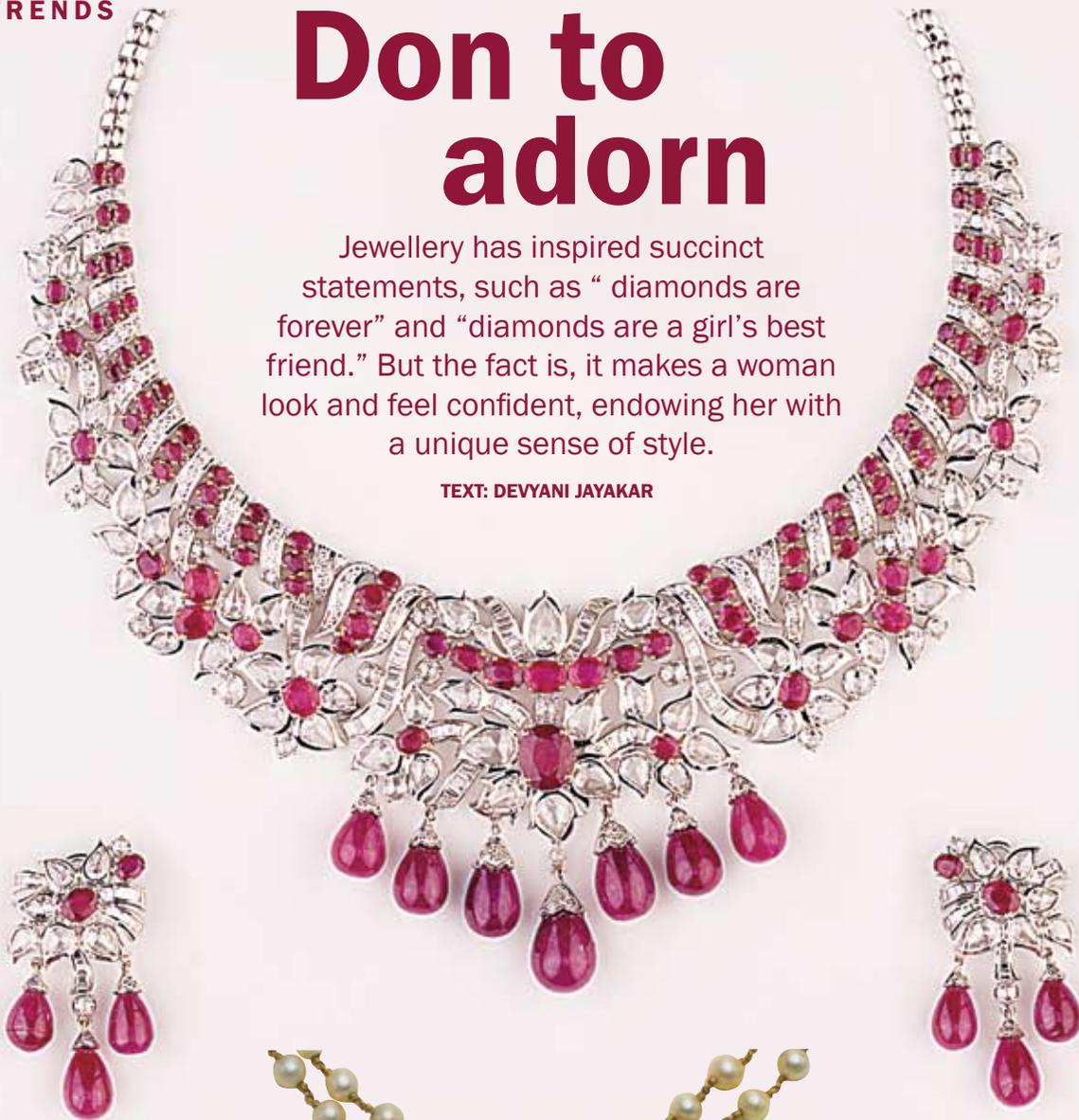


TRENDS

Don to adorn

Jewellery has inspired succinct statements, such as “diamonds are forever” and “diamonds are a girl’s best friend.” But the fact is, it makes a woman look and feel confident, endowing her with a unique sense of style.

TEXT: DEVYANI JAYAKAR



SHOBHA ASAR

EXPECTED TO BE THE cynosure of all eyes and also probably one of the most important buys of an Indian family, a bride’s jewellery involves much time and thought.

SPARKLERS AND MORE

“All my designs have been inspired by India,” says Viren Bhagat of Bhagat. “For all the occasions leading to the wedding, attires tend to be traditional. So there has



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to be an Indian element in the jewellery as well.” He also feels that diamonds and pearls are more versatile, because of their neutral colours, whereas the use of coloured stones maybe restrictive. Another trend, he says, is that brides prefer to mix and match individual pieces of jewellery, rather than buying “sets”.

