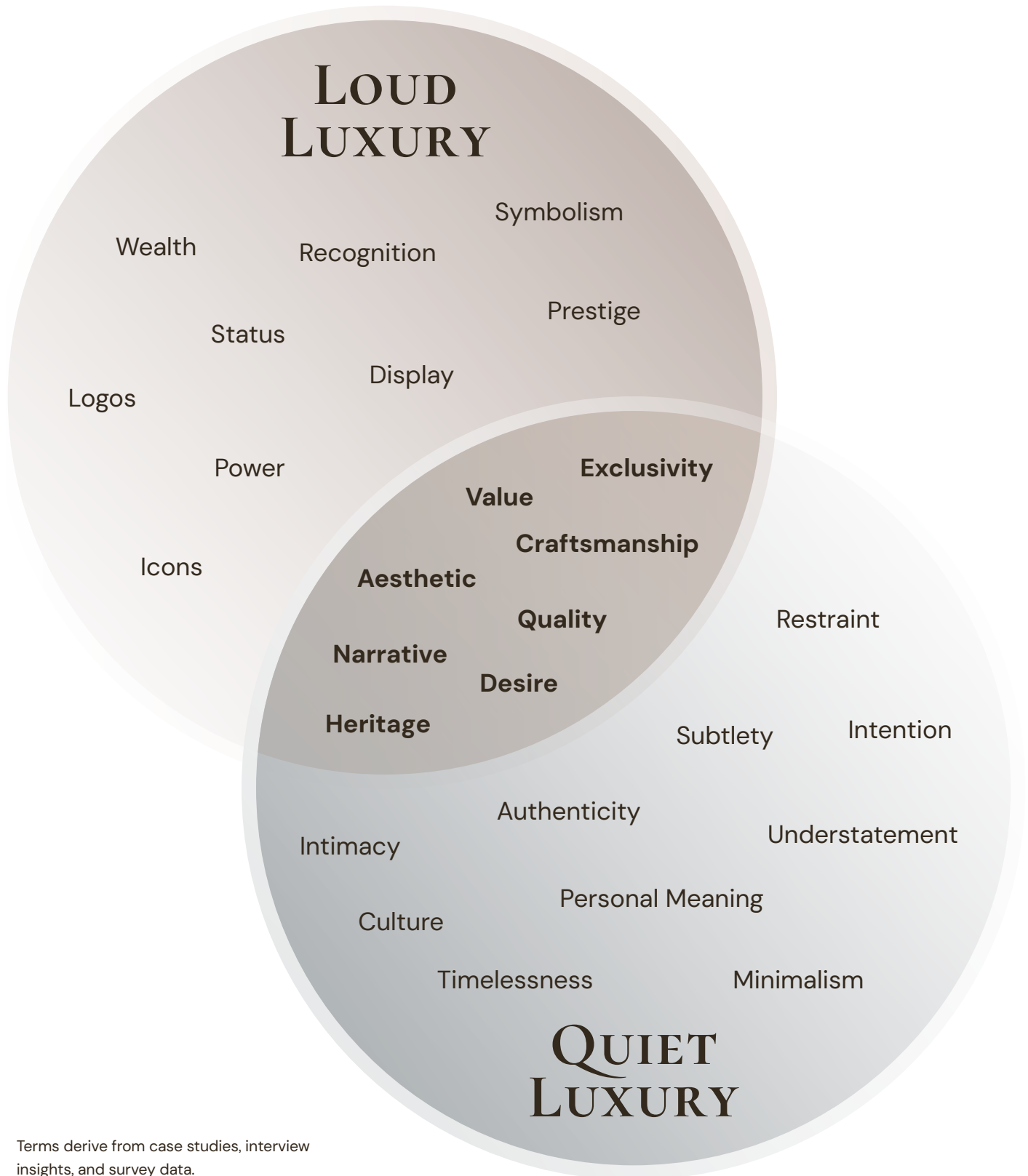
**LOUD LUXURY** is characterized by bold expression and immediate recognizability. These brands often use prominent logos, trend-driven aesthetics, and cultural visibility to assert exclusivity and social status. Loudness is performative, signaling wealth and taste outwardly to the world.

**QUIET LUXURY**, on the other hand, embraces subtlety, restraint, and timeless craftsmanship. It reflects a shift toward intrinsic value — where luxury is defined not by visibility, but by depth, heritage, material excellence, and the confidence to not seek validation through branding.

This distinction forms the foundation for our exploration. As consumer expectations evolve — especially among younger, more value-driven audiences — understanding these two poles uncovers how luxury is being redefined for the future.

# LUXURY KEY CONCEPTS

Analyses of luxury brands, products, and services revealed distinct characteristics commonly used to describe “loud” luxury vs “quiet” luxury — as well as some intersecting shared concepts.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Terms derive from case studies, interview insights, and survey data.

SCADask conducted a survey on quiet luxury to inform this report. The results are highlighted throughout.



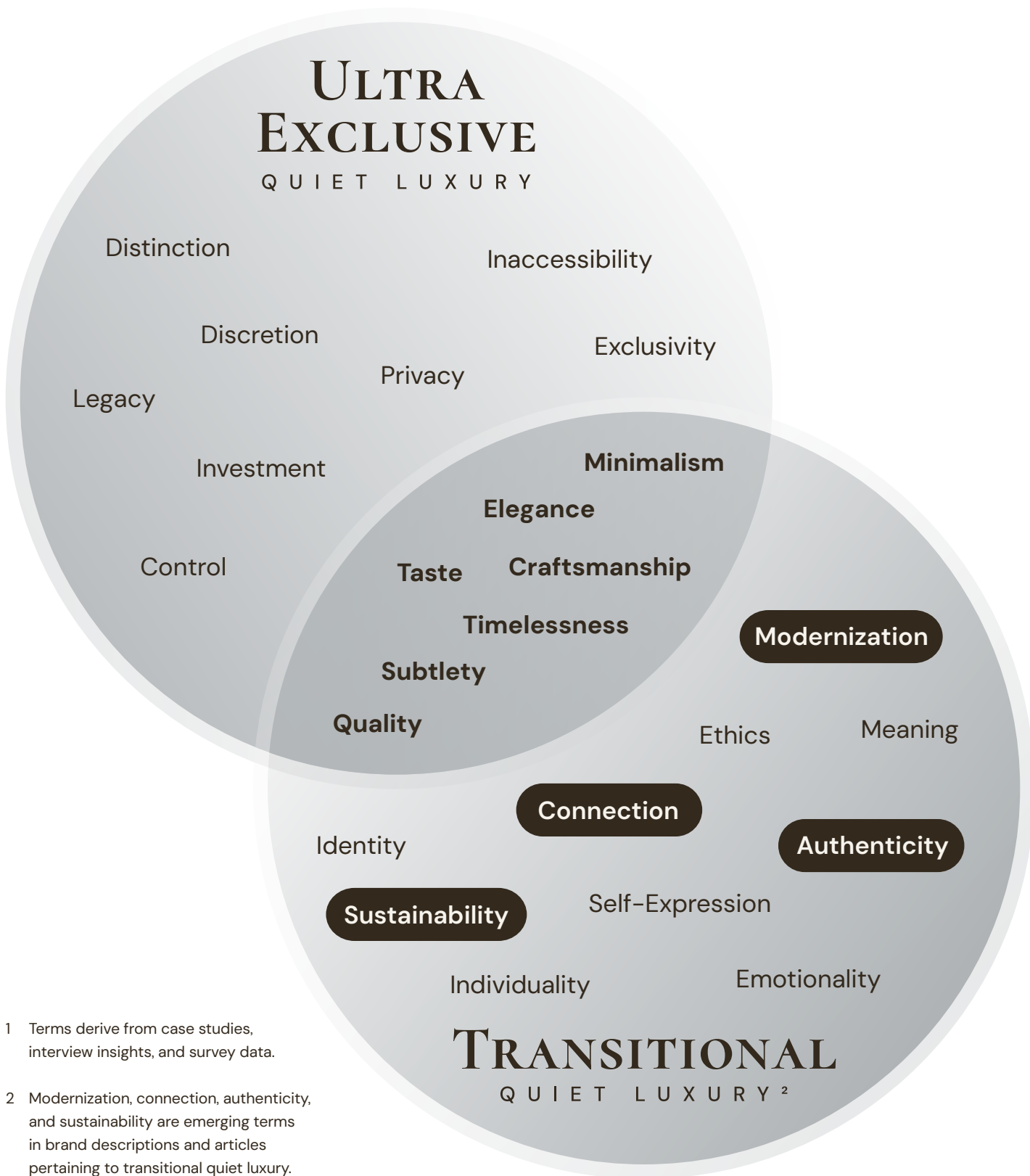
## “ QUIET LUXURY

*has grown 28% year-over-year, overtaking logo-driven luxury for the first time. It's projected to generate \$62 billion in 2024, driven by demand in Western Europe, the U.S. East Coast, and Asian capitals.*

