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Natasha Grasso Jewelry in Moraga

By Sophie Braccini



A display of a few of Natasha Grasso's jewelry pieces Photo Sophie Braccini

creative horseshoe series. Prices range from \$65 to \$1,000, depending on type of metal, length and stones used. One of her best-selling creations is the love-knot series available as a necklace, earrings or a bracelet, in silver, yellow and rose gold. "It's been a very successful design," she says. "We sell it as bridal gifts, as birthday presents, and in a cufflink version for men."

The idea behind Grasso's collections is for the pieces to look great with blue jeans or an evening dress. "These are not disposable pieces," says the jeweler, "but they are still affordable and will enhance your existing collection."

Grasso is a young entrepreneur, but is no novice. An interior designer by training, she worked for years in business development for Ethan Allen, learning the ropes of marketing and branding. But although that job was interesting, it did not fulfill her creative side. "I have a weakness for shoes, bags and jewelry," she says. "I decided to try jewelry making and started by learning welding." She remembers the first welding class she went to: "When I came out, I told my husband I wanted to get my own torch. I was hooked."

The foundation of her creation is metalsmithing. "I wanted stylish pieces that I could mix with some fine jewelry pieces my husband gave me, and would not make my other jewelry look fake," she says. She started selling pieces from what she was wearing. "That was a little embarrassing," she says with a smile, "so I opened the Etsy site I could refer people to." She quickly started selling all over the world. "I would be working all day at Ethan Allen, then at night I would be making jewelry on my kitchen table," she remembers. The stress level became quite high, but the income from the jewelry was catching up with that of her regular job, so Grasso decided to take a plunge and start a company.

She has now been in business for eight years, expanding online, in upscale boutiques, resorts, as well as museums. "I am at the Getty," she says, "I do special exhibitions at the De Young, we do an exclusive auction at the Academy of Science Museum."

Grasso says her challenge is that she wants her jewelry to be made in this country, while staying competitive. She is the one creating all the collections, four times a year, by hand. She then works with a network of artisan stay-at-home mothers living in the United States who hand-make each piece sold. "One of my biggest challenges as a small business is to maintain the integrity behind the business and still make money," she says.

What gave Natasha Grasso the desire to open a shop in Moraga? The young woman is a metal welder, an artist and a businesswoman. A success on Etsy, Instagram, and upscale boutiques and museums around the country, Grasso's creations have been featured in magazines including People. The young Orinda resident is also an archetypal Lamorindan, a creative go-getter who focuses on combining harmonious family life with successful enterprising. She recently moved her first retail shop from Burlingame to Moraga to engage with her clients locally.

Grasso exhibits a wide variety of creations in her Rheem Shopping Center store, next to Tangelo. The intimate space stocks long and short necklaces in silver and gold with pyrite, fresh water pearls, quartz interlaced with black tourmaline, earrings, bracelets, pendants from the most simple gold drop to ancient coins or keys, infinity knots, and a

The business owner wanted to open her own store to build a more direct rapport with her clientele. "It is important for me to engage with the people who wear my jewelry; it helps me evolve the line so it stays relevant to them," she says. "For a small business owner, it is also important to give a face to the business, since most of my revenue is wholesale."

The fact that her new baby daughter, now 18 months old, attends Child Day School next to the store is no doubt a big reason why Grasso chose that space. The boutique is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. For information, visit

For information, visit natashagrasso.com.

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