

NIRAV MODI

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Models wearing Nirav
Modi high jewellery

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Nirav Modi is one of
the first Indian jewellers
to move away from
traditional designs



AWAY WITH DIAMONDS

ALL THAT GLITTERS, FROM INDIA TO THE WORLD



At 45, Nirav Modi is a big success story. Within the span of six years, his namesake brand has staked its claim in the diamond high jewellery scene, both locally and internationally. What started out as a simple earring design for a friend became a luxury brand, with stores in the high streets of New Delhi, Mumbai, New York, Hong Kong, Macau, and London. By 2020, the plan is for the brand to have 30 more boutiques in a dozen countries.

While the world was reeling in the 2009 recession and diamond prices were in a slump, Modi aggressively bought many substantial pieces. Call it luck or foresightedness, his gamble paid off. But unlike others who may have simply resold the stones, Modi took to setting them in stunning designs. “Growing up in a family of diamond manufacturers, my entire childhood was surrounded by precious gems,” he shares. “I was fascinated with rare diamonds. I spent a lot of time with jewellery craftsmen, which eventually inspired me to create one-of-a-kind designs and strive for excellence.”

One of his important pieces is the *Golconda* necklace that graced the cover page of *Christie’s 2010 Catalogue* — a first for an Indian jeweller. The necklace is embedded with a rare 12.29ct Golconda diamond, suspended on a lattice of trademarked Airacut diamonds and pink Argyle diamonds. With this as a phenomenal start, Nirav Modi — the brand — was born.

Born to a *diamantaire* father and interior designer mother, Modi was exposed to jewellery and art at an early age. This is evident in the brand’s philosophy, aesthetics, and, of course, jewels. “In each of our jewels you will find an element of art in the setting of the diamond. For instance, the Lotus Collection was inspired by Claude Monet’s masterpiece, the *Water Lilies*,” says Modi.

When asked about his manufacturing process, Modi explains: “It takes



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approximately 550 hours to manufacture a Rolls Royce, while it takes us 300 hours to craft a fine pendant and 2,000 hours to create a grand necklace.” High jewels coming out of his workshop are not just pretty designs studded in diamonds, but made special with patented cuts, like *Ainra*, *Mughal*, *Jasmine*, and *Endless*. Often, they bear complicated mechanisms, such as the clever joining of more than 90 moving parts in the *Embrace* bangles.

One of the first Indian jewellers to move away from traditional designs, Modi strives to have minimal visible metal in his pieces. In the *Ainra* cut, the links consist of two crescent shaped diamonds fastened together, and many of them put together form chains or lattices. “With barely any metal visible, the diamonds appear to be floating, and weaving diamonds together ensures that each jewel is very light and comfortable for the wearer.”

The *Endless* cut, one of Modi’s specialised cuts, makes for bespoke pieces. “I wanted to create a ring with no visible metal, but cutting out a single uninterrupted ring of diamonds from a larger chunk is not feasible for obvious reasons.” His solution? The *Endless* cut, which creates a seamless halo of diamonds with calibrated curves to create a continuous, ‘endless’ diamond ring effect. “Due to the nature of the cut and the ring, each diamond has to be sized, measured, and calibrated to the wearer’s finger,” explains Modi.

With the recent spree of openings of new stores and exhibitions, the world got to see more high-value pieces from the brand. The *Diamond Maharani* necklace greeted the elite guests in New York, the *Water Lily* necklace made its debut at the Biennale des Antiquaires in Paris, and the *Emerald Maharani* necklace was first exhibited at their 5th anniversary celebrations.



THE GOLCONDA NECKLACE GRACED THE COVER OF CHRISTIE'S 2010 CATALOGUE

With a focus on bridal jewellery overseas, Modi has extended its signature engagement ring lines, including *Tulipe*, *Signature Solitaires*, *Ribbon*, and *Celestial*. “We are soon launching a digital campaign that celebrates solitaire engagement rings with the simple message: ‘Say Yes to Love Everyday’.” With this philosophy in mind, he said the bride should always choose jewels that she can wear often. “The engagement ring is increasingly becoming a part of a bride’s first ever trousseau jewel.”

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP
Emerald drop necklace
Lotus necklace
Golconda necklace