LUXONOMY report, 2024

# QUIET LUXURY KEY CONCEPTS

Research reveals different genres of quiet luxury brands, products, and services. To refine the scope of our research, we focus on transitional quiet luxury audiences, who share values with the ultra-exclusive, but distinguish themselves through values like modernity, authenticity, sustainability, and human-centered connectivity.<sup>1</sup> Relevant key concepts distinguishing transitional quiet luxury and ultra exclusive quiet luxury are below.



<sup>1</sup> Terms derive from case studies, interview insights, and survey data.

<sup>2</sup> Modernization, connection, authenticity, and sustainability are emerging terms in brand descriptions and articles pertaining to transitional quiet luxury.



“**THE DEFINITION**

*[of quiet luxury] is changing. It used to be minimalism. ... [I am] noticing a shift away from minimalism and more to connection and emotional resonance.*

**Joseph Altuzarra**  
creative director, founder, and CEO  
Altuzarra

We Believe

THE FUTURE OF  
QUIET LUXURY IS

HUMAN  
CONNECTION.

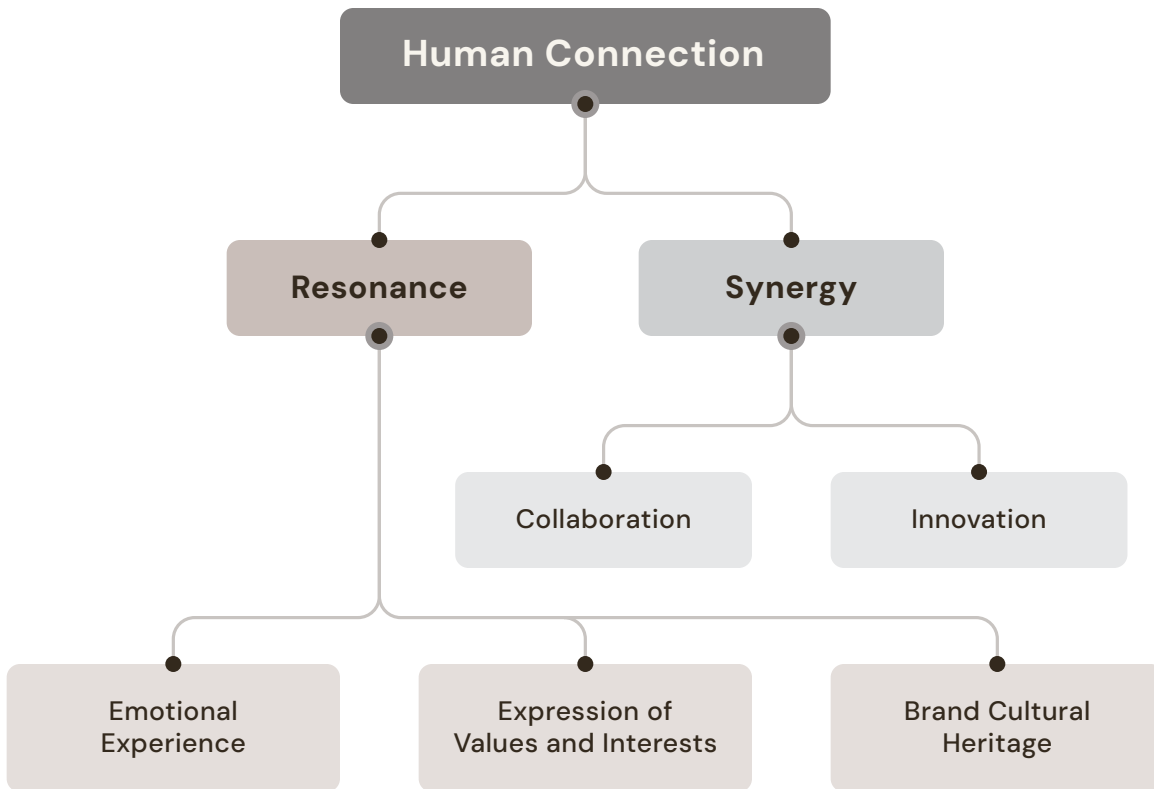
“THE FUTURE OF  
LUXURY IS DEFINITELY  
ABOUT CONNECTION.

*It's no longer just about the product — it's about how you feel about the brand, how they make you feel, and how well they understand you.*

**Bob Chavez**

former executive chairman of Hermès Americas,  
executive in residence at SCAD, and board member for Macy's Inc.

# CONCEPT MAP



**RESONANCE** refers to the emotional, cultural, and personal alignment between a brand and its audience. It is the felt connection that arises from a product's authenticity, the story it carries, and the values it reflects, drawing from a brand's cultural heritage.

Forged in emotional experience, resonance is felt through tactile, aesthetic, or narrative intimacy. Its non-performative expression can be traced through interests and values like sustainability, ethics, or timelessness.

Resonance signals belonging, identity, and depth.

**SYNERGY** refers to the active, future-oriented collaborations and innovations that allow quiet luxury brands to connect meaningfully with their audiences.

It emphasizes strategic co-creation, whether through media, partnerships, or product development, where brands build value through smart, aligned ecosystems.

Synergy is signaled via subtle multimedia storytelling, intentional and ethically aligned partnerships, and emotionally intelligent or sustainability-driven product innovations.

# TARGET AUDIENCE

**MILLENNIALS AND GEN Z** are emerging as influential forces in the luxury market, despite not having deep-rooted family histories with luxury consumption. United by a desire for authenticity, sustainability, and digital connection, these generations represent a new kind of luxury consumer, one that values meaning over heritage and purpose over prestige. This research focuses on understanding their motivations and exploring how brands can cultivate lasting relationships with them in an evolving market landscape.

**MILLENNIALS**, born between 1981 and 1996, are often described as “digital pioneers” for growing up during a period of rapid technological advancement and the widespread adoption of information and communication technologies. They have led the way in embracing innovations like the internet, mobile devices, and social media platforms, setting the standard for digital engagement across generations. As the most educated generation in history, their high level of educational attainment has significantly contributed to their potential for wealth accumulation.



## AUTHENTICITY AND PURPOSE-DRIVEN BRANDS

Millennials value authenticity, transparency, and brands that stand for more than just profits.

## SUSTAINABILITY AND ETHICAL PRACTICES

Millennials are willing to pay more for sustainable brands and products, valuing product sustainability over brand name.

## EXPERIENCES OVER MATERIAL GOODS

Millennials spend more time and money on events like concerts, social gatherings, and cultural experiences.



**GEN Z**, born between 1996 and 2010, are considered “digital natives” — the first generation to grow up entirely immersed in the internet, social media, and mobile technology. Their values are shaped by constant connectivity and global awareness, making them more socially conscious and driven by purpose. With a growing influence in the luxury market and a collective disposable income of \$360 billion, Gen Z is redefining what luxury means by favoring subtlety, sustainability, and authenticity over status-driven consumption.

## QUIET LUXURY APPEAL

Gen Z gravitates toward minimalist, timeless fashion that conveys taste without relying on flashy logos or brand visibility.

