

GREEN WITH ENVY

The definitive shade of the jewelry world this year is undeniably green: citrusy, zingy, vivid, pale... Smitha Sadanandan explores how designers are fashioning their jewels with green gems and green details.



It's official. Green gems and accents have infiltrated the jewelry industry. Every time someone thinks the green hues might hit a saturation point in a bit, a bunch of designers release swoon-worthy combinations in green and keep the momentum going.

While designers and brands have their own favorites among green gems, most notably Muzo Emerald Colombia, Gemfields, Fuli Gemstones (peridot mine) pair up with designers to spread the word about their gems. These collaborations, often done annually, encourage designers to experiment with special cuts and interesting shapes in their design and have made a compelling case for green

stones. This year, even accents rendered through enamel, ceramic, rhodium and other details, also in green, have become positively ubiquitous in the jewelry world.

Head jewelry buyer at Marissa Collections, Jennifer McCurry, is convinced that – at least for the time being – green gems are trending. Don't forget enamel and rhodium accents, and titanium in green hues, says McCurry, also a consultant and stylist: "It's still going strong." Indeed, the love for green stones and green accents shows no sign of abating.

Vault, Gucci's experimental concept store, has stocked up on pieces by Jean Prounis. She opts for precious and semi-precious stones in pieces crafted from 22-karat gold; and it has tourmaline, emerald. But it is not just emeralds that the jewelry world is obsessed with: peridot, green tourmaline, tsavorite, malachite, jade, maw sit sit, chrysoprase, green alexandrite, green sapphire, chrysoberyl. "You have to find alternatives in the green realm because emerald is very expensive and it is also a delicate gem," McCurry points out.

Melinda Zeman of Boochier employs tsavorite and chrysoprase to add generous green hints in her new jumbo spiral rings. The latest addition to the popular Slinkee collection, which resurrects the keepsakes of the 90s, sees the designer adding contrast with blue zircon, pink sapphire and turquoise. Contrasting combinations, incorporating green stones, is instantly uplifting. These rings, according to Zeman, were immediately scooped up by retailer

Reinhold Jewelers. It is definitely worth taking note when a color, such as green, becomes du jour among designers and jewelry wearers. There is a big sense of quiet luxury about emeralds, observes McCurry. "Designers are using emeralds as accents, in combinations with other gems, or setting it into warm yellow gold that lends itself to quiet luxury," she points out.

Although beautiful green emeralds from Saboo, Bayco or Piranesi yield star-studded looks, it seems the "wearable, stackable pieces with green stones" – that the quiet luxury woman can wear day-and-night – are what retailers are gravitating toward. "It's a trend that's sweeping through the industry and it's about wearability. We want to be able to travel with our jewelry, pair it with our gold chains, pieces that we've accumulated, wear it with our jeans and T-shirts, or to a dinner party and also when we go out with our friends – and still look like trendy," explains McCurry.

Irene Neuwirth is all about color combo, and employs opposing colors in exciting ways; Graziela and Katherine Jetter are also retail favorites at Marissa Collections. "Katherine Jetter does emerald accents with pearls, and uses blue rhodium for pops of color. Graziela loves green also does several pieces in green rhodium. We like bright accents at Marissa," adds the jewelry expert.

Jetter gives her 18k hoops an edgy upgrade; she uses emerald rhodium with diamond in mini hoops. You can spy electric blue rhodium finish winking at the emerald baguettes and rounds also in the bigger hoops. Kaufman stays true to her vision. "I have used emerald and tsavorite and in finishes, including titanium and color rhodium," adds the designer, whose 3-sided band rings are priced between \$2,200-\$5,000, effectively hitting the sales' sweet spot.

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Palatable color

Rendering jewels in 14k gold keeps things affordable. Stylish pieces in 14k gold by Zoe Chicco serve as great holiday gifts for Marissa Collections, especially Chicco's open cuffs, emerald drop huggie earrings and mini huggies ranging from \$1,000-\$3,000. "I also love the color combination of turquoise with emerald accents; Leigh Maxwell does a lot of that," says McCurry.

Camille Zarsky, founder of The Seven in NYC's West Village, loves the green reign. "Emeralds are the second best-selling stone for us, second to diamonds. There seems to be a never-ending request for cool emerald pieces." Why does she think the green hues have caught up in such a strong way? "It's a very palatable color given it almost yields as a neutral since the rich green hue of emeralds goes with so much. Since yellow gold is still holding strong, this is also a stone that pairs exceptionally with anyone who wants an updated look of yellow gold pieces with a touch of color," notes Zarsky.

