



Palo Alto

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JUDAICA SHOP ARRIVES ... The hole left with the January 2009 closing of bob and bob, a Jewish gift and book store at 4500 El Camino Real in Los Altos, is finally being filled — at least partially. A new Judaica gift shop is planning to open in Palo Alto's new Oshman Family Jewish Community Center on Fabian Way. The shop, Miriam's Well, is putting on the final touches as it prepares for its limited opening March 21 and a full opening in mid-April. "The shop is small; it's about the size of my garage. And it's a closet compared to bob and bob," said Michelle Booth, who started Miriam's Well five years ago in her Foster City home. The business took on a life of its own. "It was all word of mouth," Booth said. "It's kind of taken over my house. I'm looking forward to moving everything out of my home and into the JCC." Booth sees a great need for a traditional Judaica shop. "Not everybody likes to order online. I'll be providing a community as well as a gift shop," she said. "And it's still a work in progress. Expect it to be a little funky at first. But in a year from now, it will evolve into something beautiful."

A shop in Town & Country Village is also offering a small selection of Judaica. Ruti's, an Israeli clothing store that opened in November, has decorated its shelves and windows with menorahs, mezuzas and palm-shaped amulets called hamsas. "I'm shocked how popular they've become and that they sell so well," owner Ruti Zisser said. The colorful Judaica items are intricately designed and account for about 10 percent of the store's sales. Like Booth, Zisser started her business in her home. "I had more than 3,000 people on my mailing list when I was working out of my home. It was time to take a risk. I saw the space at Town & Country, I fell in love with it and here I am," she said.