## SUSTAINABILITY AND ETHICAL PRACTICES

This generation is more likely to pay a premium for sustainable, ethically-made products, supporting brands that show environmental and social responsibility.

## DIGITAL-FIRST INFLUENCE

Trends like “quiet luxury” and the “old money aesthetic” thrive on platforms like TikTok, where Gen Z reshapes cultural perceptions of wealth and elegance through digital storytelling.



# KEY TAKEAWAYS

WE BELIEVE that the future of quiet luxury is human connection. In a world increasingly saturated with noise, immediacy, and image, the most enduring forms of luxury will be those that resonate personally, emotionally, and culturally with the individual. This connection is carefully designed, intentionally restrained, and deeply meaningful. At the heart of this new paradigm is human connection between people and meaning. Quiet luxury is about alignment: with values, with feelings, with time, and with identity.

## MULTISENSORY EXPERIENCES

Immersive environments or product experiences designed to engage multiple senses simultaneously — sight, touch, scent, sound, even memory — to create a deep emotional imprint.

## EMOTIONAL CLARITY

Emotional minimalism redefines luxury as a path to clarity and balance, valuing fewer, more meaningful possessions that create space for feeling — not just visual silence.

## CRAFT-TECH ALLIANCES

Strategic collaborations blend traditional craftsmanship with advanced technology to preserve heritage while driving innovation in materials, sustainability, and personalization.

## INNER QUIET LUXURY

Integrating emotional, mental, and physical wellness into luxury shifts the focus from external status to inner alignment, offering products and experiences that foster calm and wholeness.

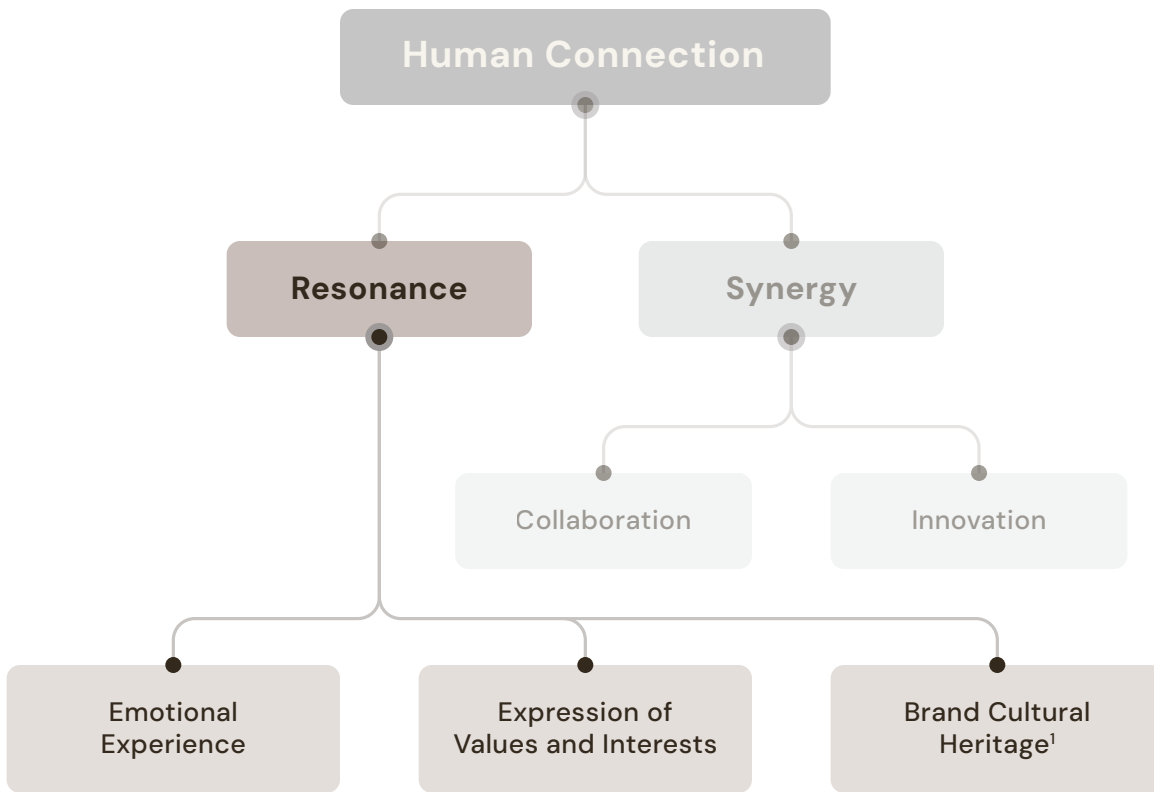
## VALUE-DRIVEN DESIRE

A shift from excess to ethics redefines luxury, where purpose, process, and values like sustainability and authenticity become the true markers of status.

03

HUMAN CONNECTION  
VIA  
RESONANCE

Future oriented resonance: intimate emotional experience, purposeful expression of values and interests, and brand cultural heritage.



## RESONANCE Emerging Trends:

**Intimate Storytelling**

**Quiet Sustainability**

**Value Signaling Through Subtlety**

**Emotional Depth and Belonging**

<sup>1</sup> This chapter does not explore brand cultural heritage; it only identifies it as a quality related to resonance.



## INTIMATE EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE

**AN INTIMATE EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE** is quickly becoming a powerful and enduring purchasing standard for quiet luxury consumers. This represents a shift as consumers evolve beyond overt status display. Across interviews and survey data, one message becomes clear: for the emerging generation of luxury consumers, especially Millennials and Gen Z, luxury is not what you show, but what you sense and sustain internally. Emotional connection defines worth.

While traditional luxury often revolved around signifiers of wealth, power, and exclusivity, quiet luxury shifts the center of gravity inward. This reorients desire from the performative to the personal, from the visible to the visceral. This does not mean that aesthetics, craftsmanship, or branding are irrelevant; their role is redefined. They are no longer tools of declaration, but vehicles of emotional resonance.

# INNER FULFILLMENT

## A SERIES OF CASE STUDIES

Emotional experience in quiet luxury directly reflects its core values of restraint, authenticity, and inner fulfillment. Unlike traditional luxury, which often seeks external validation, quiet luxury turns inward — prioritizing how a product makes the wearer feel over how it makes them appear. The emotional connection comes from craftsmanship, longevity, and intentional design.

This shift reveals a deeper cultural value: luxury as emotional security, not spectacle. When consumers describe feeling calm, confident, or grounded in what they wear, they are responding to a product that honors their identity quietly. The restraint in design mirrors a restraint in expression — a conscious choice to seek meaning over performance. Authenticity surfaces not in messaging but in the lived, tactile experience of wearing something that “feels right.” In this sense, emotional experience is the embodiment of quiet values themselves. It turns consumption into connection and affirms that luxury’s most powerful role may no longer be to impress others, but to bring its wearer a sense of internal alignment, comfort, and self-respect.

**84%** associate **fulfillment** with the concept of quiet luxury

1. **ALTUZARRA** is redefining what it means to be luxurious through the lens of emotional connection. Founder Joseph Altuzarra described this evolution in an interview for this report, positioning his brand firmly within a new paradigm of quiet, intentional, and intimate luxury.

He explained that luxury has split into two groups: one driven by logo-based status signaling, and his consumers, who seek emotional resonance and craftsmanship. In Altuzarra’s view, quiet luxury is not about minimalism in the cold, clinical sense. It conveys warmth, storytelling, and meaning.

Altuzarra emphasizes that his design process is “deeply considered,” not only aesthetically but philosophically. He wants each piece to feel special to the wearer, regardless of whether anyone else notices. This inward-facing intimacy is cultivated through product curation, personalized fittings, and showroom

## “OUR CUSTOMER

*is not seeking to show off wealth, but to build an emotional relationship with the product.*

**Joseph Altuzarra**  
creative director, founder, and CEO  
Altuzarra

appointments that foster a direct emotional link between designer and client. President Marta Lastra reinforced this with the brand's approach to emotional durability: creating garments that last in both material quality and sentimental value. Every detail — be it the choice of fabric or a print — is imbued with purpose and intention.

