

Jewelry with Conscience

Guilt-free finds you'll long for this summer

• BY MARYRUTH BELSEY PRIEBE •

Photos courtesy of Smart

Jewelry fixation? Whether you're looking to spruce up an outfit for an upcoming wedding or searching for something dramatic for next week's date, you've got a lot of options from which to choose. But the next time you're scouring online and in-store jewelry selections, why not consider eco-friendly pieces that'll really get people talking?

After all, the conventional jewelry industry comes with several environmental risks:

Gold mining is one of the dirtiest industries in the world, resulting in water poisoned by cyanide, mercury, arsenic, and other heavy metals; air pollution from lead and oxides of nitrogen and sulphur; and massive piles of toxic solid waste (a 20-ton

pile for every one-ounce 18-karat gold ring).

Like precious metal mining, diamond mining faces many of the same environmental concerns, but has the added challenge of overcoming the trade in conflict diamonds which impoverishes and endangers many lives.

Fashion jewelry is often made of plastic, which is a non-renewable petroleum product that has many environmental hazards, too.

So this season, check out these fabulous offerings from earth-conscious designers and artists. From sparkling neck adornments to daring baubles, they have got the most inspired jewelry this side of green street.



Photos by Rebecca Crawford

<<Black Rubber Flower Bracelet: Rock out in this bracelet made from recycled tire inner tubes. £60 (approximately \$86)

Anniversary Rings: Dress up your wedding rings with the warmth of gleaming gold or the sophistication or white gold or platinum studded with juicy gems in any number of Brilliant Earth's stunning anniversary rings. \$700+ ▼



Photos courtesy of Brilliant Earth

Brilliant Earth
Brilliantearth.com

Elevate any jewelry purchase by opting for a Brilliant Earth piece created using certified conflict-free diamonds and recycled metals (gold, silver, and platinum). Choose from artfully adorned rings for men and women, chic earrings, and dazzling pendants, or create your own look using their "Create Your Own" service.



<<Men's Wedding Rings: Choose a modern wedding ring for your special day with this matte-finished ring. \$1,300 (Platinum) or \$700 (18K white gold)

Spacefruit
Myspacefruit.com

These oh-so-pretty pieces—from necklaces to brooches to earrings—are made from litter found along the shores of UK beaches by Spacefruit designer Becky Crawford. Using shampoo bottles, tire inner tubes, and milk cartons, each piece is unique and can be made to order.

Cluster Petals Brooch & Pompom Earrings: Add a touch of whimsy to a summer dress with these pieces made from hand-cut discs out of found shampoo bottles. £45 - £90 (approximately \$65-130) ▼





Glass

Smart Glass Smartglassjewelry.com

Created out of the bottoms of recycled wine, soda, and beer bottles of all shapes and colors, you can add vibrant color to your fingers, wrists, or neck to liven up any outfit. She even has a Coca-Cola licensed line of products for the ultra-soda lover. Kathleen Plate strives for eco-friendly design in all of her work, including how she packages the finished product (she now uses oxydegradable bags).

<<Asymmetrical Necklace: Customize this fresh take on neck art by choosing from seven different types of recycled glass for each circle along the sterling chain. \$138

>>Cuff Links: Dress up your man with these go-to accessories made from any of seven different recycled glass options. \$130 (pair)



Photos by Jerry Anthony Photography

<<Crossword Puzzle Bracelet: Add drama with this crossword puzzle bracelet that comes on a comfortable elastic cord, embellished with sterling silver bead trim. \$599

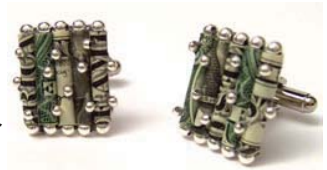
Newspaper Jewelry Newspaperjewelry.com

Working with the bright colors and interesting textural patterns of yesterday's newspaper, artist Holly Anne Mitchell creates award-winning and fashion-forward accessories out of The Boston Globe, The Washington Post, and The Baltimore Sun (to name a few). She also repurposes stock listings, comic strips, and even sweetener packets and old money into pieces that truly make a statement.

StarStrings Starstrings.com

If you're into in the music scene, then these accessories will certainly get you movin'. Made from recycled instrument strings and found objects, designer Molly Magdalain combines elegance with sustainable design.

>>Dollar Bill Cufflinks: The ultimate in guy bling, these cufflinks are made with recycled dollar bills and silver trim beads. \$99



>>Lotus White Quartz Bracelet: Made with a secondhand guitar string and finished with quartz. \$75



<<Vintage Crystal Bracelet: A brightly-adorned guitar string with a vintage look. \$65

Photos courtesy of StarStrings

For more information on ethical, eco-friendly jewelry, check out:

- No Dirty Gold
www.nodirtygold.org
- Earthworks
www.earthworksaction.org/EnvironmentalImpacts.cfm
- Diamond Facts
www.diamondfacts.org
- Environmental Literacy Council
www.enviroliteracy.org/article.php/1121.html