



Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster

By Dana Thomas

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Once luxury was available only to the rarefied and aristocratic world of old money and royalty. It offered a history of tradition, superior quality, and a pampered buying experience. Today, however, luxury is simply a product packaged and sold by multibillion-dollar global corporations focused on growth, visibility, brand awareness, advertising, and, above all, profits. Award-winning journalist Dana Thomas digs deep into the dark side of the luxury industry to uncover all the secrets that Prada, Gucci, and Burberry don't want us to know. *Deluxe* is an uncompromising look behind the glossy façade that will enthrall anyone interested in fashion, finance, or culture.

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Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster By Dana Thomas Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Newsweek reporter Thomas skillfully narrates European fashion houses' evolution from exclusive ateliers to marketing juggernauts. Telling the story through characters like the French mogul Bernard Arnault, she details how the perfection of old-time manufacturing, still seen in Hermès handbags, has bowed to sweatshops and wild profits on mediocre merchandise. After a brisk history of luxury, Thomas shows why handbags and perfume are as susceptible to globalization and corporate greed as less rarefied industries. She follows the overarching story, parts of which are familiar, from boardrooms to street markets that unload millions in counterfeit goods, dropping irresistible details like a Japanese monk obsessed with Comme des Garçons. But she's no killjoy. If anything, she's fond of the aristocratic past, snarks at "behemoths that churn out perfume like Kraft makes cheese" and is too credulous of fashionistas' towering egos. Despite her grasp of business machinations, her argument that conglomerates have stolen luxury's soul doesn't entirely wash. As her tales of quotidian vs. ultra luxury make clear, the rich and chic can still distinguish themselves, even when Las Vegas hosts the world's ritziest brands. Thomas might have delved deeper into why fashion labels inspire such mania, beyond "selling dreams," but her curiosity is contagious. (Aug.)

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Thomas has been the fashion writer for *Newsweek* in Paris for 12 years and writes about style for the *New York Times Magazine* and other well-known publications. She traces the origins of luxury from the mid-nineteenth century, when Louis Vuitton made his first steamer trunks and custom-made clothing was strictly the province of European aristocracy, through the fashion boom of the 1920s, when names such as Dior, Gucci, and Yves Saint Laurent came into prominence, and buyers with expendable income could afford exquisite clothing and perfume. Sadly, today most of the well-known names are owned by multinational groups, and luxury items have become commodities, where buyers crave name brands for what they represent rather than their inherent quality of manufacture and design. Thomas takes us into the streets of New York, where counterfeit items are sold that look so much like the real thing that it takes an expert to tell them apart, to the Guangzhou region in China, where children make knockoff goods under appalling conditions. She manages to remove the veil from the fashion industry with a blend of history, culture, and investigative journalism. Siegfried, David

Review

Deluxe is delicious if you know about fashion; fascinating even if you don't. We're not just backstage at the runway show, we're all the way back in the factory, which might well be in a remote province of China. Dana Thomas is a fearless reporter who shows how so many designer goods have gone to hell in a handbag. This is a page-turning yarn about the men and women who have transformed luxury into an off-the-rack, global commodity. -- Joel Achenbach, *Washington Post* columnist and author of *The Grand Idea*

If you have ever wondered why a woman absolutely needs to buy a \$3,000 handbag, or why she might perish without a certain shade of lipstick, this book explains it all in empirical, evolutionary detail. Dana Thomas has brilliantly dissected the fashion phenomenon while the healthy beast still thrives luxuriously on the operating table. *Deluxe* might make some women pause before spending the rent money on their Manolo Blahniks. -- Richard Johnson, *New York Post*

The story of luxury goods today is really about globalization, capitalization, class and culture. Dana Thomas has a feel for all of this and more and has written a fascinating book. A luxury product about luxury. --

Fareed Zakaria

Through exhaustive reporting and personalized storytelling, Dana Thomas has delivered a historical survey of a business that truly keeps the world going round. She may never again be so readily welcomed in some quarters of this beau monde, but the trade off is an essential reference for any student of fashion, finance or culture. -- *Rose Apodaca, former west coast bureau chief, Women's Wear Daily*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Calvin Baker:

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation or even go to the outside with them family or their friend. Are you aware? Many a lot of people spent that they free time just watching TV, or perhaps playing video games all day long. If you wish to try to find a new activity that is look different you can read any book. It is really fun in your case. If you enjoy the book that you read you can spent the entire day to reading a guide. The book *Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster* it is extremely good to read. There are a lot of individuals who recommended this book. We were holding enjoying reading this book. In case you did not have enough space to create this book you can buy the actual e-book. You can m0ore simply to read this book from your smart phone. The price is not too expensive but this book features high quality.

Lizabeth Melgar:

Playing with family in a very park, coming to see the marine world or hanging out with friends is thing that usually you may have done when you have spare time, subsequently why you don't try point that really opposite from that. A single activity that make you not sense tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you already been ride on and with addition info. Even you love *Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster*, you may enjoy both. It is good combination right, you still would like to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh can occur its mind hangout folks. What? Still don't have it, oh come on its known as reading friends.

Bernice Martinez:

Many people spending their moment by playing outside together with friends, fun activity using family or just watching TV all day every day. You can have new activity to invest your whole day by studying a book. Ugh, ya think reading a book can actually hard because you have to bring the book everywhere? It all right you can have the e-book, having everywhere you want in your Mobile phone. Like *Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster* which is getting the e-book version. So , why not try out this book? Let's view.

Michael Kautz:

Is it you actually who having spare time then spend it whole day simply by watching television programs or just resting on the bed? Do you need something new? This *Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster* can be the response, oh how comes? It's a book you know. You are so out of date, spending your spare time by reading

in this brand new era is common not a geek activity. So what these books have than the others?

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