## “THESE ARE PIECES

*you treasure and rely on, the kind of things you might want to hand down to your children.*

**Marta Lastra**  
president  
Altuzarra



Altuzarra's commitment to storytelling as luxury also points to a broader trend. In quiet luxury, meaning replaces spectacle. Clients increasingly want to understand where a piece comes from, how it was made, and why it matters.

Through Altuzarra's lens, emotional experience is no longer a bonus in luxury — it is the essence. By centering human connection over status, Altuzarra proves that to wear something beautiful is one thing, but to feel something about it defines true luxury.

## “TRUST IN

*the brand, product quality, longevity, uniqueness, and how well it fits [your] personal style or values.*

**Joseph Altuzarra**  
creative director, founder, and CEO  
Altuzarra

2. **LEMAIRE** invited a quieter, more poetic form of intimacy: garments that became personal through time, wear, and repetition. Designed to age beautifully, crease naturally, and blend into daily rituals, Lemaire's pieces absorbed the user's rhythm, becoming emotional extensions of the self. Its muted earth tones, organic shapes, and soft drape spoke to emotional restraint rather than aesthetic minimalism. Customers often referred to Lemaire as a "uniform" — but one that evolved with them, rather than flattened them. The emotional experience became trust — a relationship built slowly, through repeated proximity.

“**I FEEL**

*composed, grounded — like I don't need to try.*

**Gen Z**

Aspirational quiet luxury customer



3. **STORY MFG.** offered emotional experience through craft-led optimism and radical gentleness. The brand's garments were dyed with natural ingredients like indigo, jackfruit, and madder root — often through weeks- or months-long processes involving artisans from India and the UK. Each piece carried visible marks of handwork, aging, and process — not just aesthetic signs, but emotional proof of care and time. Story mfg. invited customers into an ethical ecosystem where kindness to the earth and to people was embedded into every thread. This created not only moral satisfaction, but also a warm emotional texture — a sense of peace, calm, and innocence. The garments felt like rituals, not commodities: their imperfections, scents, and softness offered comfort and spiritual grounding. Customers described the clothes as things to “grow old with,” not replace. Emotional resonance came from the feeling that they were protecting something.

“  
**IT’S LIKE  
A WHISPER**

*between those who understand.*

**Gen Z**

Aspirational quiet luxury customer



4. **LOEWE** offered a unique emotional experience by merging artisanal heritage with cultural curiosity. Under Jonathan Anderson’s direction, the brand moved away from overt logos and into a realm of quiet storytelling, where clothing and objects became emotional artifacts. Customers felt a sense of intimacy and playfulness through Loewe’s tactile use of materials — from hand-woven textiles to soft napa leather — as well as through collaborations with craft communities and artists. The Paula’s Ibiza collections, for instance, evoked not just travel, but a dreamlike nostalgia, blurring memory, history, and personal identity. Loewe’s seasonal publications transformed shopping into a narrative experience, making customers feel part of a quietly expanding cultural dialogue. Instead of demanding attention, Loewe invited emotional reflection — a sense of childlike discovery layered onto mature craftsmanship. The brand’s emotional resonance came from how it reawakened curiosity, tactile joy, and a connection to the sensorial.

“  
**IT BECOMES  
YOURS**

*— your story, your memory.*

**Gen Z**

Aspirational quiet luxury customer





In the evolving landscape of quiet luxury, emotional experience is no longer a secondary benefit — it is the essence. Across case studies from Altuzarra, Lemaire, Story mfg., and Loewe, we see a collective shift toward luxury that prioritizes inner fulfillment over outer validation. These brands cultivate emotional resonance not through spectacle, but through intentional design, meaningful storytelling, and human-centered touchpoints.

For today's consumers, especially Millennials and Gen Z, true luxury lies in how it makes them feel: composed, connected, and seen. In this intimate paradigm, garments become memory keepers, products become personal rituals, and brands become quiet companions in a consumer's evolving identity. Emotional connection now defines value.



## PURPOSEFUL EXPRESSION OF VALUES AND INTERESTS

**PURPOSEFUL EXPRESSION OF VALUES AND INTERESTS** refers to how brands communicate their deeper beliefs, ethics, and cultural stances in ways that feel intentional, authentic, and aligned with their audience's worldview. For quiet luxury, this expression is often consistent, subtle yet deeply meaningful. It is not about making bold statements, but about quietly embodying principles such as sustainability, craftsmanship, or social responsibility.

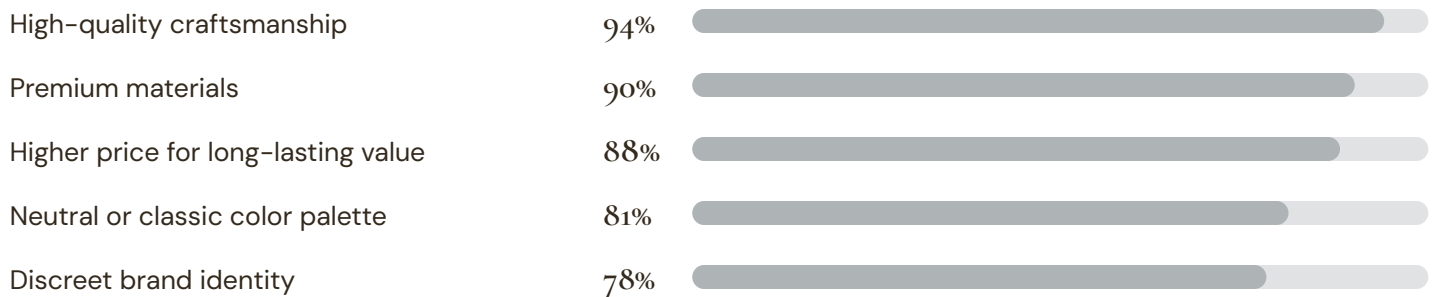
For Gen Z and Millennials, who prioritize purpose over prestige, this kind of expression fosters brand spiritual connection and trust. It allows consumers to see themselves reflected in the brand's choices, from the materials used to the partnerships formed. Purposeful expression creates space for shared identity and reinforces a brand's relevance in an increasingly value-driven market.

# LOW-VOLUME, HIGH-MEANING

## A CASE STUDY

In today's shifting luxury landscape, a new form of expression is emerging — one that is quiet, intentional, and deeply value-driven. Rather than competing for attention through overt displays of wealth or bold branding, many modern luxury houses are choosing to express their commitments through thoughtful action. This reflection of quiet values is not rooted in performance, but in alignment — between what a brand believes, what it creates, and how it communicates. Whether through sustainability, cultural stewardship, ethical sourcing, or timeless design, these brands speak to a generation of consumers who seek meaning over noise and authenticity over excess.

### Top factors associated with the concept of quiet luxury



1. **HERMÈS**, the French luxury house founded in 1837, seamlessly integrates sustainability into its operations — expressing a philosophy rooted in craftsmanship, restraint, and long-term value. This commitment is not positioned as a marketing tool, but as a natural extension of the brand's identity. It reflects a purposeful expression of interests and values that resonates with modern consumers who seek authenticity, responsibility, and emotional depth in their luxury choices.

At the core of Hermès is a belief in enduring craftsmanship. The brand's commitment to quality over quantity is a quiet, yet powerful rejection of fast fashion and waste. Each object is designed to last, be repaired, and passed down — embodying values of patience, care, and permanence. Sustainability is a way of thinking and making.

## “ I DON’T LIKE

*when it’s screaming the brand name. It’s more meaningful if people who know just know. That’s the kind of taste I want to show.*

**Bob Chavez**

former executive chairman of Hermès Americas, executive in residence at SCAD, and board member for Macy’s Inc.

This philosophy extends to sourcing. Hermès prioritizes natural, renewable, and traceable materials, practicing discernment in every stage of production. Responsible leather and silk sourcing are handled with transparency and precision, upholding environmental integrity while preserving artisanal traditions. These decisions reflect more than operational excellence — they signal ethical intention.

