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ALLSTON BRIGHTON, BACK BAY

New Balance to open Copley Square shop Friday before Boston Marathon, steps past race's finish line

Posted by Matt Rocheleau April 3, 2012 01:14 PM

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(Matt Rocheleau for Boston.com)

A photo taken in early April of the outside of the soon-to-open New Balance Experience Store at 583 Boylston St. in Boston.

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

New Balance plans to debut a retail store in Copley Square three days before this month's Boston Marathon and just steps from the finish line.

The Brighton-based sneaker and athletic apparel company says on its website that it plans to open the second New Balance Experience Store in North America at 583 Boylston St. on April 13, the Friday before the Patriots Day holiday known to some locally as Marathon Monday.

The commercial property is about one block past where the 26.2-mile Hopkinton-to-Hub marathon route [ends on Boylston Street](#) in the Back Bay.

The store will take over space that formerly housed card and gift shop Copley Flair, which recently closed all three of its Boston locations including shutting down its flagship Copley Square shop last spring after a 35-year run there.



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The first New Balance Experience Store in North America opened in New York City in August. At the corner of Fifth Avenue and 20th Street, that ground-floor, 4,000-plus-square-foot store features a two-lane running track along its perimeter and a glass-enclosed area where employees assemble running shoes on site.

In [summer 2009](#), the shoe company's first-ever Experience Store opened in New Balance in China's capital city of Beijing.

When the Boston Experience Store opens, its product offerings will include a limited edition locally-themed "Boston 890v2" sneaker that began being sold at select Boston-based retailers on April 1.

The tips of the shoe's laces read "Run Fastah," and the sock liner and back heel feature various city and marathon-themed icons, including: a lobster, a pint of beer, a cup of coffee, Heartbreak Hill and the ducklings statues in the Public Garden.

The shoes are available in men's and women's sizes and retail for \$110 a pair.

For the Boston Marathon's 116th running on April 16, the company has also launched a marketing campaign dubbed "Qualified To..." which "celebrates the many 'qualifications' that these runners represent: from being qualified to run the race itself to experiencing its unique moments," New Balance officials said in a statement.

Marathon-specific tag lines are being used for outdoor, public transit and digital advertisement and are also being placed on commemorative products. The tag lines will include: "Qualified to Crush Kenmore," "Qualified to Break Heartbreak" and "Qualified for a Screaming Girls Fan Club."

The company recently [filed detailed plans](#) to build a new headquarters complex on property next to the site of its existing outlet store and the company's current headquarters building that towers over the Massachusetts Turnpike in Brighton.

The New Balance Experience Store in Copley Square is scheduled to be operate Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., according to the company's

website.

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(New Balance)

A photo of a limited-edition sneaker that features local- and marathon-related themes. It was released by the company on April 1.

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