

BUSINESS/RETAIL

Long Island's New Luxury Outlets to Offer Upscale Experiences and Long List of Designer Brands

Thom Browne, Missoni, Vivienne Westwood and more are among the brands set to debut in phases at Belmont Park Village.

BY DAVID MOIN

Belmont Park Village, an off-price center on Long Island for luxury brands and the kind of upscale experiences and services typically associated with the designer sector, “soft opened” on Wednesday and will continue to open in phases as the weeks go by.

Brands opening over the next few weeks include Thom Browne, Rene Caovilla, Aquazzura, Missoni, Palm Angels, Orlebar Brown and Vivienne Westwood. They are all debuting their first off-price boutiques in America, according to officials of Belmont Park Village.

The lineup also includes AllSaints, Swarovski, Paige, Longchamp, Rains, John Varvatos, Roberto Cavalli, Fusalp, Lacoste, L'Occitane and The North Face, among others.

Belmont Park Village expects to ultimately house about 160 shops.

Most outlet centers are not known for their fine dining, but at Belmont Park Village, there will be an array of dining venues including Hundredfold, an American brasserie by Patina Restaurant Group set to open the spring, and Frost + Fry, a new culinary brand by Chef Anshu Anghotra from London with Jeffrey Chodorow and Robin Leigh, focusing on “proper” gelato and “posh” nuggets. On the service side, Belmont Park Village will be rolling out a suite of guest special services including personal shopping, hands-free shopping, concierge and a VIP private shopping space, called The Apartment, which opens next year.



Belmont Park Village

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Belmont Park Village isn't for your everyday bargain hunter. The 340,000-square-foot retail complex is the grand vision of Scott Malkin, founder and chairman of The Bicester Collection, which already operates 11 open-air, service-oriented luxury centers in Europe and China as well as two beachfront resort hotels, The Seabird Ocean Resort & Spa and Mission Pacific Beach Resort, and Valle, a Michelin-star restaurant in southern California. Malkin and his team characterizes their retail developments as “off-price luxury shopping villages” rather than outlet centers.

Belmont Park Village, located at 2501 Hempstead Turnpike in Elmont, N.Y., is about 19 miles from Manhattan, and accessible by the Long Island Railroad. The site is in Nassau County, just east of the Queens

border and is a major component of the redevelopment happening in the area, including the renovation and downsizing of Belmont Park, the thoroughbred horse race track. Right next door is the UBS Arena, where the New York Islanders hockey team plays and concerts are held. The arena opened in November 2021 and is co-owned by Malkin.

The new outlet center expects to draw from a wide radius including Long Island and New York City. It could draw business from shopping centers in the region, and even from the very popular Woodbury Common Premium Outlets in Central Valley, N.Y., which is much larger than Belmont Park Village and has a concentration of upscale and designer outlets. Woodbury Common is set to open a total of 20 new outlets this year, on top of the 20 that opened or expanded last year, in an apparent move to counter the expected competition from Belmont Park Village. Woodbury Common is approximately 67 miles from Belmont Park Village.

Belmont Park Village is just over eight miles from John F. Kennedy International Airport and is also expected to draw international travelers and tourists.

Many of the designers and upscale brands opening in Belmont Park Village also have full-price shops not too far away. There's the Americana designer shopping center in Manhasset, N.Y., which is 10 miles from Elmont. There is also the luxury wing of the Roosevelt Field Mall in Garden City, Long Island, about 16 miles from Belmont. It's also possible that Belmont Park Village draws some business from Madison and Fifth Avenues, though it's Malkin's point of view that his outlet



Belmont Park Village

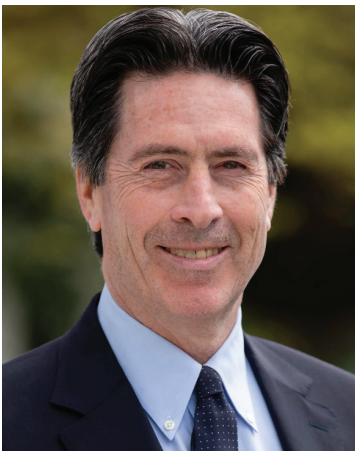
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villages do not cannibalize the designers' full-price stores and even helps convert outlet shoppers into full-price customers.

"New York is the toughest, most ambitious place I've ever seen," said Malkin, in an interview with WWD chief content officer James Fallon during a meeting of WWD's Global Impact Council in December. "I've been lucky enough to live and work around the world. At one level, we are looking to define ourselves in a way that can make sense in the context of such a powerful, commercial environment.

"On another level, we have for years been building up this vision of The Bicester Collection to define ourselves as something other than factory outlet shopping. We are not outlet shopping in any traditional sense. Everyone in the U.S., certainly in New York, knows what outlet shopping is, and it's not what we do. A big challenge for us will be executing that in the context of the U.S. and New York, with the same attention, energy and conviction," as the other 11 luxury villages operated by Value Retail.

Malkin considers The Bicester Collection a platform for full-price customer acquisition, even though it's tenanted by outlets. "The future has to be customer acquisition that happens within physical locations," Malkin said. Each boutique within the collection, he said, is "a flagship for that brand."



Scott Malkin

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