

## Boutique Store Intermix Reopens at Bal Harbour Shops

By Nycole Sariol Wed., Jan. 21 2015 at 11:00 AM



Opening up a new designer outpost in Bal Harbour is all the norm these days. Within the past three months, specialty boutiques like Vince, Chloe, and Bulgari have all dropped anchor in the most profitable shopping area in the world.

For some of the original retail pioneers who have called the outdoor shopping emporium home for years now, a revamp is the only means of staying relevant against the surge of new-comers flooding their turf. Last week, the high-end, multi-line chain store Intermix, finally launched the re-opening of its Bal Harbour location with a party and revealed a major facelift to the store's aesthetic. New Times was there to bear witness to its transformation.

As per usual at these kinds of events, we were greeted with a crescendo of bass and treble streaming out of the amp and speaker set of DJ Coco Hara, sitting at the left-hand corner of the entrance. Almost immediately, tall slender glasses of rosé were shoved in our hands, we had no other choice but to consume the fizzy pink wine -- or four of them. Finger foods on silver platters floated around the party; none of which were tasty enough to go back for seconds, save for the bacon-wrapped dates: plump, chewy Medjool dates wrapped in a crispy, smoked tarp of bacon. A coven of six headless mannequins, styled in breezy resort wear stood at the center of the store.

Toward the back of the store there were dozens of pointed-toe pumps and fringed mules by Bionda Castana and Sergio Rossi anxiously waiting to be slipped on by future owners. A tufted

leather coffee table-cum-sofa sat in the middle of the area, propping up the tushies of partygoers.

Eyes of well-off housewives and their well-heeled offspring took careful note any newcomers to the scene, intentionally unintentionally sizing them up. There wasn't a shoulder in sight that didn't bear the weight of a chain-link woven leather Chanel clutch. The names Seasalt and Pepper were sporadically tossed around throughout the night by what appeared to be Miami socialites.

Besides all the underlining contention between the store's most prized and exclusive customers, assistant manager Laura LaRue had this to say about the store's upgrades: "Our space is beautiful, new, and fresh. We've expanded a little and pretty much renovated everything -- the floors, our register was over there," she pointed across the room where some more impeccably-dressed mannequins now stand in front of a mirrored column. "Our fitting rooms were back here," her hand motioned behind her, now the cash rep.



It's true. The store has changed drastically, a complete metamorphosis from its earlier industrial-inspired space. But even with the added five-hundred square feet to the new, airy layout, and the marble and white hardwood floors, the concept seemed no different than the other four stores residing in South Florida, all boasting the same airy prototype detailed with subtle, modern nuances. Still, there was no denying that said airiness made for a more than pleasurable shopping experience, and underpinned the night's triumph of haute consumption.

Cashiers looked as though they were under siege by a mob of professional shopaholics with some serious swipe-power. One of the store's associates said that sales were consistently skyrocketing all night long, and judging by the average price tag of \$800 dollars, we

believed them.

Whether or not they had a clue, the night's consumers dropped Benji's with good intentions. With every purchase made, ten percent went toward the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, a local cancer diagnostic center here in South Florida.

Though we wanted to believe the chosen invitees flocked to the Florida flagship based solely on charity, the boutique's bronzed racks packed with clothes was the real reason for attendance, of course. The scale of price points went from high-end to practically unattainable. Varied tiers of names ranging from luxury designers like Stella McCartney and Derek Lam to names as contemporary as J Brand and Equipment bordered the store. Silk crepe de chine shorts and oddly shaped bags from McCartney's Resort 2015 collection riffed on a superhero motif and covered elegant marble tables. The more "reasonable" priced pieces rested in brands like

Frame Jeans and Elizabeth and James, as low as 175-dollars. Jaw dropping, we know. But come on; Bal Harbour names equal Bal Harbour price points.

And for the select percentage of consumers whose net-worth allows them to spend an ungodly sum on one sheath dress, three words: Intermix Bal Harbour needs you.

Intermix is located at 9700 Collins Ave., Bal Harbour, inside the Bal Harbour Shops.