Shobha Asar as well as R.Gandhi of Gazdar feel that to-be-brides are giving

a great deal of thought to what kind of jewellery will be appropriate for their body type and structure. Shobha points out that women with long necks are more likely to go in for chokers, whereas someone with broad shoulders would prefer a wide necklace. "Brides also want the jewellery to be memorable and look perfect," she says.

ORRA

She finds that brides today are much more particular about coordinating their jewellery and clothes, than they were in the past. Some have gone to the extent of carrying their bridal outfit to the jewellers, to make sure that the antique look of the polish is exactly the same shade as the bronze in the *zari* of the *lehenga*. "The look of the jewellery is also more experimental, flamboyant and bold, with a greater emphasis on design than there was a few years back," she

SHEHZAD ZAVERI/MINAWALA



adds, "read... show stopper Cleopatra-style necklaces, which spread out from the neck towards the shoulders."

Devaunshi Mehta of Dia observes that more than the family and the festivities, the bride's preferences are given priority. This change percolates to the jewellery as well with brides being over

zealous about their jewellery complementing their outfit. Consequently, pieces of jewellery are matched with appropriate regalia for different occasions, with more care than ever before.

Maheep Kapoor asserts that bridal jewellery today is still 'classical, traditional and elaborate. Women tend to look at this jewellery as a potential heirloom, which can be handed down to daughters or daughters-in-law and brides want to choose a design which they feel will not get out-

dated." Maheep also enunciates that brides like to have a mix of various kinds of jewellery for myriad occasions. In addition, brides today are more practical, and want to make an investment which will grow—so diamonds are a better buy

than *jadau*, which is slower to appreciate in price.

"There is also no possibility of 'remaking' *jadau* jewellery," she says.

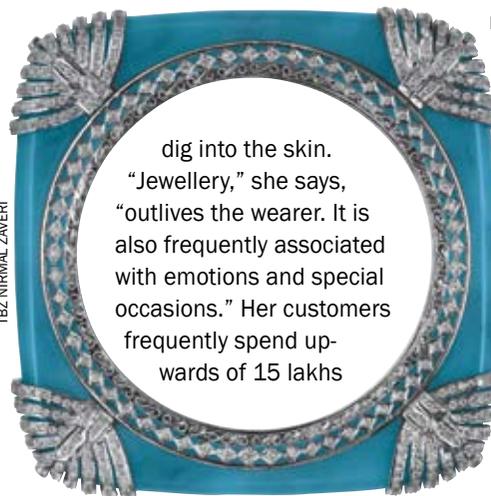
Farah Khan, who retails at Mahesh Notandass, says that high-end jewellery is never

out of style. She uses large stones and delicate,

feminine, floral designs. However, she strongly believes that the pattern should not overpower the person. The emphasis in her pieces is on design and workmanship. Women want pieces to be comfortable, fluid and flexible, and are not so willing to wear pieces that

ORRA

TEBZ NIRMAL ZAVERI



dig into the skin. "Jewellery," she says, "outlives the wearer. It is also frequently associated with emotions and special occasions." Her customers frequently spend upwards of 15 lakhs

on important pieces. Diamonds are most popularly combined with rubies and emeralds, because red and green are Indian colours. South Sea pearls are also finding a big market. Very large statement rings are a favourite of Farah's, with the



PIPRIYA & CHINTAN

centre stone being of a size and quality which is difficult to procure. The look is dressy, over-the-top bling.

Earrings which can be worn on their own without a necklace, are similarly elaborate.

Neelam Kothari, on the other hand, feels that bridal jewellery today is slightly smaller than it used to be; the prime consideration being wearability after the big day. So the preference is more for detachable, convertible pieces. Clients

may want bracelets, for example, which can connect to form a necklace, for another occasion.

TIMELESS MASTERPIECES

Shehzad Zaveri of Minawala whose name is synonymous with avant garde, imaginative design and exquisite workmanship, says bridal jewellery is always big and dramatic. "What is the point of wearing jewellery which is not noticeable?" he says irrefutably. Additionally, the designs are classic and timeless – mere fads can never be followed for something as serious as a wedding.

An interesting observa-

tion is made by Vijay Jain of Orra. "Trousseaus have undergone a change," he says, "and

ROOPA VOHRA

there is a preference for wide, open necklines. Consequently, necklaces have a more spread out look too." Gold seems to find more favour than platinum, and rose cut diamonds, rubies and emeralds are popular choices. The design may be traditional, but the interpretation is contemporary.

