

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Tamara Mellon takes shoes on cross-country retail road trip

September 12, 2019



*Tamara Mellon is launching a retail road trip. Image credit: Tamara Mellon*

---

By SARAH JONES

Footwear label Tamara Mellon is continuing to rethink luxury retail as it takes its direct-to-consumer shopping experience on the road.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**  
Plus: Just released  
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Kicking off Sept. 12 in Boston, the TM Closet experience will bring the experience of the brand's recently opened bricks-and-mortar store to consumers in 11 U.S. cities. Since its relaunch, the label has primarily retailed its designs via ecommerce, making this trip a chance to give shoppers in more markets face time with the brand and its footwear.

"We are always looking for ways to make luxury accessible to more women," said Jill Layfield, co-founder/CEO of **Tamara Mellon**.

"Driving cross-country to meet our customer gives us the unique opportunity to connect with her in person," she said. "We take the feedback we get from our customers very seriously, so there is nothing more valuable to us than being face-to-face with her, listening to her and better understanding how we can serve her needs."

On the move

Tamara Mellon has turned a 24-foot truck into a mobile store. The sides of the vehicle have been outfitted with floor-to-ceiling glass panels, creating transparent display cases for the shoes.



*Rendering of TM Closet. Image courtesy of Tamara Mellon*

The in-truck shopping experience was designed after Tamara Mellon's first bricks-and-mortar boutique in Palisades Village, Los Angeles.

Opened last August, the store has a different operating system in which every size is available on the shelf. This will cut down on customer wait times and a cumbersome experience that relies on staff having to run to the back (see [story](#)).

The shoe wall in the store was also designed to be an Instagram-friendly backdrop for shoppers.

Similarly, the mobile boutique will display each style in every size to encourage social media sharing.

Consumers will enter the truck from the back. Once inside, they will be able to find their size and try on shoes at their own pace.



*Rendering of the inside of TM Closet. Image courtesy of Tamara Mellon*

Shoes can be purchased from the truck, and orders will be shipped to shoppers.

"The decision to launch the TM Closet was inspired by the success of our brick-and-mortar location at Palisades Village in Los Angeles, which is based on Tamara's personal closet and displays each shoe in every size," Ms. Layfield said. "Women are able to interact with the shoes and try them on at their leisure, without waiting for a sales associate to assist them."

The first stop on the tour is Boston, where the truck will be parked next to the Glossier pop-up in Seaport. Tamara Mellon's mobile boutique will be in the city from Sept. 12 to 15.

From there, the truck will visit New York, Tysons, Nashville, Atlanta, Houston, Dallas, Scottsdale, Newport Beach and Los Angeles before closing out the tour in the Bay Area from Dec. 12 to 15.

While Tamara Mellon has a boutique, as of press time its bricks-and-mortar presence is limited to the one location. Launching this tour enables the brand to create an in-person shopping experience for consumers in a wider geographic area.

Rethinking luxury

This road trip follows the brand's latest investment influx.

Tamara Mellon said it was looking to expand its workforce and retail presence after closing a \$50 million Series C

funding round.

Since its relaunch in 2016, led by cofounders Tamara Mellon and CEO Jill Layfield, the direct-to-consumer brand has taken a differentiated approach towards luxury, seeking to make high-end shoes more accessible. This strategy appears to be working, with the brand posting triple-digit growth in 2018 ([see story](#)).

Tamara Mellon has sought to take luxury “out of the ivory tower” and make it into something that anyone can aspire to.

Along with lower prices than competitors due to a DTC model, the brand has undermined the idea that luxury must be exclusive with an installment plan that lets lower-income customers afford luxury goods by paying for them over time. Definitions of luxury have always been unclear, particularly when it comes to price, but this move shows that a brand can confidently retain its luxury identity while courting less affluent customers ([see story](#)).

By journeying across the country, the brand is taking another step in making itself accessible to more women.

"Traditionally, luxury retail felt very inaccessible, almost like the experience had these high walls around it," Ms. Layfield said.

"The TM Closet is our way of lowering those walls and making luxury retail something more women feel welcomed to participate in," she said. "Nothing could be more accessible than luxury that travels to you."

---

© 2019 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.