

A girl's new best friend

**Lauren Chang Sommer
Moi Moi Fine Jewellery**

Sum up your business in one sentence.

Moi Moi Fine Jewellery is Australia's first and only store exclusively selling Charles & Colvard created Moissanite, a dazzling new jewel that has more sparkle than any other.

Why is Moissanite better than real diamonds?

Because of its beauty, which defined by the GIA (Gemmological Institute of America), is based on its brilliance, fire and lustre. Moissanite has much more brilliance, more fire and more lustre than diamonds.

Where does the name Moissanite originate?

From Nobel Prize winner, Dr Henri Moissan, who in 1893 discovered the mineral silicon carbide in a 50,000 year old meteorite in the Arizona desert. Silicon carbide was later named Moissanite in his honour.

Is Moissanite as durable as diamonds?

A jewel's durability is determined by a combination of hardness and toughness. Extremely resistant to scratching, abrasion, breaking or chipping, Moissanite is durable and tough, harder than sapphire and only second in hardness to diamond.

Is there any difference between natural Moissanite and the lab-created version?

Structurally there is no difference between natural and created Moissanite. Both natural Moissanite and created Moissanite consist of the naturally occurring mineral silicon carbide. However, naturally occurring Moissanite is too rare to be used for jewellery purposes, which is why Charles & Colvard create Moissanite for use in jewellery.

For whom does Moissanite hold most appeal?

Women from all age groups who are savvy, fashionable and those who love and appreciate magnificent jewellery. Another group who we have a strong appeal to, are couples that make a decision together to buy Moissanite as their engagement ring. The money that they are saving can cover the entire cost of their wedding!

How long have you been involved in the jewellery business?

Since December 2004. My background is in fine arts, I am not a jeweller or gemmologist. I just love



Sparkle: Moi Moi's Lauren Chang Sommer and, right, one of the Moissanite creations

gorgeous things and making people happy!

What do you like most about it?

I get great pleasure when I see our clients' faces light up when they try on our jewellery. It is a very nice business to be in. I know that we are offering a great product that is affordable, but will make you feel like a million dollars.

Does Moi Moi have the exclusive rights in Australia to sell Moissanite?

Yes. Moi Moi is the exclusive distributor of Moissanite in Australia. We are excited about expanding our business in Australia.

How much less than diamonds does Moissanite cost?

Moissanite is approximately 90 per cent less than its diamond equivalent.

You are marketing the Moissanite as something women would buy themselves as a reward rather than it being a gift of love — why?

Times are changing! Why should we as women have to wait to receive beautiful jewellery as a gift of love? Every woman wants a luxurious jewel with an outstanding sparkle, high durability and more importantly, affordability. Once in a while, a woman will shout themselves with a beautiful fashion piece or designer handbag as a special reward. Now with Moissanite, we can afford to shout ourselves a stunning piece of fine jewellery.



What's your favourite piece of jewellery?

I love this Prism ring from our designer based in Los Angeles (pictured). The architectural qualities make this a real stand-out piece.

What has been your biggest challenge in running your own business?

My biggest challenge would have to be introducing a whole new stone to the Australian public. Awareness is the key to the success of Moissanite. The phenomenal success of Moissanite internationally only makes this challenge in Australia more exciting.

What has been your biggest stroke of good luck or good planning?

Definitely my biggest stroke of luck was discovering Moissanite and then realising that it was not being sold in Australia yet! Moissanite is in 66 countries and doing very well, so we were thrilled to get the exclusive distributorship for Australia.

Any tips for budding entrepreneurs?

Make sure you enjoy what you do. Your enthusiasm and passion for your business will be reflected in everything you do and your clients will really appreciate your genuine approach.

Where is your store located?

Shop 16 on Level 2 of the Queen Victoria Building, Sydney.

What is your website address?

www.moimoi.com.au