

twinkletwinkle

JEWELLERY DESIGNER ALANA CHANG HAS TAKEN A SHINE TO ALL THINGS BLING.

For Alana Chang, working with precious gems every day involves a lot more than simply poring over old rocks.

"One day there was actually a marriage proposal in the shop," Chang says. "While I was printing the receipt out, the man suddenly got down on one knee and proposed to his girlfriend.

"For the record, the answer was a resounding 'yes'," she adds with a laugh.

Chang and her sister Lauren are the directors of Moi Moi Fine Jewellery. Since securing the rights to distribute a gem known as moissanite throughout Australia and New Zealand, the sisters decided to work exclusively with this relatively unknown stone and recently opened a flagship store in the QVB showcasing their work.

Moissanite is a clear sparkling gem with the luminosity of diamonds, but with a price tag closer to that of a cubic zirconia. Chang describes being "completely dazzled" by the beauty of moissanite from the moment she first saw it.

"Although it's very difficult to tell the difference between moissanite and fine diamond, moissanite is not a diamond imitation. It's actually a unique stone in its own right which has more brilliance, fire and lustre than any other jewel."

With her entrepreneurial spirit blazing, Chang says she took a leap of faith when she launched the business two years ago, but her love affair with jewellery started many years earlier.

"I was given my first piece by my mother on my 16th birthday. It was absolutely stunning and had been redesigned from one of my grandmother's rings. I guess ever since then, I've been in love with the romance of fine jewellery."

And so far it seems the sisters' business venture is paying off. The Moi Moi store is a decadent shrine to the jewellery of classic Hollywood icons, such as Elizabeth Taylor and Audrey Hepburn. Customers are invited to take their pick from pieces ranging from bold and chunky to the delicate and sublime. When asked to pick out her most extravagant design so far, Chang has no hesitation.

"In collaboration with one of our designers based in Los Angeles, we created a stunning ring with 119 moissanite stones pavé set in three overflowing hearts [pictured]. It's an exquisite piece that shows off the brilliance of moissanite from every angle."

And the price tag? At \$5900 you won't be forced to take out a second mortgage. Perhaps diamonds aren't a girl's only best friend after all.



photos: philip rogers

Glitter girl

Alana Chang knows the bigger the sparkler, the bolder the impact.

