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STYLE

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*Tiffany & Co.*

## TIFFANY & CO. IS NEW YORK CITY TO A “T”

The Tiffany & Co. brand dates back 178 years, to Charles Lewis Tiffany, the Connecticut-born son of a prosperous textile manufacturer. At 25, he and his then-partner, John B. Young, used money borrowed from Tiffany’s father to start a stationery and fancy goods store in New York.



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- 1 TIFFANY T SMILE PENDANTS
  - 2 TIFFANY T BRACELETS
  - 3 TIFFANY T SQUARE RINGS
  - 4 TIFFANY T SQUARE BRACELETS
  - 5 TIFFANY T BAND RINGS & TIFFANY T WIRE RING
  - 6 TIFFANY T WIRE HOOP EARRINGS
  - 7 TIFFANY T SQUARE BRACELET, CUT-OUT CUFF & LARGE CHAIN BRACELET

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The store imported porcelains and curiosities, as well as French accessories. Eventually, the fall of Louis Philippe's regime in France meant a windfall of diamonds as aristocrats exchanged them for cash. Tiffany seized the opportunity to bring major gems to the United States and caused a sensation.

His ability to understand the public taste was key to his success. In 1858, when the historic Atlantic telegraph cable was being laid, Tiffany had the foresight to purchase 20 miles of extra cable and marry four-inch lengths of it with brass that was incorporated into souvenir paperweights, canes, umbrella handles and watch charms.

"Tiffany has always been a company of great innovators, great dreamers who are constantly pushing the boundaries of what's possible with design," said Francesca Amfitheatrof, Design Director of Tiffany & Co. "This frame of mind links directly back to the company's founder, Charles Lewis Tiffany, who was an entrepreneur long before anyone even knew what that term meant. He was a firebrand, a risk-taker, someone who constantly did things no one else had the courage to try. At Tiffany, we carry forward that spirit of risk and vision. We're unfettered by historical styles or schools of design, rather we create with a freedom to make – and break – our own rules."

In the 1850s, Tiffany & Co. bought the silversmith operations of New York's John C. Moore and was thereby well-positioned to cater to Victorian society's fresh appetite for silver goods. The ability to both meet and set trends has been a hallmark of the Tiffany company. The use of coloured gemstones in fine jewelry, for example, was first popularized by Tiffany, and after a gemologist called George Frederick Kunz sold the company a remarkable tourmaline, Charles Tiffany hired him to search the world for its finest gems.

When Tiffany bought one of the largest diamonds ever found – a 287.42 carat stone – he had it cut into a cushion-shaped brilliant with 82 facets and a distinctive sparkle. Tiffany & Co. soon became known as a jeweler where diamonds are cut for brilliance, rather than size.

They remain an important element in Tiffany's collections. Gold, silver and other precious gems also play a part in Amfitheatrof's designs. The Tiffany "T" collection was her debut collection for Tiffany & Co.

"You have very delicate pieces that work well when they're mixed together with big, sculptural cuffs and softer chains. The collection is offered in 18 karat gold – rose, yellow and white – and cool sterling silver, which has such a great, crisp feeling to it. For people who want to wear precious stones in a really modern way, there are a number of diamond pieces that are inspired by sketches from the 1920s that I found in the Tiffany archives."

Earlier this year, she introduced some popular new pieces.

"T" pays homage to the Tiffany name, but it also has a verticality and angularity that I associate with the energy and intensity of New York. Tiffany T is sculptural and bold and very closely linked to the architecture of this city," she says. "There is a lot of New York in Tiffany T, and by that I mean the relentless movement, optimism and creativity you find on these streets. This is a place of courage and reinvention that constantly sparks creativity. Honestly, I can't think of a more exciting place I could possibly be."