

## Custom clothier relocates

Olivine Gabbro brings unique women's wear to Greenwich Avenue

By Richard Lee

A Greenwich women's apparel store that has developed a reputation for custom work and its own line of clothing is shouldering into a spot on Greenwich Avenue among the heavy hitters of the industry.

Olivine Gabbro, a designer women's wear brand that has been at 19 E. Elm St. for the past five years, plans to move to 243 Greenwich Ave., by Sept. 1, and should be well-suited for the new location.

"Our customers are sophisticated women between the ages of 20 and 60 who are frequently seen in the social scene. Our target audience is women who know quality," said Patrick Chae, managing director of Olivine Gabbro. "We use Italian fabrics and English wool, and our clothing is made in Greenwich. They represent elegant lines."

The clothing is designed in-house by creative director Grace Kang, who started the business five years ago with Sue Neumann, president of the business.

Kang, who graduated with highest honors from Parsons The New School for Design, is Neumann's niece. She previously worked at Donna Karan and Dolce & Gabbana.

"Customers can pick off the rack or when the customer needs a specific fabric, she can have something made for her," Chae said. "Our dream is for the company to be long lasting — generation after generation."

The new location, with a



Patrick Chae is the managing director of Olivine Gabbro in Greenwich. The upscale women's fashion store on East Elm Street will be relocating to Greenwich Avenue in September.

Jason Rearick/Staff photographer

large municipal parking lot in back, is ideally suited for a long-term stay, according to Ron Brien, president of Alliance Commercial Property, who represented Olivine Gabbro in its search for a new space.

"It's probably the number one block on the avenue. Hermes, Ralph Lauren, Tory Burch and Michael Kors are there. It's got a lot of big-name retailers," Brien said. "I started with Patrick

and Grace years ago. They'll fill a niche, offering what those stores don't."

The new space, measuring about 2,400 square feet, is bigger than the current location and should benefit from the heavy foot traffic of Greenwich Avenue, Chae said, commenting that the new location will allow customers to have a new shopping experience.

"We didn't want to miss this opportunity. It's one of the main shopping districts.

When I walk on Lexington Avenue (in New York City), I think it's walking on Greenwich Avenue," he said, adding that the larger location allows Olivine Gabbro to expand into offering private label jewelry and handbags. "We want to be special and unique. It's something we can't compromise."

The Olivine Gabbro collection line runs from \$800 to \$2,800, while its made-to-measure service starts at \$4,000.

The philosophy of the store is based on its name. Olivine is a light-green mineral often called peridot, and gabbro is a dark igneous rock with the combination connoting inner beauty.

Olivine Gabbro's move to Greenwich Avenue makes long-term business sense, according to Marcia O'Kane, executive director of the Greenwich Chamber of Commerce.

"Their location has always been a hidden

treasure, so their move to Greenwich Avenue will provide them with the visibility that they deserve," she said. "They cater to a high-end buyer with beautiful custom-made dresses that are quite beautiful and unique. The move to Greenwich Avenue should bode well for them since they already have a following of devoted buyers, and this will allow them to gain some new devotees of their chic designs."