

BUSINESS

Good American's size-inclusive brand lands at Mall of America

The L.A.-based label is testing out a store through the holiday season.

By John Ewoldt (<http://www.startribune.com/john-ewoldt/10644811/>) Star Tribune |

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Emma Grede may be a size 2, but she possesses a savvy understanding of larger sizes for women. And she has brought it to the Mall of America.

Grede partnered with Khloe Kardashian to create the size-inclusive fashion brand Good American three years ago. On Tuesday, she opened a new store on the mall's second floor.

"I grew up with a lot of women who are fuller and proud of their curves," she said at a preview party Monday night. "Women in fashion school didn't have that pride, but I wanted to create a brand that's a cross section of real women's sizes."

The 1,800-square-foot store is a test for Good American and billed as a pop-up on its website (<https://www.goodamerican.com/>). It will be at the mall until at least January. Good American previously offered pop-up stores in New York and Glendale, Calif.

The label offers a denim-dominant selection in sizes 00 to 24. Grede said plus-size women, those wearing size 16 and up, spend more on clothing than women in sizes 0 to 14. "Once a plus-size woman finds a good place to buy clothes, she's loyal," she said.

It is usually reported that the average American woman is a size 14, but recent studies indicate it is now 16, or even up to 18, said Mary Van Note of Ginger, a retail consulting business in Minneapolis.

"What Good American does to reinforce the inclusivity is showing a garment being worn by at least three women of different sizes on the website," Van Note said.

Good American goes further with some items. With denim, it shows 15 different-size models each wearing her size.

"Let's do something for every woman and give her a chance to see what a piece looks like on someone of her shape and size," Grede said.

Grede ignored fashion tradition when she insisted on adding a size 15. "I guess I have a lack of respect for the rules, but my team kept saying 'You can't do that' and I kept saying, 'Why?'"

Van Note thinks adding size 15 is good business. "It's where the action is," she said. "They did the research to discover that the majority of returns are in sizes 14 and 16. There's too much a size difference between the two and they were creative enough to figure that out."

Size 15 is already the company's fourth-best-selling size.

Van Note described the retailer's line as "current, sexy, form-fitting and showy." The brand is also sold in Nordstrom stores in the Twin Cities.



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The Good American store is on the mall's second floor between Macy's and Nordstrom.

Good American's arrival is part of an effort by Mall of America executives to attract stores with a more diverse portfolio of sizes.

It's also part of the mall's addition of "clicks to bricks" retailers such as Casper, Fabletics, Untuckit, Indochino and Morphe. All originated online and branched out with retail storefronts.

As a young black woman, Grede said she didn't consciously start out to create a groundbreaking business. "I just wanted to include everyone and be inclusive, not exclusive."

Most of the company's products are made in the U.S. Athleisure pieces are made overseas.

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