Beyond environmental concerns, Hermès demonstrates a cultural commitment through the Fondation d’entreprise Hermès and its petit h workshop. These initiatives support artistic creation, the reuse of surplus materials, and the preservation of human craftsmanship. They highlight Hermès’ belief that sustainability also means sustaining the creative ecosystems and knowledge that define luxury at its most meaningful.

This ethos is shared by other brands. The Row, for example, embraces minimalism, slow production, and impeccable tailoring as a quiet protest against excess, expressing values through timeless form rather than overt branding. Loro Piana, known for its refined cashmere and wool, quietly champions material excellence and environmental stewardship, sourcing rare fibers with care and supporting traditional communities. Meanwhile, Brunello Cucinelli explicitly blends profit with purpose, investing in the



cultural and social wellbeing of its local Italian town — a philosophy the founder refers to as “humanistic capitalism.”

In true quiet luxury fashion, these brands communicate their values with restraint. Rather than rely on performative messaging, they allow thoughtful design, ethical sourcing, and cultural integrity to speak for themselves. This understated approach reflects a deep confidence and trust in a discerning audience — those who recognize and value quiet integrity over loud declarations.

## “ YOU CAN FEEL

*the care in something well-made. It’s like the designer is sharing their philosophy with you — quietly.*

**Jens Kaeumle**

associate dean of School of Fashion and DeSole School of Business Innovation at SCAD

# HUMAN & PRODUCT-BASED STORYTELLING

## A SERIES OF CASE STUDIES

In quiet luxury, storytelling is an expression of belief. Unlike traditional luxury marketing built around bold campaigns and visual spectacle, quiet luxury brands rely on intimate, intentional narratives that resonate deeply with their audiences. These stories are told in two distinct but often overlapping ways: through human-based storytelling that centers on relationships, and product-based storytelling that embeds meaning in materials, form, and function.

### “SOMETIMES, SALES ASSOCIATES

*tell you more than the product description. They remember what you like, they follow up — it feels like someone’s actually listening to you.*

**Bob Chavez**

former executive chairman of Hermès Americas, executive in residence at SCAD, and board member for Macy’s Inc.



1. **HERMÈS** exemplifies this approach through its exceptional in-store experience. Sales associates act as brand ambassadors, guiding clients through product options and the house’s storied heritage. These conversations often include personal anecdotes about artisanship, material sourcing, and the lineage of product design — transforming the act of purchasing into an intimate exchange of culture and values. Popular podcasts such as Acquired have further elevated Hermès’ narrative among younger consumers, who crave context and meaning behind the brand’s quiet legacy.

83%

prefer **personalized** and **customized** experiences

2. **BRUNELLO CUCINELLI** also places human connection at the center of its brand. The founder is known for his humanistic philosophy — leading with dignity, respect, and community as core values. His personal story and the values infused into the brand's headquarters in Solomeo, Italy are consistently shared with customers, building trust and emotional loyalty through transparency and humanity.



3. **THE ROW**, founded by Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen, avoids mass advertising or social media campaigns. Instead, the brand leans into exclusivity and relationship-building through private appointments, word-of-mouth referrals, and meticulous client service — where storytelling is built through interaction, not spectacle.

While human connection is essential, many quiet luxury brands also rely on the inherent storytelling of their products — designs that speak for themselves through material quality, symbolic references, and heritage techniques.

4. **ALTUZARRA** takes a deliberate approach to product-based storytelling. Without relying on flashy marketing budgets, the brand hosts small-scale fashion presentations for its most loyal clients, distributing hand-assembled lookbooks that include the collection's inspiration, fabric swatches, and handwritten notes from the designer. This physical artifact becomes part of the product's story, deepening the personal relationship between the consumer and the creation.

5. **LORO PIANA**, known for its rare cashmeres and vicuñas, weaves the origin story of its materials into the product experience. Information about the altitude of the Andes, the communities involved in harvesting, and the climate conditions of the animals are subtly shared with clients — framing the product as an item born of time, place, and human touch.



## “ WE ACTUALLY

*have this little book that we give people that has the fabric and stories and photos and the little samples of the collections in there, and it's handmade. It's like a physical story. You feel like you're part of the brand's world when you receive it.*

**Joseph Altuzarra**  
creative director, founder, and CEO  
Altuzarra



## “**STORYTELLING**

*becomes the new logo.*

**Joseph Altuzarra**  
creative director, founder, and CEO  
Altuzarra

In the world of quiet luxury, storytelling is embedded. Whether it's Hermès' one-on-one relationships or Altuzarra's handcrafted narratives, these brands exemplify how deep, value-driven storytelling — through both people and product — creates lasting emotional resonance, shaping brand perception and the future of luxury itself.



# BEYOND THE BUZZWORDS

## A SERIES OF CASE STUDIES

In the evolving landscape of luxury fashion, sustainability has transitioned from a peripheral concern to a central tenet. However, within the sphere of quiet luxury, sustainability is subtly woven into the fabric of the brand's identity. This approach emphasizes authenticity, longevity, and a deep respect for craftsmanship and the environment.

Quiet luxury brands integrate sustainability as a natural extension of their philosophy — anchored in longevity, craftsmanship, and intentionality. By prioritizing timeless design and durable quality, these brands inherently promote sustainable consumption, encouraging long-term ownership over seasonal disposability.

1. **HERMÈS**, for example, exemplifies this ethos through its dedication to products made to last generations, minimizing waste and resisting the fast fashion cycle. Its sustainability efforts extend beyond product lifespan, incorporating responsible sourcing and ongoing support for artisanal communities.

2. **GABRIELA HEARST** represents a modern interpretation of sustainable luxury, using wool from her own sheep farm in Uruguay to ensure full supply chain transparency. The brand also leads in innovation, having introduced compostable bio-based plastics for packaging and staged carbon-neutral runway shows — clear demonstrations of her commitment to both environmental impact and design integrity.

Together, these brands show that in quiet luxury, sustainability is embedded in the way products are made, shared, and valued.



**Factors** that influence decisions to purchase luxury products and services



- 89% | Authenticity & Verification
- 89% | Craftsmanship
- 78% | Sustainability
- 71% | Ethical Practices

95%

report **company morals** and **values** as appealing


71%

say that **sustainability** is an important factor in luxury brand strategy



Sustainability is not an accessory to the brand — it is embedded in its philosophy, operations, and storytelling. Brands like Hermès and Gabriela Hearst demonstrate that sustainability, when rooted in craftsmanship, longevity, and ethical sourcing, becomes a natural expression of quiet values. These brands show their commitments through product durability, responsible material use, and support for artisanal and ecological systems.

What sets brands apart is not just what they do, but how they communicate it. Eschewing performative campaigns and buzzword-laden marketing, they opt for subtle, transparent storytelling that respects their audience's intelligence and desire for authenticity. In a time when greenwashing is under increasing scrutiny, the future of quiet luxury must hold itself to even higher standards: moving from claims to concrete action, and from polished narratives to honest dialogue. As consumer expectations evolve, quiet luxury brands will thrive by practicing their values and letting the integrity of their practices speak louder than any slogan.



In a world increasingly skeptical of spectacle and saturated with performative branding, the future of luxury is shifting toward meaningful, human-centered expression. Quiet luxury brands are defining this new paradigm by embodying values through action — not proclamation. From sustainable craftsmanship to emotionally resonant storytelling, these brands foster trust and intimacy through restraint, transparency, and purpose. By aligning deeply held beliefs with deliberate choices in design, sourcing, and communication, they invite consumers into a shared narrative rooted in authenticity. As this movement grows, the brands that endure will be the clearest in expressing who they are, what they stand for, and why it matters.



“**GEN Z**

*wants a company that is truthful  
and sustainable — more  
environmentally conscious.*

**Joseph Altuzarra**  
creative director, founder, and CEO  
Altuzarra



## EMERGING TRENDS

The future of luxury is being reshaped by purposeful expression — a quiet, intentional alignment between what a brand believes and how it behaves. Research reveals a clear shift: today’s consumers, especially Gen Z and Millennials, are no longer satisfied with passive ownership or surface-level prestige. They seek luxury that reflects their values, interests, and identity — luxury that speaks through substance.

