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A Budding Romance with Heart-Shaped Diamonds

Still beating strong: Jewelers and shoppers are falling in love with this cut all over again.

APRIL 2, 2024 | [BETH BERNSTEIN](#)



Designers, retailers and consumers are having a romance with heart-shaped diamonds. It started with a return to fancy cuts that hadn't seen popularity in years — predominantly pears, marquises and princesses. This trend, along with a desire for meaningful symbolism and the revival of heart-themed jewelry in general, has ignited a passion for heart-shaped diamonds, attracting a whole new generation of collectors.

"In the past few years, we've witnessed the comeback of hearts, as our customers appreciate the meaning behind the cut," reports Lynne Halpern, co-owner of [Tassels](#) in Atlanta, Georgia. "[It is] more symbolic than receiving any other fancy cut, whether from a family member or as a romantic gesture."

Cece Fein-Hughes concurs. "The younger generation is displaying a proclivity for nontraditional choices that transcend the ordinary and carry profound symbolism," says the designer of [Cece Jewellery](#). "The heart-shaped diamond, with its romantic connotations and timeless elegance, perfectly aligns with these desires."

For Melanie Goldfiner Goldberg, director of marketing and business development at [Rahaminov Diamonds](#), this cut is "the ultimate symbol of love. Gen Z and younger millennials tend to be more romantic than previous generations, and this is

being reflected in their diamond preferences.”



*Cece Jewellery Horseclip necklace in 18-karat yellow gold with diamond Sweetheart charms and enamel Snake & Moon pendant.
(Cece Jewellery)*

Playfully chic

When it comes to design opportunities, heart cuts “present a playful and versatile take on serious diamonds, which is a reflection on how women perceive fine jewelry today,” comments Fein-Hughes. “In our Sweetheart Charms collection, we’ve designed our bezel-set heart cuts in three sizes to be interchangeable...on hoops, as pendants, and [as] charms on bracelets, allowing for dynamic use across various pieces of jewelry.”

Both Halpern and Goldfiner Goldberg agree that pendants and earrings are the most popular jewelry categories for those seeking heart cuts.

“Our customers seem to be most interested in wearing heart-shaped diamonds around their necks, and I personally own one myself and wear it every day,” says Halpern.

Who’s purchasing them? Halpern finds that “hearts sell well to men who are buying for their significant others. Men see them as the most romantic gesture when it comes to gifting jewelry and tend to choose them over other fancy cuts.”

Educating the customer can go a long way. Heart shapes “are definitely geared toward a particular client,” remarks Goldfiner Goldberg. “It’s important for retailers to explain the intricacies of the cut and the craftsmanship that goes into creating [it].”

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Pumping up the value

Fancy cuts across the board have gone up in price due to high demand, and hearts are no exception. “A beautifully cut heart shape comes with a premium” compared to rounds, says Goldfiner Goldberg. “But on the upside, it will also hold its value. Therefore, it’s important to seek those of high quality and crafted with precision.”

Of course, not all heart cuts are created equal. “They are one of the more difficult of the fancies to cut, but are prized for their interaction with light,” explains Tiffany Chao, designer of [Auroro Jewelry](#) in Los Angeles. “I am very specific about the proportions we use, and more often than not, end up recutting a stone to get the right length-to-width ratio, which is extremely important in choosing a heart-shaped diamond.”

Goldfiner Goldberg echoes that sentiment: “The length-to-width ratio determines the overall shape and can vary from one diamond to another. The challenge of the cutter is to strike the right balance of cleavage, symmetry, proportions, and facet arrangement. Although there are general guidelines, personal preference and variations in cutting styles contribute to the uniqueness of each diamond. The meticulous attention to detail during the cutting process is what sets exceptional heart-shaped diamonds apart.”

While myriad brands offer heart cuts in their collections, some are creating particularly resonant pieces with imaginative settings, natural colored diamonds, and swoon-worthy designs. Besides Cece, Auroro, and Rahaminov, the list includes Jessica McCormack, Anita Ko, Anne Baker, Borgioni, Buddha Mama, Serpentine Jewels, and Lizzie Mandler. These and others are winning the affections of both retailers and end consumers.

A Symbol for the Ages

The earliest mention of the heart-cut diamond dates back to the 1400s, when it became known as a symbol of royalty. A century later, in 1562, Queen Elizabeth I received a gold ring with a heart-shaped diamond from Mary, Queen of Scots, as a gesture of friendship and goodwill.

Although this was one of the most famous heart-shaped diamonds of the period, French clergyman and statesman Cardinal de Richelieu owned a ring with a much larger one: A 20-carat stone that early 17th-century Paris diamond merchant Alphonse Lopez had willed to the king.

After that time, heart-shaped diamonds became associated with romance, love, admiration and devotion. During the Renaissance and into the 1700s, diamonds were hand-cut, but the technological advances that developed afterward continued to improve the heart shape.

Iconic examples of heart-cut stones include the Taj Mahal diamond, which actor Richard Burton gifted Elizabeth Taylor for her 40th birthday in Budapest, Hungary. The table-cut diamond, which Burton bought from Cartier, was first discovered in the 17th century. This was the diamond that Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan gave in 1621 to his favorite wife, the queen who inspired the Taj Mahal. Burton joked with Taylor that he’d intended to buy her the Taj Mahal itself, but it was too big to move to their home in Switzerland, so he’d gotten her the jewel instead.

Other renowned heart cuts include the 30.62-carat Blue Heart diamond, which was first discovered in South Africa and last belonged to American heiress Marjorie M. Post. She gifted it to the Smithsonian Institute in 1964. The Cullinan V diamond, meanwhile, was a gift from the South African government to Britain’s Queen Mary in 1910. Set into a stunning brooch, it became part of her granddaughter Queen Elizabeth II’s personal collection. And in 2011, Christie’s auctioned a 56.15-carat heart diamond that broke all records at the time with a hammer price of about \$12 million.



Richard Burton wearing the antique diamond heart pendant he gifted to Elizabeth Taylor on her 40th birthday. (Trinity Mirror/Mirrorpix/Alamy Stock Photo)

Main image: Rahaminov Diamonds heart-shape bypass ring with fancy-yellow diamonds in 18-karat yellow gold. (Rahaminov Diamonds)

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