



# Field Notes

from **Future Commerce+**

# ARITZIA

**LOCATION:** La Cantera Shops, San Antonio, TX  
**VISIT DATE:** Winter 2026  
**FORMAT:** Large standalone store  
**ADJACENT STORES:** Tecova, Lulemon, Athleta, Psycho Bunny, Marc Jacobs, UNTUCKit, Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Tiffany, and Omega  
**WEBSITE:** www.Aritzia.com  
**SOCIAL:** @Aritzia

**About the Brand:** Aritzia is a vertically integrated fashion retailer that designs and sells its own lifestyle apparel brands, offering quality, modern designs that feel premium yet remain attainable. Its “curated boutiques” are designed to provide everyday luxury apparel for contemporary women seeking elevated basics and trend-aware wardrobe essentials.

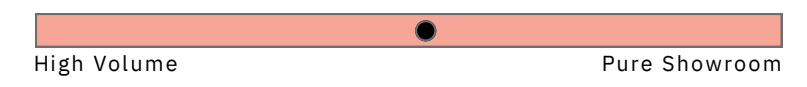
**Cultural “Feel”:** Aritzia is focused on subtle, fashion-forward style, and the culture of this store experience combines that of Everlane, Revolve, and Reformation, with hints of UNIQLO and Anthropologie. The semi-intimidating, hands-off approach of the environment felt very aloof, as if visitors were known to be existing customers who could find their own way.

## RATINGS

### CULTURE



### COMMERCE



## STORE DETAILS

### STORE DESIGN & NAVIGATION

- Different product categories were merchandised within somewhat “cavernous” alcoves, which felt slightly overwhelming because many items were hung very high.
- The POS line was well-curated with mostly accessories, following a “shop while you wait” model that drives discovery and impulse buys.

### AESTHETICS

- There was minimal signage and item descriptions, potentially to inspire customers to interpret and coordinate in their own style.
- Loud R&B and rap music felt overwhelming in the space.



**CUSTOMER DATA CAPTURE**

- Associates collected basic customer data, such as email, at the POS. Once registered, there was an immediate “welcome” email, followed by almost daily messages. The relentless “noise” of the marketing drove an unsubscribe.
- No rewards or loyalty program.

**EXPERIENTIAL ‘WOWs’**

- There were no mirrors in individual fitting rooms! Shoppers had to venture into the central area, which acted as a lounge that connected all fitting rooms. It was a truly beautiful and peaceful space where people could "hang out" while their friends tried on merchandise.
- The lighting was well-placed and flattering, and the large mirrors were helpful, but it was daunting to emerge not knowing who else might be sitting in the fitting room “lounge” area. In fact, another female customer was trying on pieces while her boyfriend waited in the lounge area. I had to come out to see my outfit (which was not flattering) while he waited for her. Thankfully, he was on his phone.
- An oversized version of the Super Puff puffy coat was on display, encouraging shoppers to try it on, post about it on social media, and tag the brand.
- The Super Puff display was highly interactive and sensorial, as you wanted to touch and feel its "puffiness." The sign featured a QR code to access more details, and small swatches were on display to show how customers could customize their Super Puffs.



## MERCHANDISE ASSORTMENT

- Elevated basics and contemporary pieces were well-priced and appeared as "effortless chic," with the front of the store featuring seasonally appropriate merchandise (e.g., sweats/leisurewear).
- Merchandise was predominantly women's apparel and accessories, with a small selection of men's apparel (including the Super Puff Men's version) intermixed in some areas. However, the distinction was difficult to spot, and an associate later described much of the assortment as unisex.
- Displays featured coordinated outfits that helped shoppers understand how basics intermixed with seasonal items across categories. The blending of loungewear and outerwear, for instance, suggested that Aritzia targets a younger, more fashion-forward customer.
- There were two collaborations, although they were minimally promoted:
  1. Items featuring specific baseball teams, specially designed for women, including female-friendly baseball caps.
  2. A unique but small collaboration with Nike, including limited-edition sneakers in a co-branded box. This brand partnership was extremely subtle and would have been easy to miss if not for closer scrutiny of the store.
- Accessories were displayed throughout the store, and there was a very cute section of dog merchandise/accessories; it was unclear whether they were seasonal or permanent.



**EXPERIENTIAL NOTABLES**

**Storytelling**

- There were minimal storytelling elements in the store aside from the digital screens and some small signage with product details.
- One video featured Jenna Lyons as the talent, brand ambassador, and creative face of Aritzia’s Fall 2025 Cashmere Collection marketing campaign.
- Without the sign behind the POS and one branded sweatshirt, the brand name/story was barely visible.

**Human Interaction**

- I wasn't greeted or acknowledged when I entered the store, despite my obvious trepidation and “curious fascination” as a new customer. I wandered the store for over 10 minutes without assistance, even when I couldn’t reach a higher display. A similar experience was had in the Greenwich, CT, store.
- The salespeople (all female and likely under 35) were dressed very stylishly and were friendly when I approached and asked some questions. They seemed quite flattered when I asked if I could "interview" them about the brand story. One also helped me try on some blazers, and when my size wasn't in stock, she offered to order it and ship it for free.

**Technology**

- Four large digital screens featured images and lifestyle videos of models in the apparel.
- The screen featuring Jenna Lyons was in front of the store, though there was no audio, suggesting the content was likely reused from the social campaign.



**THE SENSES MATRIX**

**SIGHT**

- ❑ Cavernous alcoves with high-hanging merchandise created vertical drama.
- ❑ There was no overt storytelling, which made products the star, but inhibited immersion.
- ❑ The fitting room lounge was architecturally beautiful, but also isolated shoppers.

**SOUND**

- ❑ Loud R&B/rap soundtrack dominated the space.
- ❑ Very little associate engagement, creating an ambient silence in the space.
- ❑ No audio on digital campaign screens (visual storytelling only).

**TOUCH**

- ❑ Super Puff display encouraged squeezing, wearing, and testing different fabric swatches for customization.
- ❑ Accessories and impulse items near the POS were curated for grab-and-go exploration.

**PALATE**

- ❑ The experience left a feeling of aesthetic admiration, but social loneliness.
- ❑ The barrage of marketing messages received post-visit left a (figurative) bad taste in the mouth.

**SIXTH SENSE**

- ❑ No digital connectivity in the store, except for the rare screen featuring campaign content.
- ❑ No integration of personalization or clienteling.

**FIELD TEST**

Ask these questions to benchmark key learnings against your branded environments.

- 1 How does your in-store experience reflect your target consumers' alignment with key aesthetics and cultural trends?
- 2 Is your store equipped with enough storytelling elements to tell your brand story sufficiently?
- 3 Do your associates (and the way they serve customers) deliver upon the brand promise?

**About the Analyst:** Kate Fannin is a strategic Retail Realist passionate about customer-first, immersive experiences that engage shoppers (or don't!). With her strong focus on ROE (Return on Experience) and "connecting the dots" between customers and brands, she reinforces the mantra "People Buy Things. They Pay for Experiences." Kate has 18+ years of expertise in Marketing, Retail, and Consumer Behavior at The Estee Lauder Company, Nordstrom, Neiman Marcus, and Gap.

