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GRAZIA

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GIRL IN THE GREEN EMERALD

Romantic, unique and an investment is how 'Emerald Lady' Gargi Rathí describes the precious stone

Words NAMRATA KEDAR

Have you experienced love at first sight? The release of endorphins and the rush of dopamine when you see something that makes your stomach flip? For most, this is a feeling associated with a significant other. For Gargi Rathí, founder, House of Meraki, a store in London that specialises in emerald jewellery, it was when she saw Zambian emeralds for the very first time glinting under the African sun. "I grew up between London and Lusaka, and my first memory of gems dates back to visiting the local Zambian Tuesday market with my mother," she says. "Amidst the fruit and vegetable vendors present were emerald miners on the side of the street that stole the show. Those incredible green stones glistening and beaming caught my attention. At the time people knew little about Zambian emeralds."

The magnificent green stones seemed to have captivated Rathí from an early age, as did her allure for jewellery. "My family has been one of the largest collectors of fine jewellery, but even back then, my favourite piece was a heart shaped Columbian emerald ring, that was eventually passed down to me. I have worn it daily since I was 18."

Rathí's reputation (or should we say obsession?) precedes her. She is famed as the 'Emerald Lady' across London. "There is just something incredibly fascinating about emeralds," she exclaims. "Their raw beauty and the exceptionally deep green hue is soothing to the eyes. Each emerald is unique and that fascinated me to bring 'Meraki emeralds' to a woman's everyday life."

'Meraki emeralds' are the exquisite gems that Rathí uses to craft jewellery for her brand House of Meraki. Conceived three years ago, the brand started with specialising in bespoke emerald creations commissioned by private clients dotted around the world. "A large part of this practice is possible thanks to working with responsible companies like Gemfields. My association with them has helped me ensure that I work with not just the finest emeralds in the world, but also ones that are ethically and responsibly sourced. We pride ourselves in complete transparency, disclosing the chain of custody for every

emerald we sell." Rathí recently launched a prêt line to "make emeralds accessible at an affordable price point."

The jewellery is designed with the emerald in central focus. "The jewellery we design is modern and minimalistic in silhouettes with a European sensibility. I use emeralds in different shapes, sizes and shades to create distinguished pieces. The faceted cuts reflect the many dimensions of a woman's personality. My latest collection is inspired by Victoria Falls in Zambia and the bluish-green landscape. Each piece dares to go beyond conventional design. Complemented with diamonds and pearls, all our jewellery is set in 18 carat gold or platinum."

With a presence in South East Asia, Europe and the United States, The House of Meraki has sights set on the Middle East. "I think for us, it will always be about emeralds. We specialise in that, and that's why our clients appreciate us. We are the best at working with emeralds." ■

Gargi Rathí is known as 'Emerald Lady' for her penchant for emeralds