**INTIMATE STORYTELLING** is becoming the new form of prestige, where human- and product-based narratives foster personal connection and invite consumers into a shared value system.

**VALUE SIGNALING THROUGH SUBTLETY** allows consumers to express taste through insider knowledge and restrained designs. Meanwhile, minimalism with meaning reframes luxury as having quality — where every design detail becomes a reflection of care, longevity, and intention.

**QUIET SUSTAINABILITY** gains prominence as brands move away from symbolic gestures toward operational integrity — designing durable products, sourcing materials ethically, and communicating these actions with quiet honesty.

**EMOTIONAL DEPTH AND BELONGING** relate to how a product makes someone feel and the alignment it creates between consumer and brand, which resides at the core of quiet luxury. When brands express their values clearly and consistently, they foster deeper bonds with those seeking trust, resonance, and purpose in what they buy.



# ACTION GUIDE

## 01 | PRACTICE RADICAL TRANSPARENCY WITH ELEGANCE AND INTENT

Share real stories of sourcing, process, and impact. Respect the audience's intelligence by giving them truth, not spin. Transparency, when done with elegance and humility, builds trust and long-term brand loyalty.

## 02 | BUILD HUMAN-CENTERED RELATIONSHIPS

Prioritize real human connection. Train teams to build emotional rapport. Founder-led storytelling, meaningful clienteling, and community touchpoints turn brands into lifelong companions.

## 03 | GO BEYOND GREENWASHING: MAKE SUSTAINABILITY VISIBLE

Integrate sustainability across the brand. Communicate efforts with clarity. In a post-greenwashing era, credibility is earned through integrity.

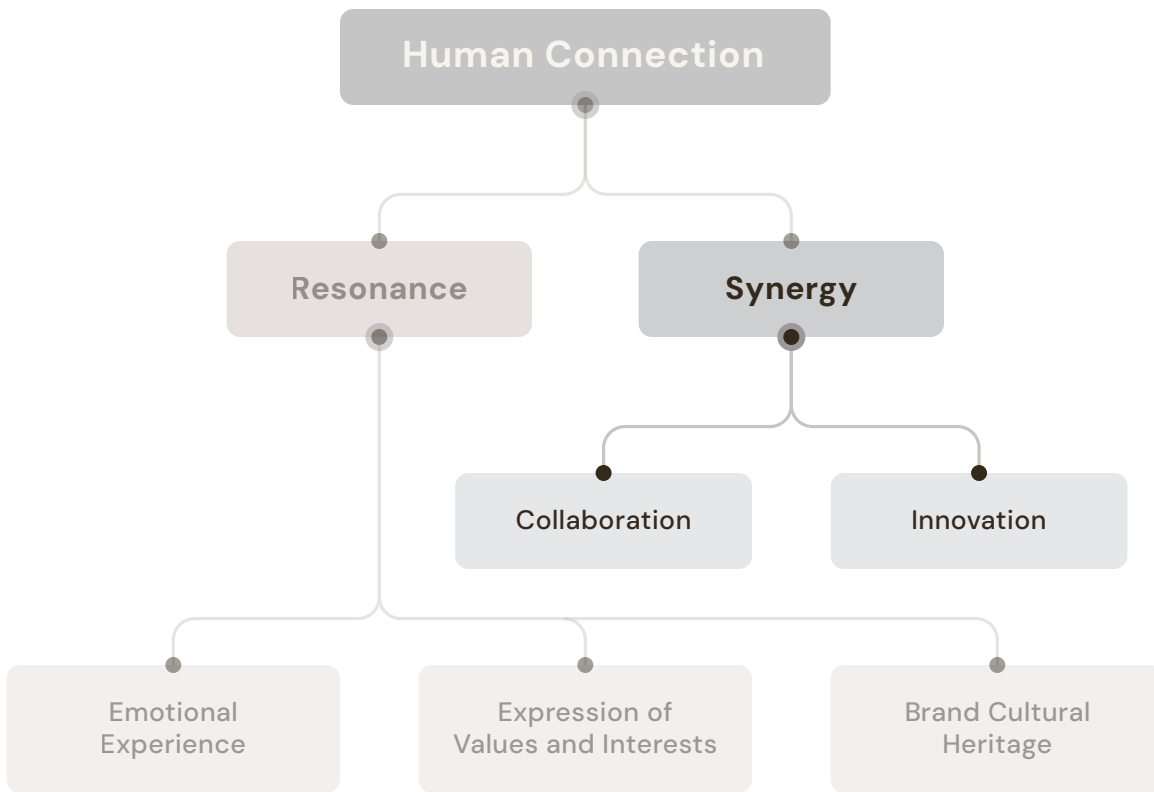
## 04 | TELL THE BRAND STORY THROUGH EVERY PRODUCT AND EXPERIENCE

Every product is a touchpoint to tell a brand's story. Go beyond aesthetics to share the origins, values, and intentions behind designs. Quiet luxury brands invite consumers into a deeper narrative. That storytelling builds connection, trust, and lasting emotional resonance.

04

HUMAN CONNECTION  
VIA  
SYNERGY

Future-oriented synergy: strategic collaboration and customer-oriented innovation while maintaining authentic and consistent brand image.



**SYNERGY** Emerging Trends:

**Co-Creation as Creative Leadership**

**Multimedia Storytelling as Relationship-Building**

**Innovation Without Disruption**

**Sustainable Systems as Shared Responsibility**



# COLLABORATION

**COLLABORATION** plays a central role in shaping the future of quiet luxury by fostering synergy between brands, creators, and audiences. Rather than relying solely on traditional prestige cues, innovative quiet luxury brands are beginning to embrace co-creation across multimedia and strategic partnerships to cultivate meaningful human connection and cultural relevance.

For Gen Z and Millennials, collaboration offers more than visibility. It reflects shared beliefs and builds a sense of trust and belonging. Audiences see their values mirrored not just in the product, but in the brand's choice of partners. Whether through co-created content or curated events, collaboration quietly strengthens connection and meaning. This helps brands remain relevant and personal in a world where luxury is defined by lasting, genuine experiences.



# IN PARTNERSHIP, WE WHISPER

## A SERIES OF CASE STUDIES

Collaboration is a dialogue. These brands lean into cultural intimacy, co-creating narratives through multimedia and partnerships that reflect shared values, aesthetics, and emotional resonance. Whether through film, livestream, or aligned brand alliances, quiet luxury invites younger audiences to be co-creators in a story.

1. **HERMÈS**, through its collaboration with Apple, extended its heritage of craftsmanship into the realm of contemporary technology, offering a refined expression of quiet luxury. This partnership translated the maison's artisanal values into a new context. The handcrafted leather straps — made in France with the same precision as its saddlery — paired with minimalist digital interfaces designed in harmony with Hermès typography. The result was a product both timeless and quietly modern. Rather than loud campaigns, the collaboration let the object speak for itself, appealing to Millennials and Gen Z who seek authenticity, design integrity, and subtle status. Here, innovation became an extension of legacy proving that, even in digital formats, Hermès tells a tactile, emotional story of elegance and restraint.



## “THE ONLY COLLABORATION

*we ever did in 25 years was the Apple Watch collaboration. ... It took a long time to get there, but the idea, the concept, was to marry the technology to the craftsmanship of a strap.*

**Bob Chavez**

former executive chairman of Hermès Americas, executive in residence at SCAD, and board member for Macy's Inc.

2. **JACQUEMUS** transformed a fashion show into a generational moment through TikTok Live. Instead of limiting access to front rows, Jacquemus opened the show to Gen Z's native stage: the smartphone. The minimalist silhouettes, sun-drenched palette, and natural settings told a story. The collaboration with TikTok redefined exclusivity, allowing intimacy to scale and storytelling to travel via shares, loops, and emotional impressions.

