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Maggie Rizer to Try Retail With M Concept at City Center Bishop Ranch

The model's multibrand boutique adds to Sunset Development Co.'s plans for a tailored retail and restaurant experience in the East Bay.

By **Kari Hamanaka** on February 7, 2018



A rendering of City Center Bishop Ranch in San Ramon, Calif.

Model Maggie Rizer's foray into **retail** is another step forward for the San Ramon mixed-use project **City Center Bishop Ranch**.

Rizer is one of several new tenants the developer confirmed Wednesday as additions to the 300,000-square-foot property in the East Bay set for a fall opening.

Rizer's 2,000-square-foot boutique called M — complete with a statement-making Victorian-style birdcage mansion, real birds and vintage mannequins — will carry a range of women's ready-to-wear brands.

Rizer said the timing was right to explore an avenue of the fashion industry and she's local.

"City Center is a very unique space that has never existed before," she said, explaining how architect **Renzo Piano** spoke with her about the center's piazza experience. "For me, this is not a store, where it's a cold box that has no soul. For me, it's about bringing these women who are shopping there, who are very well-traveled and educated, an experience and bringing designers that aren't regularly here or not as well-known to the area."

Rizer said M will be an extension of her closet — with the exception she doesn't keep birds in her real one — and it will be something unique to online.

"I don't want anyone to feel like I'm trying to force my sense of style on them," Rizer said. "I am the customer. My friends are the customer and so this is just about having a different experience with things you can go in and touch and feel and look at. I shop online a lot out here. It's really about creating an experience rather than pushing my fashion on these women."

Rizer ticked off brands such as Rick Owens, Paco Rabanne, Margiela, Anna Sui, Marc Jacobs and Temperley London, mixed in with vintage Levi's, YSL denim and Re/Done she's thinking of stocking for the store. She'll also carve out space for ath-leisure with brands such as Y-3, Adidas AG and Nike Inc. Sections for jewelry, beauty, gifts and children's will fill out the space.



Maggie Rizer walking for Anna Sui in September.
Courtesy Photo

Rizer said her love for fashion started before she began working as a model. As a child she favored Gap, but her tastes changed as she got older. During visits to her father in Manhattan he would take her to stores and expose her to new brands.

"My dad and I had styles that I think are very similar. I'd like to think I got a lot from him. We both like very casual pieces, but we appreciate amazing quality and amazing fabrics," Rizer said. "I remember we went in Calvin Klein and he was showing me jeans. He was trying to explain to me why that denim was so much nicer, explaining cut, fit and fabric. We bought a pair of jeans that day that I had for years. So for me it's really about having designers with amazing quality, but keeping it on the more casual level."

It's Rizer's story that will make her boutique stand out and speaks to what City Center Bishop Ranch aims to be, said Sunset Development senior vice president of retail Jeff Dodd.

"She brings to us a story about the store that we feel in today's world is often what makes the difference between a good performance and a great performance," he said.

Her concept is but one example of the play Sunset Development aims to make with City Center Bishop Ranch, which last year confirmed The Lot will take on about 45,000 square feet for a luxury cinema, bar and coffeehouse, serving as one of the center's anchors. The confirmation of Rizer's boutique includes a 30,000-square-foot Equinox as the center's second anchor, as well as Bay Area women's boutique Alys Grace, Williams Sonoma, Pottery Barn and West Elm. On the food side, Sunset has confirmed deals with Fieldwork Brewing Co. of Berkeley, Roam Artisan Burgers, Ramen Hiroshi and Boba Guys.

"The idea of the place is a modern public square and our view is how do we create a mix of things that add to the experiences of consumers' lives where they find themselves here three to four times a week, whether they're getting their hair done or working out," Dodd said. "We're really trying to build layers around the consumer that's thinking a little more carefully about where they want to eat, spend their time and take care of themselves. The frequency of that mimics a city center."

Additional tenants will continue to be announced, which will include more within fashion, jewelry and other accessories along with services, according to Dodd. He also hinted at a deal in the works with a well-known Bay Area restaurant.