

ention the words crystal, chakra and jewellery in the same sentence, and images of silver-set turquoise dreamcatchers or crude pendants bought from a stall at Glastonbury come to mind. However, a fresh generation of jewellers is harnessing the talismanic and therapeutic power of stones – and this new age of crystals is as much about beautiful design as it is about healing.

"I grew up with crystals," New York-based jewellery designer Paige Novick says. "My mother was an early pioneer of holistic practices when they weren't really known." Novick's new collection, Powerful Pretty Things, recently launched at Browns, combines her knowledge of healing gemstones with contemporary design. "Crystals never felt luxurious before. I wanted to use them in an elevated and sophisticated way." She produces guides to encourage clients towards the gems they should focus on wearing. For example, to someone wanting to boost their intuition and creative powers, she might recommend the colour green in an aventurine ring, or a single emerald earring.

Can she swear that it helps? "No," she answers, "I can't, but it certainly helps to tap into a particular feeling, which can propel change and make us feel better about ourselves."

Fine-jewellery houses, too, are gravitating towards crystal medicine. Chopard's co-president Caroline Scheufele suggests wearing amethyst during the party season (the Romans believed it would protect against over-indulgence), or her rose-quartz drop earrings if you're looking for love. Chaumet's recent Liens Séduction fashions flowers in turquoise for success, malachite for luck and lapis lazuli on watch dials for power and vision. For its 50th-anniversary Ritratto collection, Pomellato dug deep into the earth for semiprecious stones such as tiger's eye and malachite in rings with evocative-sounding names such as Tea in the Sahara and Magic Ginger.

Keen to have my own crystal reading, I visited the LA showroom of ex-wardrobe stylist and costume designer Azalea Lee. Her celestial downtown showroom, Place 8 Healing, feels like a Swiss sanatorium mixed with a contemporary gallery displaying jewellery and crystals as art objects. Over the course of two hours she lays 100 crystals on and around me while prompting me to scroll back to significant moments. "I act as a tour guide to give better clarity in your life," she explains.

As for the piece of rock you go home with, it turns out the crystal must choose you. "I've had crystals shout at me loudly, they're so keen to get to a person," giggles Lee. Eventually a blue frosted piece of anhydrite, commonly known as angelite, volunteers to travel to London with me, and I leave with strict instructions. "You need to see it every day," I'm told. "Sit with it, preferably while meditating, and have it by your keyboard." It's not in front of me as I type this – however, the shiny hunk of black tourmaline that also did a shout out is here. "I've never met a person who didn't need black tourmaline," confides Lee. "It takes all the shit and turns it into positive compost."

Lee's jewellery is tailored to life's tricky moments. Rivertumbled black tourmaline set into a ring can be worn like a shield when tackling emails, she says, while an arrow-shaped sapphire, pointing inwards, prompts the mind to listen to the heart. For a disconnected millennial addicted to digital devices she prescribes haematite, with its vibrational connection to Mother Earth. There's no scientific way to measure results, only the testimonies of people whose life trajectories have changed for the better. Am I one of them? I'll keep you posted.



For compassion:
lapis and diamond
ring, \$5,300, Venyx.
For prosperity and
teellbeing: gold and
peridot carrings,
\$21,550, Paige
Novick, at Brotens.
For enthusiasm:
chalcedony
carrings, \$500,
Nush Gems. To aid
intuition: gold and
malachite bangle,
\$5,600, Piaget

