



Elegance

THINK PINK!

Russian Gold's Beautiful Resurgence

The delicate and feminine nature of rose gold contributes much towards its romantic allure. A product of a bygone era, this rouged raw material has recently made its way back to the top of the jewellery world's most desired list, and features a prominent part in South African jeweller, Shimansky's breathtaking collections.

Rose gold can be traced back to ancient times. Smelting back then was certainly not as sterile as it is today, resulting in impurities seeping into the gold while it was molten – often altering its colour quite substantially to either a pink or red hue.

It wasn't until the turn of the 18th century that rose gold became a de facto popular choice in Russia, where an alloy was created through the mixture of 24-carat gold and copper, and in some instances silver too. Known, back then, as "Russian Gold", the jewellery and accessories took on a vintage appeal almost instantaneously – due to the oxidising nature of copper resulting in gradual colour change very soon into wearing the pieces. It was here where the birth of rose gold, in all of its romantic splendour, took place and became popular before crossing the European border during the late 18th century – very close to the Victorian era.

Rose gold continued its popularity throughout early 19th century jewellery design, exploring the use of colour and precious gems, until the rise of the Art Deco movement, when its whimsy and romance was vastly overshadowed with platinum structure, precious stones and monochromatic design. Gaudy buildings, chromium motor vehicles, stained glass and speakeasies became the backdrop to a more resolute jewellery design, ratified with the use of heavier and stronger metals. However, by the luck of the Russian gods perhaps, the war era saw the need for almost all platinum production to be used by governments for wartime efforts, and supply to jewellers all but ceased. Gold quickly became the precious metal of choice, almost by accident, which gave rise to the Retro era of the '50s and '60s. The glamour of old Hollywood and the glitz of Monte Carlo paved the way for a new style of jewellery design – oversized and overstated – dripping with emeralds, rubies and sapphires. Rose gold was the belle of the ball, featuring in many collections of the high-society jet set. Brooches, rings, earrings and necklaces all stole the limelight, and with an all-new, three-dimensional design, those on



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whom "Russian Gold" was adorned became iconic statues lavishly showing it off to millions in awe of these glamorous people in this glamorous time. However, once again rose gold's popularity began to dip, making way for the more simplistic styles of yellow and white gold though the '70s and '80s. And by the time the Times Square Ball dropped on 1990, contemporary style and minimalism became a fashion the world over, with thanks in part to telecommunications unrivalled in the history of mankind. Gold made way for platinum once more, as collectors sought cleaner, crisper, more modern pieces to suit the penultimate decade before they entered the unknown "Y2K" realm of the future.

Rose gold remained dormant for over a decade, only making cameos through inherited estates, themed throwbacks or the sentimentality of family heirlooms...until now. Post 2010, classic design became fashionable once more, breaking free from the contemporary shackles that bound it to the '90s. Reminiscence goes hand in hand with romanticism and jewellers have realised that rose gold is the glue that binds the two. Fashion and jewellery designers have realised that it complements many women's skin tones, and does not lend itself to the "bling" category that both yellow and white gold have a tendency to find themselves in. As a result, rose gold offers discerning collectors with understated beauty that pairs fantastically with white and yellow gold, diamonds and other precious stones that will never fall into the category of over-the-top or flashy.

2012 marked the resurgence of rose gold at haute jewellery's most prestigious showcase, the Biennale des Antiquaires, and has since trickled down into mainstream jewellery design. With its relatively new re-invention as a popular precious metal, the trend is only set to get bigger and more diverse – welcoming a range of exciting designs and interpretations from numerous influences around the world. Interestingly too, is that aside from rose gold's romantic and feminine attributes, it is also beginning to feature among men's jewellery collections – especially in high-end timepiece design and wedding bands that are often paired with white gold, platinum or palladium. An appreciation for the historic, coupled with an endless pool of creativity and design influence, the interpretation and growth of rose gold is only going to become more dynamic. ■ Kevin Taylor

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South African-based jeweller, Shimansky, carries their own range of Rose Gold engagement rings from some of their most sought-after collections. These are some of our favourites:



Millennium

The Millennium diamond ring is an iconic and original Shimansky design, that is regarded as the most sought after engagement ring in South Africa. With two bands carefully holding an expertly cut Shimansky diamond, the bands symbolise the coming together of two lives and their unique journey represented by the centre stone.



Evolym

Taking its name from 'MY LOVE' written in reverse, the Evolym is a reflection of your love and commitment in a truly breathtaking, innovative design. The Evolym ring is hand-made with precision to ensure it has the appearance of a delicately set Shimansky diamond in the centre, and its 360-degree exposure to light, ensures that your diamond radiates true brilliance when viewed from every angle.

Two Hearts

The unique Shimansky Two Hearts engagement ring, symbolises the coming together of two hearts to form one. The delicately hand-set Shimansky diamond is held in place by the two hearts that form the setting on either side of the centre stone.



My Girl

The My Girl Diamond is a signature Shimansky Diamond Cut – a South African first and patented around the world. The hallmark of the My Girl Collection is an expertly cut My Girl Diamond at the centre of each design. As the first square cut diamond with a diamond shaped table, every My Girl Diamond is the perfect balance of fire, brilliance and scintillation – sparkling with every move that you make.



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