

INDIAN SPARKLE

Allure Jewels

HAILING FROM THE Emerald City of Jaipur in northern India, Shirish Poonglia has the business of precious stones in his blood. "Wholesaling and manufacturing emeralds, rubies, sapphires, and diamonds is an ancestral business," he says. "My family has been in the precious stones industry for over 100 years, and I'm now the fourth generation to continue that heritage."

With his home city known for centuries for its trade in coloured stones, it's little surprise that Shirish and two close family friends – also from Jaipur – set up Allure Jewels. In 1999, seeing that the wholesale stones business was becoming saturated, Allure made the decision to diversify into the manufacture of jewellery, with dazzling results.

"Since we already had the expertise of cutting stones and sourcing loose diamonds and coloured stones, we thought we could add value by manufacturing jewellery," says Shirish. "As well as our family tradition in precious stones, India has traditionally been a very jewellery-oriented market, since the old times of the maharajas and great kings. That's really what prompted us to get into designing beautiful, luxury jewellery."

For him, Allure stands out due to its quality, expertise, exclusivity and the fact it gives clients that "wow" factor. The company today specialises in luxury jewellery that's worn to be noticed. "We've made our niche among people whose tastes are very design-centric," says Shirish. "We don't just do small, commercial jewellery; what we're making here is bigger, statement pieces, like a flower-shaped cocktail ring or large jewelled earrings."

With prices starting at just over £1,000, Allure's bold but exquisite jewellery is not for

the unassuming. Each visually striking piece is dreamt up by one of Allure's four in-house designers, and crafted using the best-quality diamonds and coloured stones. "Our forte is in baguette diamond jewellery," says Shirish, "and a lot of our designs are very Arabic-centric with a universal and modern appeal."

Indeed, Allure's three associates have influences from across Asia. Ajay Jain lives in Bangkok, where he runs the factory; Manoj Jain in Dubai, where Allure currently has its largest market; and Shirish is based in Mumbai, India, where he sources the diamonds and precious stones. This happy arrangement means that the company can be sure of maintaining the highest standards – from stone selection and cutting to making the finished products – and is always in touch with what the customers want.

Allure is now a truly global business, with designs that blend the company's rich Asian heritage with a modern twist that has helped them win loyal clients worldwide. It sells primarily through trade shows, and around half of Allure's client base is in fashion-conscious Dubai and elsewhere across the Middle East. The remaining 50 per cent is divided between Asia, North America and Europe, in particular style-conscious clients in Italy and France.

"Because we come from a family of jewellers, people trust us to source the finest stones," says Shirish Poonglia. "I also have a lot of input on the designs – I'll feed back to the designers about what lines to follow and what kind of jewellery our clients like most. We're creating beautiful, high-end pieces that people really desire."

— www.allure-jewels.com

