

# Fashion Trends

## Spring's Femininity Demands Fine Jewelry's Finishing Touches

(NAPSA)—The international fashion community has spoken and one trend is clear—women are looking decidedly feminine and attractive for spring 2006. Gone are the costume-like layers, jangling accessories, and over-the-top prints of last year.

This year, colorful gemstones and sparkling diamonds are a winning bet in jewelry, says the Gemological Institute of America (GIA). This prestigious nonprofit education and research institution teaches the public and the jewelry industry about diamonds, gemstones and jewelry design. It even grants business degrees in jewelry.

The Bohemian looks favored by celebrities are morphing into sleek, ladylike silhouettes for spring, led by the new prominence of the dress. The seasonal colors are soft and flattering—delicate pastels and neutrals. Creating a more dramatic turn are graphic black-and-white patterns. Most often, the punctuation of an outfit comes from accessories with floral motifs or in bright colors.

For all of these ladylike looks, the finishing touch of fine jewelry is a must.

Flirtatious and flattering, earrings remain fairly long and dangling, sparkling with faceted gemstone drops. Rings and bracelets are wide and bold, cocktail rings continue their comeback and cuffs make a reappearance. The newest necklaces go in several directions—very long in length, layered with several strands or just resting on the collarbone.



**Pictured is a pair of long earrings, featuring graduated tones of yellow sapphires, ending in a pearl drop. Designed by Mark Patterson.**

In spring collections, many designers have chosen neutral colorations—nude palettes and muted earth tones. With that new chiffon blouse with ruffled or lace trim, choose a delicate necklace with a centerpiece of pastel-colored gemstones such as pink tourmaline, blue chalcedony, peridot, citrine or morganite.

What would spring be without flowers? GIA says that jewelry designers are showing earrings and rings blooming with tiny

carved flowers of coral, turquoise and mother-of-pearl or are creating pendants of crystal flowers with diamond centers worn on silk cords.

Continuing to be a favorite look of fashionable women are necklaces of gemstone beads. These colorful beads are cut in a variety of ways: round, oval, square, faceted or free-form shapes. For the ultimate in versatility, GIA's gemstone experts advise choosing a necklace mixing several different colors, such as the spring-like combination of citrine/peridot/amethyst.

At the other end of the color spectrum is the dramatic combination of black and white, from graphic zebra stripes to classic checkerboards. Here, designers are showing earrings of white South Sea pearls with black Tahitian pearls—one color on each ear—or as bold drops with the pearl colors reversed. Other options include black onyx, hematite, ebony, white agate, mother-of-pearl, crystal or black and white enamel.

To learn more about colored gems—as well as the ever-popular diamonds—go to the GIA Web site for a wealth of gem and jewelry information. There are two separate tutorials on the Web site, one for diamonds and one for gemstones. Both sites can be accessed from GIA's home page.

Visit GIA at [www.gia.edu](http://www.gia.edu) or call (800) 421-7250 for more information on gems and jewelry, as well as for GIA Education and Laboratory services.