

HOLIDAY GIFTS

Once Again, Buying Diamonds Is Cool

NewsUSA

(NU) - It's cool to buy diamonds again.

Well, at least those that have been "sustainably mined."

With holiday jewelry shopping now in high gear, those two words alone are likely to provide a tremendous sense of relief – the pop-culture equivalent of "Mad Men" re-upping in perpetuity – for anyone who's been concerned about mining's impact on local habitats. Indeed, these days Rio Tinto, one of the world's major diamond producers, for example, is as likely to be lauded for its enviro creds as it is the incredibly gorgeous natural color diamonds produced by its Argyle Mine in Western Australia.

"We appreciate that people want to know that the jewelry they buy has been mined responsibly and ethically," Rebecca Foerster, Rio Tinto Diamonds' U.S. vice president, said last year on becoming the only miner to be certified by the Responsible Jewellery Council for initiatives that include employing indigenous community members to cultivate seeds of native plants for re-vegetation.

Here's what's also fueling the very hot Argyle diamonds trend:

- **There's nothing ho-hum about them.** Though this may be one of the prime times for proposing, anyone who still thinks engagement rings are the only kind women want on their fingers is stuck in a time warp. So know that for every one of those natural color diamonds produced through just the right confluence of the elements and the environment – we're talking soft, neutral shades like champagne, cognac, silver and gray – it's estimated that there are



Rough champagne diamonds from the Argyle mine.

10,000 white diamonds. What woman wouldn't want something unique?

- **Brown is the new black.** From a purely fashion point of view – and this applies to Argyle diamonds set in giftable rings, bracelets, earrings, etc. – the champagne stones, especially (which get their distinctive hue from nitrogen atoms present at their formation), work well with all the bright-colored clothes the fashion mags have decreed women should be wearing right now. And guess what? Those fashion plates, especially, don't think of themselves as ordinary.

Or, as jewelry and style expert Michael O'Connor puts it: "It's not just that people want to feel good about having made environmentally friendly choices. They also want things that are unusual and different from what their friends have, and these are diamonds with a story."

- **The price is right.** Undoubtedly, cost wasn't a factor in model Heidi Klum's decision to don brown Argyle diamond earrings and ring for an Oscars-related event. But for the rest of us, it's nice to know that Argyle diamonds are actually affordable.

Learn more at www.diamondswithastory.com.