Besides emerald, chrysoprase is a close second, she adds. Paired with other green like stones, or with turquoise, in fetching combinations, the creations "yield truly unique looks that speak to our customer's desire to have more unique pieces." At The Seven, getting a nice everyday emerald piece in the range of \$5,000-\$10,000 is a sweet spot and always sells well. "Rings tend to be our strongest style for the moment. Pendants would come in as a close second. Additionally, anything under \$10,000 is great, and if it's a substantial special stone then the \$15,000-\$20,000 price range does well," adds Zarsky.

Nak Armstrong, uses half-moons in a light blue-green tourmaline and a combo of bi-color pink tourmaline and Ethiopian opal tapered baguettes. Does his current design take cues from the rising demand for green jewels? "There is probably no color more represented in the gem world – every hue and intensity of green is out there, which is why I think it is so popular. I've always worked with emerald, green tourmaline, and sphe; so, my choices are less about demand and more based on what I love," says Armstrong.

"I've always been jazzed by stones that present multiple colors and sphe;es reflect a range of my favorites – green, orange, yellow, brown. They're so complex and rich and are hard to pin down," he adds. The Austin-based designer marries opaque and translucent stones and, or color contrasts to give dimension to his pieces. "I use both techniques in the Tuft earrings," he notes.

Green gemstones, for Peggy Grosz, have always had wide appeal for their ability to evoke the richness of nature's greens: emerald for lush foliage, blue-green tourmalines that remind us of lagoons and the deeper greens of forests and jungles. "The various green garnets (demantoid, tsavorite, grossular) can take our minds from budding spring to a rich summer field or the welcome evergreens so noticeable in winter or even the clear green waters of lakes around the world," adds the senior vice-president and creative director, Assael.

It is particularly easy and appealing for Assael to use different shades of green gemstones to complement the various intensities and shades of greens present in Tahitian pearls. "Additionally, the appealing contrasts that greens can create with different shades of coral can be dramatic and irresistible." The brand's focus on cultured pearls and responsibly sourced coral is suited to its use of green gems. "Green can be fresh, feel healthy or dramatic and there is a shade or two (or three) that

can work with everyone's complexion, mood or fashion style," observes Grosz.

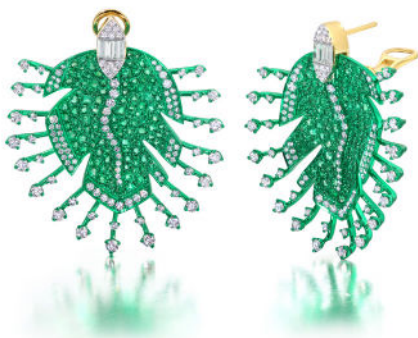
Anne Russell, executive vice-president of Hamilton Jewelers, notes that rare gemstones in green are probably one of the most sought-after colors at their store. "This is partly due to their scarcity, but also because there is such a wide range of green gemstones available to us," she says.

From emeralds, the most majestic of the greens, to tourmalines, or peridot, or even a rare green diamond, their clients love seeing green. "These shades evoke the powers of nature in their creation and are exceptionally beautiful to the eye," Russell adds.

Tatiana Van Lancker creates whimsical, articulated robots in 18k gold for her fine jewelry brand Van. The Re Van Robot (King Van Robot) necklace, part of her Royal collection that she launched after moving to Rome, is outfitted with "polished, gloriously glossy and curvaceous cabochons evoking Rome's monumental domes." She is also considering adding round belly bots to this collection "since they represent fertility," and these dancing bots with emerald, she feels, would be perfect for a May baby or expecting mother. Emeralds, peridots are the go-to green gems for Van Lancker, whose brand DNA hinges on contemporary Art Deco.

Laura Barringer, senior buyer fashion at Ben Bridge Jeweler, weighs in on the green gem trend.

"It has been trending now for a couple years, the interest in emeralds and peridot, in particular, for us seem to transcend the monthly birthstone interest we have seen in previous years," she notes. Green in broadening in popularity. "Peridot in smaller sizes meets an attractive price point for the savvy shopper interested in a soothing relaxing color. Additionally, we recently added a small capsule collection of malachite to our proprietary Italian brand Toscano, it bodes well with big bold yellow gold which is also back on trend," adds Barringer.



