



IN LOVE WITH STONES

Jyotsna Singh, the granddaughter of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala, launched Manjusha, her line of fusion jewels in Bangalore. **Madhuri Velegar K** spoke to her

PHOTOGRAPH BY SANJAY RAMACHANDRAN

What inspires you to design?

Honestly, I struggled with design, especially in the beginning. But then slowly, after meeting *karigars* in Jaipur, I would be flooded with design ideas. I think because of the fact that I lived abroad, it became easier for me to bring slight but inventive changes in the traditional forms and motifs of Indian jewellery. Now I absolutely love what I do, I am passionate about stone jewels.

What are some of the trends in traditional Indian jewellery today?

I believe it's time for statement pieces. I also feel that any jewellery that we wear should make a statement—it reflects a confident, trendy persona. The other trend that is huge is lighter pieces. Then again, the really big draws are the stone jewels. Emeralds, carnelians, rubies and pears. Even a small *jadau* piece can make a big

impression. Rubies and pearls, corals that go so well with our skin tone work well. I combine stones to make them come alive. The idea is to make contemporary and ethnic pieces.

Where do you source your stones from? And who are the takers for this kind of jewels?

All my stones, precious and semi-precious, are from Jaipur. I spend three months designing, then sourcing the stones and then again another six months to create the jewels. I also sell my pieces in the US, and have just returned from an exhibition in Brazil where the women loved this work.

How do you shuttle between two different worlds, and keep your sanity intact?

I worked for corporate American clients for almost two decades and this gave me a lot of skills on how to multitask and move forward.

How are you priced?

People have become very price conscious. They know the difference between bench jewellery, between fine jewels, stones, and many even prefer silver today. My neckpieces that use different kinds of semi-precious stones, if set in silver, range from about ₹13,000 to ₹30,000. Others can go higher, depending on the stone, gold and design element in them. However, my biggest sellers are earrings, which I have in a wide range. ●

WHAT A LEGACY!

Seventy-five years ago Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala created history when he unveiled the renowned Patiala Necklace inside a Cartier showroom in Paris for the first time. Now his granddaughter unveils Manjusha, which means a treasure chest of jewels, in delicately encrusted gold and silver. Manjusha is inspired by the beauty of the royal *jadau* designs.