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# RETAILdesign

INTERNATIONAL



## HARLEY'S

La Piazza Shopping Center, Tyler, TX



DESIGN: WKMC Architects & Michael Malone Studios, Dallas, TX  
 PRINCIPAL IN CHARGE: Michael Malone, AIA  
 PROJECT MANAGER: Alasha Niedziela, Assoc. AIA  
 PROJECT ARCHITECT: Steven Domingue, Assoc. AIA  
 PHOTOGRAPHY: Jod Haggard Photography, Bellare, TX

At the other end of La Piazza shopping center, developed by Bridgette and Harley Hooper, is Harley's—an upscale men's shop that balances the composition with Bridgette's, the shop for women. Harley's is Harley Hoopers "dream store," and after 35 years in the menswear business, he—working with Michael Malone and WKMC Architects of Dallas—has created "a highly personalized place for the display and sale of fine clothing and accessories."

A dome topped pavilion serves as the entrance to this 4000 sq. ft. space.





Within this jutting, circular construction are large windows filled with fully dressed and accessorized mannequins as well as the entrance doors to the shop. Beyond the foyer, the store is largely one contiguous open space that is organized by the arrangement of the floor fixtures and the ceiling features. To one side there is clothing and accessories, and sportswear and shoes fill the other half of the store. Between the two and centered on the foyer is the round cash/wrap with its circular light cover that acts as "a visual centerpiece." From here the sales staff can see the whole store in one glance and greet anyone who enters.

The shirt wall, with its display cubicles above and floor cases for accessories such as cuff links, etc. in front, serves as a dramatic background for the clothing department. The floor cases act as lay-out and match-up tables where shoppers can put outfits together and accessorize them. To further assist

in the "match-up" there is a large display table up front with recommended suggestions. Suits and sports coats are hung in wall bins around the perimeter. Here, too, the walls are white and so are the ceilings, and richly stained wood trim outlines and frames these recessed wall areas and enriches the shelving as well. Pants are stacked on a large antique wood table—one of the several one-of-a-kind-old pieces used as part of the store's furniture/fixtures. The depth and selection of pants, shirts and ties are part of Harley's reputation. Dressing rooms and a hospitality bar are located behind the previously mentioned shirt wall and is readily accessible.

Sportswear is organized around adjustable floor fixtures that allow both folded pants, jeans, shirts and sweaters to be displayed on the graduated tiers.



An antique chandelier highlights this area and accentuates the location of these tables/fixtures. Sportswear is also hung in the adjustable bins located on the perimeter walls. Shoes are displayed on self-illuminated shelves in an area that also houses belts and small leather goods.

Throughout, there is a residential or men's club feeling that is reinforced by the soft clay chairs, leather couches, an occasional stuffed trophy head, live plants, and soft, warm overall lighting. A muted gray green carpet covers the seating and merchandised areas while a creamy stone floor indicates the traffic aisles.



## BRIDGETTE'S

La Piazza Shopping Center, Tyler, TX



DESIGN **WKMC Architects & Michael Malone Studio**, Dallas, TX  
 PRINCIPAL IN CHARGE: **Michael Malone, AIA**  
**Alesha Niedziela, Assoc. AIA**  
**Steven Domingue, Assoc. AIA**  
 PHOTOGRAPHY **Jud Haggard Photography**, Belaire, TX

Bridgette's has been the shopping experience for fashion-forward women of Tyler, TX for almost two decades. With the changing demographic in Tyler and more young professionals moving in, Bridgette Hooper realized that "the store has to be able to act as a background for changing fashion trends, and feel comfortable to sophisticated matrons and young girls."

She opened this 4000 sq. ft. store, designed by Michael Malone of WKMC Architects of Dallas, in a new shopping mall that she developed with her husband, Harley Hooper. The new center also features Harleys—an upscale men's shop—





and other select local tenants. Together they all help to define Bridgettes as "a regional destination for women interested in fashionable clothing supported by a high level of customer service."

As designed by Malone and his team, the entry into the store is a three sided windowed pavilion with display platforms for mannequins in the windows. The merchandise presentation begins here with completely accessorized outfits shown up front on low fixtures so that there is an uninterrupted and spacious view into the store. Since shoes have always been an important part of Bridgettes offer, the shoe department is located near the front to "provide it with enhanced visibility and to emphasize this offering to the store's customers." A banquette is provided here and it doubles as a try-on seat as well as a resting spot for shoppers and their friends.

The store itself is neutral in color: pristine white walls and ceilings with black accents and minimal details that allow for the clothing, shoes and accessories to be visually dominant. In the more formal area of the shop a dark carpet sets the tone while a lighter stone floor appears in the casual area. Black plays an important part in emphasizing the fixturing. Tables and cube bases are glossy black with glass tops upon which the merchandise displays are set out. The same high shine black accentuates the trim of the hanging bins and around the recessed wall units and is especially dramatic in emphasizing the height of the tall, vertical shelf units. Many of these wall cases are provided with their own integral lighting systems as well as recessed standards for added flexibility. "These bins can be reconfigured to allow for display on either shelves or hang rods or both." Individual illuminated shelves appear up front where handbags and other small accessories are displayed in the shoe area.

With this new shopping center and with Bridgettes (for women) and Harleys (for men) the Hoopers have created "a better shopping experience" and one that is more in keeping with those available in nearby Dallas.

