

New outlets added to Bergen Town Center

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THE RECORD

The Bergen Town Center outlet mall, which is branding itself as a magnet for discount shoppers, has added off-price stores for Chico's, J. Crew and Jos. A. Bank.

Bergen Town Center also recently added REI, the outdoor-gear store, and Ultra Diamonds.

Retail analyst Howard Davidowitz said the expansion of Bergen Town Center reflects the growing popularity of discount stores. Outlets, he said, are "far and away the fastest-growing segment" in the retail industry, as shoppers seek out low prices.

"Living standards are down, so consumers are looking for a better deal," he said. "They're not getting raises; consumer confidence is at a terrible level." As a result, he said, many high-end retailers, such as Saks Fifth Avenue, are focusing most of their expansion efforts on their outlet stores.

Davidowitz said the addition of Chico's, Jos. A Bank and J. Crew will increase foot traffic at Bergen Town Center because they're all well-known brand names.

"I think this is going to enhance [the center], and it's already good," he said.

The 1.5-million-square-foot Bergen Town Center, which is owned by Vornado Realty Trust, was once known as the Bergen Mall and anchored by a Stern's department store. Vornado renovated the center and focused on off-price outlets, including a Banana Republic factory store, [Bloomingdale's](#) outlet, Century 21, Guess factory store, Marshalls, Last Call Studio by Neiman Marcus, Nike factory store, Nordstrom Rack, Saks Fifth Avenue OFF 5th and Tommy Hilfiger.

Chico's, the women's clothing chain based in Fort Myers, Fla., has 1,074 stores. Jos. A. Bank Clothiers Inc., the men's clothing chain based in Hampstead, Md., has 500 stores. J. Crew, based in New York, has about 350 stores, including 93 outlet stores. Ultra Diamonds, based in Chicago, sells diamond jewelry at value prices.

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