Poonam Soni's new range is defined by an extensive use of baroque pearls in an extremely creative manner. Also of special interest is her creation of "knots" in the design of her pieces. One is hard pressed to believe that they are in gold, and not of lustrous silken threads. The look of the jewellery is extravagant with opulent designer touches in which diamonds, rubies and emeralds are set in previously unheard of bronze. "Semi precious stones have been done to death," says Poonam.

Priya and Chintan are emphatic about the element of tradition in jewellery. "Even Victorian designs," they explain, "can be worn with Indian as well as Western clothes. Different polishes, lending an antique appearance, define their look."

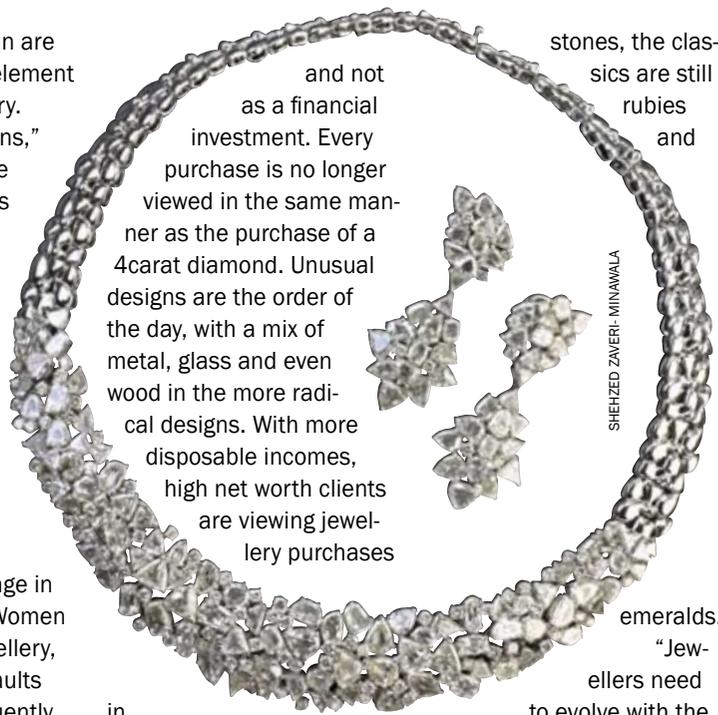
EVOLVING STYLES

In agreement with this observation is Queenie Dhody, who says, "there is a change in outlook these days. Women want to use their jewellery, not keep it in bank vaults and lockers. Consequently, designs have to be more convenient." However, she says the trend is not for completely traditional designs, for the simple reason that nobody is wearing completely traditional clothes.

And a purely traditional piece of jewellery would be infernally difficult to wear with western attire later on. So there is a comfortable mix in the designs, and exotic jewellery, combining coloured stones with diamonds has a niche market.

Roopa Vohra, who revived Thewa, pronounces that high-end clientele are gradually becoming more and more open to the idea of jewellery as an accessory,

and not as a financial investment. Every purchase is no longer viewed in the same manner as the purchase of a 4carat diamond. Unusual designs are the order of the day, with a mix of metal, glass and even wood in the more radical designs. With more disposable incomes, high net worth clients are viewing jewellery purchases

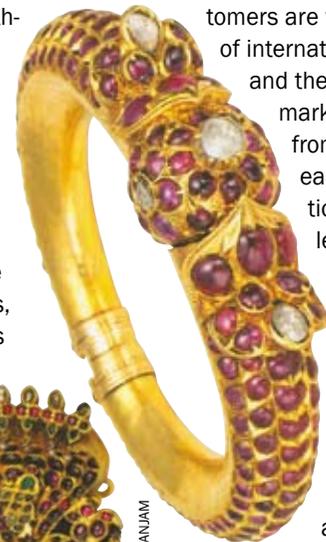


SHEHZED ZAVERI- MINAWALA

emeralds. "Jewellers need to evolve with the customer," says Samrat Zaveri of TBZ. Indian customers are well informed of international trends, and the bride today is markedly different from those of earlier generations. "Jewellery is bolder, chandelier earrings are in, the retro look of the 1920's is popular, necklaces are dramatic and size matters!" rattles

in much the same way that they would a garment-without obsessing endlessly over its resale value or its appreciation in cost. Biren Vaidya of Rose Collection says, "The emphasis seems to be on pieces that can be

made larger or smaller at will." This echoes Neelam Kothari's and Queenie Dhody's observations. Moreover, there is a 'fusion' in the design of jewellery, as there is in garments. So expect to see Western elements combined with Indian ones, as also the old with the new. "Gold," he also says, "is making a big comeback." In coloured



GANJAM



FARAH KHAN

