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recommended the furrier to friends, family and next generations. When asked to explain such loyalty, in typical no-frills fashion, this throwback to a more genteel era credits others.

"I am 81 years old, have two wonderful sons who both encouraged me to keep the business going, one while working in the company, the other in a different field; a beautiful daughter-in-law; three terrific grandchildren; many friends; a loving wife for 49 years, who worked alongside me and whom I lost five years ago and still miss more than ever... and the nicest customers any merchant could ask for."

A formula for success if ever there was one!

Fleischman Furs, 112 Engle Street, Englewood, NJ 07631; (201) 568-2242

Hamrah's: Bergen's Most Enduring Women's Clothing Shop

Walk into Hamrah's, a large and immaculately appointed fine women's fashion shop in Cresskill, and you are immediately struck by the range of offerings, fashion-forward selections and keen interest in personalized service. Each accessory, each garment, is personally chosen by Joyce and Lilli Hamrah, who travel the world for designers and lines that offer classic, fashionable styles. Their 50 years of fashion retail insight and experience are evident throughout the meticulously merchandised store, the long-term employees and the emphasis on customer service.

From the beginning, when their mother, Mary Hamrah, opened Hamrah's in 1957, Joyce, Lilli and sister Suzanne, always played integral roles in the day-to-day operations of the store.

Now a Northern New Jersey retail icon, Hamrah's enjoys loyal shoppers, who attribute the unheard of staying power of the shop to the sisters' eyes for talented designers and garments that accentuate a woman's look, putting her at the height of fashion, not at the mercy

of it. The sisters have seen trends come and go and come back again. They've watched fashions evolve; some having a lasting influence and some going as quickly as they came. The sisters' legendary knack for identifying contemporary classic styles was honed over numerous years of successfully dressing generations of New Jersey's elite.

The ability to consistently attract and cater to discerning personalities has made Hamrah's a destination spot amidst the ever-changing retailers of Bergen County. Frequently compared to Bergdorf Goodman and Barneys in terms of the caliber of its offerings and carefully selected merchandise, Hamrah's is "focused on service, selection and customer relations," Lilli emphasizes. "We're valued for providing exquisite clothing and accessories, many of which are not available nearby, and really fitting our customers, not just selling them clothes. Our customers, many of whom are high profile, love us because they know they are getting the best of the best here, thanks to truly knowledgeable salespeople with whom they have long-term relationships. People come to Hamrah's because they want top quality clothing and accessories, stellar service and a pleasant, easy shopping experience."

Throughout the years, Hamrah's has endured largely because of this commitment to service and its fresh, bold looks, even when "malls and stores opened all around us," Joyce notes.

The sisters are confident that business will continue to grow as ever-younger customers gain an appreciation for the sophistication and confidence a Hamrah's-bought piece lends them. Over the years, the sisters have gotten to know their customers well. When on a buying trip, their philosophy is not to buy for the store, but to buy for their customers.

"We handpick every item, often selecting only portions of a designer's line, to match what we believe suits our customers' style. By selecting only the best of the best, we offer customers a



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time-saving, streamlined means of finding that perfect look. We group lines and pieces systematically so hues, textures and pieces make sense and work together and our store is easy to navigate," Lilli says.

European designers such as 6267, Etro, Lanvin, Ermano Scervino, Martin Grant, Lamberto Losani, Gunex, Rivamonti, Rene Lezard, Max Mara and Moschino blend seamlessly with top American collections and sportswear designers that include Donna Karan, Lida Baday, Vera Wang, Ports 1961, Tory Birch, Tse and Robert Rodriguez to create an environment that is at once clean, classic and vibrant.

Making a sale is not what has kept the Hamrah sisters in business for so long. Instead, it is their devotion to making certain that each woman leaving their store looks good and knows it. As much as styles change and fashion evolves, this is the one ingredient that, for Hamrah's, will always be a constant.

Hamrah's, 2 Piermont Rd, Cresskill, NJ; (201) 871-4444

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