

Black, Starr & Frost to Open in Phoenix

Written by Editorial

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Alfredo J. Molina, president and chairman of Molina Fine Jewelers, has announced construction on his Phoenix location, allowing for the iconic luxury brand, Black, Starr & Frost – America's First Jeweler since 1810, to serve clients under the same roof of his well-known building at 32nd Street and Camelback. The new store is slated for completion early this fall 2015. Molina Fine Jewelers will remain open and in full operation during the transformation.

Molina acquired the iconic firm, Black, Starr & Frost, in 2006, and in 2011, opened a beautifully appointed showroom overlooking the Newport Beach harbor in Southern California. "We are thrilled to expand our footprint into Arizona and see the Phoenix and Scottsdale area as a perfect market for our rare jewels, luxury Black, Starr & Frost timepieces and finely crafted jewelry," Molina says. "This is an important step as we continue to focus on revitalizing the Black, Starr & Frost brand with new collections, signature piece and new locations nationwide."

According to lead architect and PHX principal Erik Peterson, the new store will evoke the original feel of its early New York City locations. With this in mind, "our team gleaned inspiration from a composite of vintage photos taken of Black, Starr & Frost stores throughout the 1800s and at the turn of the century." The end results, he says, will be "simple, clean interiors in the brand's palette with gleaming black and white tile floors, fine sterling silver accents – a nod to the company's early work as silversmiths – and walls clad in black-on-black patterned wallpaper." Exquisite jewels and fine jewelry, all housed in classic glass and silver casework, are the focal point of the new space – with additional casework recessed into walls.

Highlights will include:

- *Intricate front door hardware patterned after a signature Black, Starr & Frost emerald and diamond brooch – hinting at the beautiful jewelry within.*
- *A large plate glass front window displaying jewelry to the outside (Black, Starr & Frost was an innovator, being the first retailer to show merchandise to the outside of a building, essentially launching window shopping.)*
- *Jewelry casework inspired by the much-talked about 1912 building.*
- *A classic and enclosed outdoor front patio for special events and parties featuring a water element that combines fire and water.*
- *An in-store display showcasing early photos, antiques and original pieces, all depicting the jeweler's colorful 205-year history.*
- *An upstairs salon designed to accommodate VIPs and allow private viewings of rare pieces.*
- *A safety deposit box system contained within the salon's vaults providing safe-keeping of clients' valuables. (The firm invented the safety box system during the Civil War to keep valuables of clients from the North and the South safe during war.)*

Along with magnificent one-of-a-kind jewels and everyday luxury collections including timepieces, the new store will feature custom jewelry design and manufacturing; a VIP concierge; cleaning and inspection; fine jewelry repair; jewelry appraisals; private appointments; and estate jewelry.