Designers are showering an incredible amount of love on green stones. If you are looking for a shot of green or much more, look to ITA, Retrouvai, State Property, Kavant & Sharart, Marla Aaron, Buddha Mama, Mateo, Jade Russo, Future Fortune, Hirotaka, Lizzie Mandler, Bibi van der Velden, Howl, Anita Ko, Jemma Wynne, Emily P. Wheeler, Sorellina, Yvonne Léon, Jacqui Aiche, — all have cool designs that speak to the power of green.

Neon quality

Sarah Hendler, for instance, has devoutly used peridot since the start of her collections. “I love peridot. The green is so unique. It can have this fun almost neon quality to play with next to yellow gold and all different enamel colors, emerald pave and diamonds,” says Hendler, whose designs are inspired by a nod to the past, with cuts and styles now reinterpreted for a client who loves vintage but with a modern twist. “I think for the bold color choice and price point, it has always fitted in with what I design.” Her cuff and bangle are under \$2900, making them ideal for self-purchase. “The price reflects on the 18k gold, size of peridots and embellishment of diamond pave or other elements,” she adds.

Orly Eisbart, the designer behind the brand Orly Marcel, has a penchant for bold greens. Her colorful pieces reference spiritual sources of inspiration such as the Mandala. Hoops, pendants and rings embellished with gems or inlay feature malachite, green turquoise and emerald in prices from upwards of \$2,600 to below \$6,000, with the green stones mostly paired alongside blue hues.

Green is taking center stage right now, reiterates Rosena Sammi, founder and CEO of The Jewelry Edit. “The beauty of green is that it embodies a chic sophistication, but also a reflection of harmony and nature. It caters to so many different clients’ styles and needs and presents something bold to add into their jewelry wardrobe.”

Sammi has re-opened her pop-up location at 485 Park Avenue in New York City, and will retail through the holidays. Malachite, with its properties around

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healing and transformation, has resonated with The Jewelry Edit’s clients this season, and it was the gemstone used in their strongest selling pendant by Lindsay Price. “We have also seen a dramatic increase in clients asking about tsavorite and peridot. It’s a stone that has come onto clients’ radars and they are actively seeking it out. We are launching Ileana Makri this holiday season, which will include some tsavorite pieces,” informs Sammi.

She is seeing green move at all price points, both in semi-precious and precious jewelry. “It’s definitely something we zeroed in on last season to expand and explore.” Jennie Kwon’s emerald jewels, whether alone or contrasted with diamonds and sapphires, continue to be an easy way for Sammi’s clients to effortlessly work in pops of color into their everyday jewelry. “Jennie is one of our go-to designers for younger clients looking for color with something delicate, modern and non-traditional,” points out the founder of The Jewelry Edit.

She has sold a number of rings by Alice Cicolini in tsavorite and malachite.

“This color combination has been our most popular. The two greens are a complimentary, but striking pairing.” Jade earrings by Ten Thousand Things always command attention. “Their designs and the masterful cut of the jade, create what I call a green-goddess look!” The love for green jewelry has Sammi curating a New Zealand edit launching this month. “It has a focus on Pounamu (New Zealand Jade).” In the pipeline is an exclusive collaboration with Fuli Gemstones and their peridot mine. “So, there’s a lot of green in our future curations!” adds Sammi.



Lebanese brands L’Ateir Nawbar, Nada Ghazal, both new to the US market, have green elements in their offerings guaranteed to pique buyers’ interest. Sisters Tania and Dima Nawbar, love to “design pieces that give strength, hope and optimism” to the wearers. For the Psychedelia collection referencing a make-believe flower, they picked “vibrant stones, as it’s is part of our DNA.” The line is designed in various stones, including pink coral and malachite carved that blossom into earrings, rings, and pendants. Inspired by atoms, their Atoms collection relies on spherical compositions for the design and features hand-painted green enamel stones framed with 18k yellow gold and white diamonds.

Designer Nada Ghazal’s homage to her beloved city Beirut has transpired into the My Muse collection. “I have used pink sapphire and tsavorite gems to represent flowers, which fill our streets,” she says. Doors Of Opportunity, a new line handmade in her Beirut atelier, has pendants and rings inspired by the city’s doors and arches. She uses tsavorites to outline the arches and butterflies in muted 18k yellow gold; the smaller pendants hover in the range of \$4,000 and small arch rings are under \$3,000, while the bigger and heavier door pendants with champagne diamonds and tsavorites are priced upwards of \$35,000.

“We work with wonderful stores such as Twist, Greenwich St. Jewelers, The Conservatory, August, Aleph Gallery, Szor and Meridian Jewelers. As our collections have a wide variety of pieces, the selection at each retailer varies of course, based on the customers,” concludes Ghazal.