

# SPORT: A NEW DIMENSION OF LUXURY?

On March 14th, a new store opened its doors on the prestigious Place de la Madeleine, succeeding the iconic Fauchon after nearly 130 years of history. The arrival of a sports store in the heart of one of Paris' most affluent districts may come as a surprise.

While Decathlon was already present in the area, its underground location conveyed a certain discretion within the highly exclusive 8th arrondissement. In contrast, Oysho, the "sport" brand of the Inditex group (Zara), has taken a resolutely bold approach by establishing itself in full view. This positioning raises a fundamental question: is sport becoming a new symbol of luxury?

## From Accessible to Exclusive Sport

Long perceived as a universally accessible pastime, sport has historically played a key role in society, supported by brands like Decathlon, whose Annual customers' average purchasing power is very close to the national average (€39k vs. €42k in France).

However, Oysho adopts a radically different strategy by targeting an urban and affluent clientele. Its real strenght lies is not just in its choice of location but in its ability to transform the image of sport and sportswear into an exclusive and premium offering.





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Like other brands such as ON, Gymshark, and Lululemon, Oysho establishes itself only in strategic locations: Paris, Anglet, Aix-en-Provence, and Cannes.

## A New Trend Limited to Paris?

Is sport as a social distinction merely a Parisian trend, or is it spreading nationwide?

The year 2025 marks the 20th anniversary of a major transformation in sports practice in France, with the emergence of private, paid sports complexes, such as the first Five centers launched in 2005. Since then, this model has expanded across the country with climbing gyms (Climb Up, Arkose) and padel courts, which have become the major sports trends of the 2020s.

While complexes like Five or Urban Soccer develop in both city centers and commercial zones (ZAC), with an average population density of 1,693 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup> (excluding Île-de-France), climbing gyms follow a more selective approach.



Indeed, these gyms prioritize dense urban centers, where population concentration is 46% higher than in multisport complexes. This strategy clearly aims to elevate the status of sports by making them more exclusive.

Does the rise of premium sports represent a mere evolution of practices, or a true repositioning of sport within the world of luxury?