3. **CELINE**, under Hedi Slimane, explored another multimedia path through the cinematic release of *Teen Knight Poem*. This gothic-inspired fashion film was a layered narrative told in aesthetic frames, soundtracked with post-punk romanticism. Slimane reimaged the runway as a stage for sentiment, creating a quiet yet thunderous digital myth that aligned with youth seeking mood over marketing.

4. **THE ROW** partnered with Oliver Peoples to create a refined eyewear collection, merging minimal elegance with optical heritage. The result was a quiet alignment of sensibilities. The collaboration whispered in harmony, speaking directly to connoisseurs who value form, restraint, and story.

5. **BRUNELLO CUCINELLI** cultivates partnerships for purpose. Collaborations with organizations like the Horiuchi Foundation reflect shared values in education and craftsmanship. These relationships deepen the brand's ethical stance and reinforce a commitment to dignity — a narrative especially resonant with Millennials and Gen Z who seek purpose-driven consumption.



6. **GABRIELA HEARST**, in her partnership with Chloé, integrated sustainability into every stitch. From using recycled cashmere to sourcing traceable wool, the collaboration was eco-conscious and revolutionary. Through this alliance, Hearst transformed the tone of French luxury: one of accountability, substance, and soulful modernity.

7. **TOTEME**, a Swedish quiet luxury brand, works with artisans and limited local suppliers, ensuring each partnership enhances the product's story. These collaborations are communicated through understated editorial campaigns and subtle, tactile in-store storytelling, proving that supply chain choices can become chapters in a brand's evolving narrative.

## “THERE HAS TO BE A CONSISTENCY

*to your quality, to the materials, and to the experience overall. It has to be a quality experience. ... I think [that] is part of why quiet luxury has resonated so well with people.*

**Bob Chavez**

former executive chairman of Hermès Americas, executive in residence at SCAD, and board member for Macy's Inc.



Collaboration in quiet luxury reflects a commitment to shared values, intentional alliances, and cultural depth. Unlike traditional luxury, which often highlights individual brand prestige, quiet luxury embraces co-creation — partnering with voices and platforms that align with its understated ethos. Whether through media, fashion events, or influencer relationships, these collaborations are curated dialogues that honor authenticity, creativity, and emotional connection. The value lies not in scale but in synergy.

When audiences engage with these partnerships, they are witnessing thoughtful marketing through strategic choices. This kind of collaboration mirrors the quiet confidence of the products themselves: considered, refined, and rooted in purpose. It becomes a way to extend meaning beyond the object, reinforcing the brand's identity while expanding consumers' sense of inclusion, alignment, and cultural belonging.



## INNOVATION

**INNOVATION** also plays a vital role in shaping the future of quiet luxury by evolving tradition through meaningful design, services, and strategy. Rather than pursuing novelty for its own sake, brands are introducing thoughtful innovations — whether in materials, digital platforms, or internal culture — that enhance longevity, ethical alignment, and emotional value. Innovation in this space reflects a deeper commitment to relevance, refinement, and purpose.

For Gen Z and Millennials, innovation is not about chasing what's next — it is about improving what matters. They gravitate toward products made with rare, sustainable materials like Loro Piana's vicuña wool, services that support mindful living like Loom's upcycling platform, and leadership transitions that ensure generational continuity, as seen at Brunello Cucinelli. These innovations resonate because they align with the values of intention, care, and long-term meaning. In quiet luxury, innovation is not loud — it is lasting. It reinforces the idea that modern luxury is about what is deeply considered and enduring.

# WHERE NEWNESS GROWS SLOW

## A SERIES OF CASE STUDIES

Innovation in quiet luxury is not about being first — it is about being right. While mainstream innovation often equates to technological spectacle or disruptive novelty, quiet luxury defines it as a natural evolution — measured, purposeful, and rooted in cultural resonance. For Millennials and Gen Z, innovation is not something to admire from afar. It must fit into their values and lives: subtle customization, ethical transparency, sustainability, and emotional longevity. Whether it is in product development, service transformation, or leadership renewal, innovation in this space is a quiet act of refinement that deepens meaning and builds trust.

**81%** say **innovation** and **personalization** influence their decisions to purchase luxury products

1. **LORO PIANA** represents how product innovation can simultaneously preserve heritage and appeal to new values. Known for its unparalleled quality and craftsmanship, the brand has expanded its material story by integrating vicuña wool — a fiber historically reserved for Incan royalty and now ethically sourced from the Andes. The introduction of vicuña into its ready-to-wear lines offers tactile luxury and a narrative steeped in environmental stewardship and regional preservation. Young consumers increasingly seek meaning in the materials they wear — stories of origin, care, and responsibility. Loro Piana's products are soft, lived expressions of patience, rarity, and conscience. In this way, product becomes narrative, and tradition looks forward.



2. **LŪRA** represents a new generation of quiet luxury — where innovation builds the brand with long-term values from the outset. Co-founded by lifelong friends Yvonne Roe and Diana Planeta, the label was born out of a desire to reimagine the luxury handbag experience through transparency, intention, and emotional connection. Each LŪRA bag comes with a digital ID accessible via app, offering full transparency about sourcing, materials, and design components. But the innovation doesn't stop at clarity — it looks forward. Roe and Planeta envision a brand future where customers can sell back their LŪRA bags to be refurbished and resold, allowing new owners — especially aspiring customers — to participate in a circular economy. It is a quiet but radical rethinking of luxury ownership: one that favors community, stewardship, and sustainability over one-time exclusivity. For Gen Z and Millennial consumers, this kind of forward-thinking, emotionally intelligent innovation resonates deeply. LŪRA proves that luxury can be clear, inclusive, and future-ready while still feeling rare, personal, and beautifully made.

3. **BRUNELLO CUCINELLI**, long known for his humanistic capitalism, shows how innovation can also be strategic and generational. Rather than chasing external growth or trend-based pivots, the brand has introduced a leadership transition that brings his daughters, Carolina and Camilla, into key creative roles. This shift is a clear, conscious strategy to ensure the continuity of the brand's philosophy while staying attuned to cultural shifts. Carolina now leads the women's collection, injecting her perspective into silhouettes, materials, and styling choices. Together with her sister, she is quietly evolving the Cucinelli aesthetic to resonate with younger audiences while retaining the values of dignity, craftsmanship, and beauty. This is a case where succession expands the brand's emotional and generational relevance.





**Innovation in quiet luxury aligns with long-term value, personal connection, and cultural intelligence.**

**For Millennials and Gen Z, who are both skeptical of branding and sensitive to meaning — this kind of innovation is not just welcomed but expected. The goal is to build trust, a well-nurtured community, and a new type of prestige rooted in purpose.**

# EMERGING TRENDS

Quiet luxury is evolving through the dual forces of collaboration and innovation, where partnerships are not just performative, and innovation is not just technological. For Gen Z and Millennials, luxury is most compelling when it reflects shared values, thoughtful change, and emotional depth. Today's emerging trends show a clear shift from legacy-driven prestige toward culturally attuned growth, built around synergy, relevance, and restraint. At its core, quiet luxury now grows through intentional alliances and refined progress. The future belongs to brands that create together, evolve thoughtfully, and invite consumers not into a moment, but into a shared journey.

**CO-CREATION AS CREATIVE LEADERSHIP** is becoming central to brand expression. Collaborations are deeply strategic, as seen in The Row x Oliver Peoples or Hermès x Apple — partnerships that extend artistic vision, reinforce brand values, and invite audiences into intimate brand worlds.

**INNOVATION WITHOUT DISRUPTION** is redefining what is considered “new.” Brands like Loro Piana and Toteme innovate quietly — through material refinement, supply chain ethics, or service enhancements that improve everyday life while preserving brand identity.

**MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING AS RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING** is rising, as brands blend innovation with collaboration through creative media. Fashion films, livestreamed events, or TikTok-native presentations (e.g., Jacquemus) are connective tissue between brands and culture.

**SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS AS SHARED RESPONSIBILITY** are shifting from brand promises to consumer partnerships. Platforms like Loom create services that help consumers extend product life, personalize ownership, and participate in circular luxury, making collaboration part of innovation itself.





# ACTION GUIDE

## 01 | COLLABORATE WITH CULTURAL RELEVANCE

Choose partners who reflect values and expand creative voice. Co-create experiences, not just collections, that deepen brand meaning and invite emotional connection with new audiences.

## 02 | EMBED INNOVATION INTO RELATIONSHIPS

Innovate in service beyond what is sold. Whether it is concierge repair, AR fitting, or digital transparency, use service as a space for innovation that builds intimacy and trust over time.

## 03 | CRAFT STORIES THAT BLEND CREATION AND EVOLUTION

Let collaboration and innovation shape brand narratives. From cross-disciplinary partnerships to thoughtful product updates, stories become more powerful when they connect people and progress.

## 04 | PRIORITIZE LASTING IMPACT OVER LOUD LAUNCHES

Innovate to endure — select materials, media, and collaborative decisions that reflect care, longevity, and cultural alignment. Quiet moves build lasting loyalty.

# CONCLUSION



As conspicuous displays of wealth give way to quiet, intentional expressions of meaning, the future of luxury is being reshaped by one essential force: authentic human connection. At its core, this future is built on two pillars — synergy and resonance. Future-oriented synergy refers to strategic collaboration and customer-oriented innovation, all while preserving a brand's integrity and identity. Resonance, on the other hand, is created through emotional depth — maintaining cultural heritage, fostering intimate emotional experiences, and purposefully expressing values that consumers deeply care about.

Today's emerging luxury consumers, especially Millennials and Gen Z, are no longer impressed by spectacle alone. They seek alignment. They gravitate toward brands that reflect who they are and what they stand for. Quiet luxury is about living with purpose. Brands that lead with restraint, transparency, and emotional intelligence are building lasting loyalty through meaningful storytelling, sustainability, and shared beliefs. In this new era, luxury is not about being seen. It's about being understood.

06

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

26,099 raw data points

524 SCADask survey responses

6 customer interviews

4 expert interviews



# SURVEY OVERVIEW

To better understand the values, attitudes, and behaviors of emerging luxury consumers, a targeted survey explored how this audience approaches the purchase of luxury goods and services.

The survey began with screening questions such as age range and frequency of luxury purchases to ensure respondents aligned with the target profile, allowing a focus on individuals who actively engage with, or aspire to, the luxury market. The core of the survey explored purchase motivations and decision-making factors to surface not only functional preferences, but also the deeper emotional and cultural drivers shaping the future of luxury consumption.

# 524

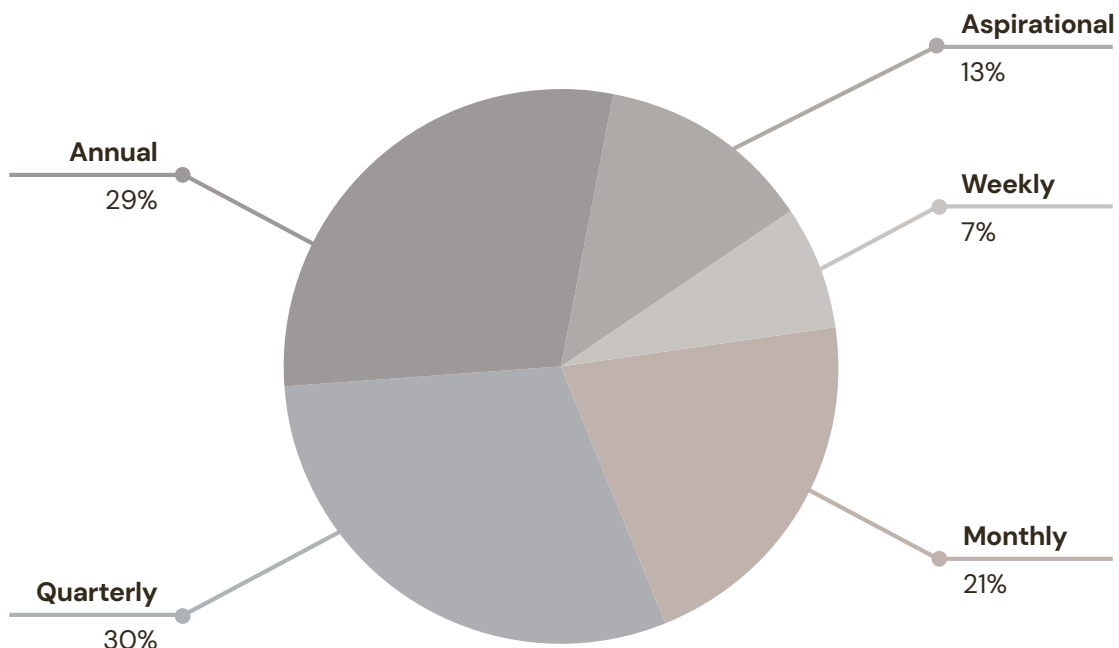
valid responses

# 406

Millennials  
1981–1996

# 118

Gen Z  
1997–2010



# SURVEY TAKEAWAYS

## 01 | QUIET LUXURY RESONATES DEEPLY WITH YOUNGER GENERATIONS

The vast majority of Millennials and Gen Z agreed that quiet luxury represents a deeper shift in consumer values, favoring inner fulfillment over wealth signaling.

## 02 | SPENDING REFLECTS ASPIRATION MORE THAN EXCESS

46% of respondents spend under \$5,000 annually on luxury, but a significant portion indicated aspirational intent.

## 03 | THE APPEAL OF SUBTLETY AND MINIMAL BRANDING

53% of respondents reported purchasing or considering luxury items without visible logos.

## 04 | CONSUMERS EXPECT MORE THAN MESSAGING, THEY WANT PROOF

Respondents expressed strong support for sustainable practices and ethical production, emphasizing the importance of brand reputation and reliability.

## 05 | EMOTION-LED DISCOVERY

Luxury buyers now prioritize purpose over status, valuing craftsmanship, authenticity, and emotional connection. Discovery is driven by digital media and trusted recommendations, while quiet luxury evokes feelings of sophistication, confidence, and personal fulfillment.

# INTERVIEW REPORT

A series of interviews with industry experts and target consumers were conducted to further the team's understanding of quiet luxury, industry insights, emerging trends, and customer mindsets.

## INDUSTRY EXPERTS

Quiet luxury reflects a growing shift in fashion toward timeless design, emotional connection, and ethical integrity. Rather than relying on logos or trend-driven appeal, quiet luxury brands value craftsmanship, intentionality, and storytelling. Quiet luxury invites consumers to form deep, personal relationships with their belongings — products chosen not to display wealth, but to reflect inner values. Transparency, sustainability, and authenticity are no longer optional; they are essential. In this evolving landscape, luxury becomes less about status and more about substance, intimacy, and lasting meaning.



“

## [QUIET LUXURY]

*is all about the materials, the subtle design, and how timeless they are.*

**Gen Z**

Aspirational quiet luxury customer

## TARGET CUSTOMERS

New generations favor emotionally resonant and curated experiences over logos. Quiet luxury is no longer about status, but about how it feels, what it says, and why it lasts.

Quiet luxury is shifting toward a more personal and emotionally resonant experience for customers, focused on authenticity, craftsmanship, and timeless design. It favors meaningful, well-made pieces over flashy branding or trends, offering subtle self-expression and emotional durability. Exclusivity now stems from ethical practices, storytelling, and personal relevance rather than price or fame. This new form of luxury values confidence and cultural depth; it is less about displaying wealth, and more about living with intention, elegance, and integrity.



# FUEL RESONANCE

WITH TACTILE QUALITY,  
SILENT HERITAGE CODES, AND  
MAKER-CENTRIC STORYTELLING.

# ANCHOR SYNERGY

IN DISCRETE, VALUE-ALIGNED  
COLLABORATIONS AND  
CONCIERGE-LEVEL SERVICE.

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08

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