

Favorite Boutiques

Come into the Closet

by Diane Mooney on November 05, 2010 at 05:30AM



Although the philosopher Plato claimed, "A good decision is based on knowledge and not on numbers," he might discard this theory at the eponymic Plato's' Closet. With all the brand-name, gently-used clothes under \$50, the numbers add up in a fashionista's favor. True Religion, Coach and Lucky are just a few of the labels featured at this trendy Kendall store.



Janet Nankin never planned on being a style maven. When she left her financial world career behind, she didn't know what she would do until her sister's love for second-hand shopping showed her the way at the Pembroke Pines Plato's Closet. Nankin fell in love with the concept of selling recycled clothes to teens and young adults.

Plato's Closet originated in Ohio with Denis and Lynn Blum, parents who grew tired of constantly buying new clothes for their growing teenage sons. They franchised the concept in 1999 and now there are over 280 locations in North America. Nankin's own teenage daughter is a fan. "Bailey never understood what I did before," Nankin said. "Now she's in heaven."

Nankin's daughter is not the only one. The store began buying clothes on September 20. Now the racks are filled with dresses, shoes and handbags priced for the teen shoppers' budget or their mod mom's. Instead of operating as a consignment shop, the store buys clothes outright for 30-40% of their resale value. And the sellers themselves had a hard time waiting for the November 2 opening. "Everyone, including my staff, begs me to let them buy clothes," Nankin said with a laugh.



Plato's Closet sells used clothes, the atmosphere is more Forever 21 than Goodwill. Items are organized by style and color, and are fresh and clean with no musty thrift store smell. Most were in retail stores within the past year, and their condition ranges from good to excellent. While the primary customer is a 12-24 year old woman, size 0-15, the store also features Ed Hardy caps and racks of jeans and shirts for men in sizes 28-40 waist, as well as books and DVDs.

The store also stocks plenty of jewelry like Juicy rings and a Betsy Johnson jeweled frog necklace. Shoes range from sneakers to thigh-high vinyl boots. An entire wall of handbags would satisfy the most discerning purse shopper, and there are scarves in every length and color. And while winter coats are not always a necessity in Miami, any shopper would be tempted by a knee-length suede number with a faux fur collar for \$50.

"I wasn't a fashion person at all," Nankin said. "Now I know all about it." She and the friendly sales staff are happy to help shoppers put together a hot new look or two. With prices this good, it's hard to stop at just one drop-shouldered top paired with skinny jeans and platforms. As Plato said, "All of us have many wants." Plato's Closet satisfies the desire for trendy togs at bargain prices. The only danger is that shoppers might want it all. At Plato's Closet, that's an affordable urge.

If You're Going...

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<http://miamifashionblog.com/1425-come-into-the-closet>