

# New lease on style

**LOVE ME & LEAVE ME REGULARLY PROVIDES A SNAPSHOT OF THE NEW CONCEPT STORES IN AUSTRALIA. THIS EDITION, ASSIA ANMEDJDOUB LOOKS AT LOVE ME & LEAVE ME'S TRANSITION INTO BRICKS-AND-MORTAR RETAIL.**

**C**ALL IT THE early adopter syndrome. Love Me & Leave Me was among the first Australian e-tailers to offer consumers the chance to borrow or buy luxury designer accessories. Women could 'rent' handbags, footwear and accessories from Chanel, Prada, Louis Vuitton and Chloe for a set weekly or monthly fee. Now director Simonne Santana is preparing another Australian first by extending the offer to bricks-and-mortar retail, with a concept store in Armadale, Victoria.

Located among the upmarket designer boutiques in High Street, the site measures at approximately 70sqm and is designed by interiors firm PHD Retail. Santana says the main aim was to translate key colours and themes from the brand's website into store.

"We feel this translation was accomplished through the use of our company colours – white gold and black – through high gloss two-pack shelving and display cabinets, gold wallpaper and mirrors and a black feature wall

and roof," she explains. "Our branding is also featured heavily throughout the store from our back wall through to our packaging."

Imported 3D gold wallpaper runs down one side of the store, while gold mirrored panels feature on the opposing wall. A floating shoe display and custom-made accessory cabinets act as visual merchandising tools, while a leopard-print ottoman and a large feature wall featuring the company logo drive the "exclusive and glamorous" message home. This is also the reasoning behind her choice of location.

"We felt that our brand did not belong amongst the mainstream 'cookie cutter'-type shopping centers as we have a unique product offering and tailored customer service," Santana says. "High Street, Armadale has always been a destination strip of shops where you can find sought-after bridal couturiers, high-end designers, antiques and special occasion pieces. With this in mind, we felt it was a good fit for our business." ■

