

Chocolate Chic

New Fashions Favor Cocoa-Colored Gems

(NAPSA)—Chocolate has found its way to the necks, arms, hands, and bodices of fashion runway models.

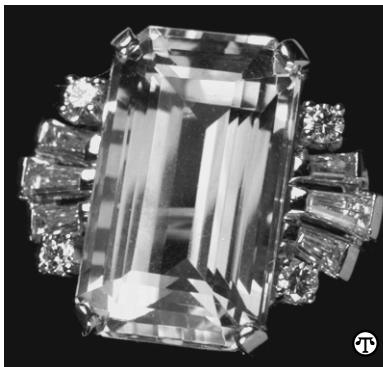
According to experts at the Gemological Institute of America (GIA), educator to the global gem and jewelry industry, gemstones with warm, brown tones are heating up. Drones of fashionistas are dipping into this latest cocoa-colored fashion trend.

The world's most influential designers in couture apparel and jewelry agree. Many have built their fall fashion menus around shades of brown—from the most delicate caramels and mochas to the darkest chocolates and coffees.

The latest fashion shows in Paris echo the earthy color movement. John Galliano at Christian Dior sent out a crocodile coat with matching hat and lace-up boots in deep brown. Missoni mixed it up with an oversized, abstract floral print in black, white and shades of brown.

In jewelry, the selection of chocolate-colored stones is vast, and gemstone experts point out a number of choices.

For the ultimate in russet glamour, think diamonds. Brown diamonds. There are plenty on earth, says GIA, creator of the International Diamond Grading System and the Four Cs of diamonds. A lightly tinted brown dia-



This brown topaz ring is an example of the brownish shades favored by designers for fall jewelry.

mond, often marketed as a “champagne” diamond, or a darker “cognac” diamond, can accentuate fall’s warm-toned flavors.

The Institute, which grades many of the world’s diamonds, advises to always ask for a GIA Diamond Grading Report whenever purchasing any diamond.

Other brown and golden-colored gems that can heat up your fall wardrobe include sunstone, andalusite, citrine, tiger’s-eye and amber. Fire opal is also a hot new front-runner in jewelry designs. Smoky quartz is sizzling too. Bold rings and pendants made of rough-cut crystals of quartz with gold and black needle-like inclusions are some of the most loved.

Bronze-colored pearls can’t be left out either. From large Tahitians to baroque (asymmetrical) freshwaters, natural- and treated-color pearls come in a range of hues that complement sophisticated fall gem flavors.

The key to wearing the new browns in jewelry is to go for contrast: cognac diamonds juxtaposed with colorless diamonds; bronze pearls alternating with white pearls; and tiger’s-eye set in silver, just to name a few possibilities.

Other gems can create the same look, according to gem experts. Cat’s-eye, topaz, and brown zircon, and agate, even lesser-known gems like chrysoberyl and dravite, all provide the brownish shades favored by designers for jewelry.

The best fashion advice? It may be to invest in some of the chocolate fashions of the times and to add to your wardrobe the season’s must-have jewelry additions in the tastes of chocolate.

For more information about gemstones and jewelry, GIA’s Gem Laboratory or education opportunities in these fields, visit www.gia.edu or call 800-421-7250. You can also learn about the important factors that affect gemstone values, along with the history, lore and care of 20 popular gemstones at the “How to Buy a Gemstone in 7 Simplified Steps” Web site tutorial.