

Parsons Xtreme Golf in Drive to Update Golf's Fashion Image *By REBECCA KLEINMAN*

Parsons Xtreme Golf, the golf equipment and its offshoot PXG Apparel, aim for 40 retail stores by 2024.



Looks from PXG Apparel's spring collection. COURTESY

One gets a sense that even if golf weren't booming in the pandemic that PXG would be in full-on expansion mode.

An acronym for Parsons Xtreme Golf, as in GoDaddy-founding billionaire Bob Parsons, the golf equipment brand and its PXG Apparel offshoot, the latter helmed by his wife Renee, aim for 40 retail stores by 2024. Not ones to ride off into the sunset after he sold his domain registration company — unless it's in a golf cart at their Scottsdale National Golf Club, which they renovated and expanded — the couple is having fun shaking up the staid golf scene.

"Golf is becoming cool again, and people don't want a lot of rules," Renee said of their mission to make the game more inclusive.

Frustrated with the equipment available, Bob launched his own line of clubs in 2014. Men's and women's clothing followed in 2018 and took off with golfers and nongolfers alike. It was no accident.

"How do we take this [look] on and off the golf course?" is at the forefront of everything we do," said Renee, who always has her eye on the runway for inspiration. "It's about

reinventing golf attire with fashion elements that roll right into après-golf. People also wear it to run errands, work and play other sports like tennis and pickle ball.”

With a hospitality background, she learned the fashion industry from the ground up through a partnership in South Korea. Apparel is still manufactured overseas, but production and design moved to PXG’s headquarters in Scottsdale. During the transition, Renee reached out to an instructor with Arizona State University’s fashion program for help. The collaboration turned into an ongoing internship initiative with the school. Renee proudly notes they made more than a dozen new hires during the pandemic, including two executives who had worked at Kiki de Montparnasse.

“Our design director doesn’t play golf, but he brings a fresh perspective and gets details,” she said, of the importance of flattering fits without being overly body-con and how pieces must feel good on. “Even our male customers share how they love our style and that they wear our polos off the course with jeans and a blazer.”

After sizing was regraded for the U.S. market, returns fell to 3 percent or less. PXG gets ahead of supply chain setbacks by sourcing materials from a variety of regions like Italian knits, Peruvian cotton and Japanese khaki.

Renee said finding ethical, sustainable materials and factories is a pillar of the brand’s ethos. A handbag collection in vegan cactus leather sourced from Mexico-based Desserto launched in December. Six styles including a tote, crossbody and duffel bag retail from \$125 to \$395. Another handbag collection’s nylon is made from recycled water bottles. She estimates 60 percent of spring 2022 apparel and accessories is sustainable, compared to half prior.

Initially limited to black and white, clothing added more color for spring. Blues, reds and oranges borrow from the company’s desert locale’s famously dramatic sky. Dresses also debuted, among the mix of sporty cuts and fashion-forward pieces such as bike shorts and cropped tops, including a puffer jacket.

“Dresses are functional but cool in a PXG way. I’m looking to Dior and Gucci to see how can we reinvent this space,” Renee said.

The couple’s aggressive approach to store openings is a bright spot in the current retail climate. Renee brings her experience in running events for GoDaddy, and they hired a Los Angeles event planner to work in-house in Scottsdale. Ken Downing curated a fashion show at their Dallas store opening last year, where brand ambassadors Gary Player, Anna Rawson and Darius Rucker mingled with other celebrities.

As a direct-to-consumer, experiential brand, PXG requires different brick-and-mortar specifications. Stores average 7,000 square feet to accommodate hitting bays and putting greens (apparel occupies 2,000 to 2,500 square feet), and customers lugging golf equipment need convenient parking.

In addition to Dallas, the company operates 11 other stores — four in the greater Phoenix area; two in the greater Chicago area; Atlanta; Seattle; Troy, Mich.; Edina, Minn., and King of Prussia, Pa.

Pending stores for 2022 are Fairfax, Va., in March, Orlando in April, Houston in May and Denver in June. More locations are planned for Boston; Nashville; Toronto; Honolulu; Charlotte,

N.C.; Columbus, Ohio; Paramus, N.J.; New Rochelle, N.Y., and South Florida.

“Our stores don’t need to be in high traffic areas and actually do better when they aren’t,” she said.

Other apparel-related projects include a celebrity collaboration by year’s end and the Bold capsule collection with two sweatshirts and a T-shirt for International Women’s Day’s Break the Bias campaign on March 8. Advocates for women’s equality, the couple is reinventing golf’s “boy’s club” image with female-friendly details, from location of tee boxes to the pro shop’s inclusive ambiance. Rather than men’s and women’s clubs, equipment is customized per individual.

“I want to be a voice for women’s golf,” Renee said.



PXG’s Signature collection made from cactus leather.