

## 7 Trends to Watch in 2016

January 04, 2016

Source: National Jeweler

New York--It's going to be an exciting year in jewelry design.

Trends have been taking new and innovative turns, and now spread across the country faster than ever, as social media and the Internet allow everyone to see and adapt to them in a short period of time. Because of this, retailers need to adapt to the trends more quickly or even be out ahead of them, said Amanda Gizzi, director of public relations and special events at Jewelers of America.

Here are the trends that the experts think will be popping up, and staying put, in the fine jewelry market in 2016.

1. Stackables/layering. This trend isn't going anywhere, especially for pieces that are personalized or allow for the sentimental. In jewelry, this includes layering delicate necklaces together as well as stacking rings and bracelets.

"It's really important (for retailers) to have and buy these pieces to drive in the younger generation," Gizzi said. "It's a buy-one-today, add-one-tomorrow mentality."

2. Mixed metal. As bridal trends continue to evolve to suit today's millennial couples, mixed metals have been and will continue to be a top trend, especially when it comes to rose gold mixing with white gold and platinum.

"The juxtaposition of the warm rose against cool platinum makes for a unique and beautiful setting, and there are so many different ways in which you can display the

accent, from contrasting prongs to a halo," Amanda Tropila, the former public relations manager at the Platinum Guild International (PGI-USA), said in an interview conducted in early December.

3. Open styles. One of the most prevalent variations on this trend is openwork jewelry. This is an ongoing trend likely influenced by high precious metal prices.

Openwork cuffs are going to get a little bigger and spread out to keep metal weight down, "letting more skin show through," Gizzi said. She also noted that these types of pieces likely will begin to include fewer opaque stones, as the style moves toward the use of more translucent or transparent gems.

Variations on the trend also can include rings and bracelets that wrap around the finger or wrist without meeting in the middle, and collars that remain open in the front of the neck, not completing the circle.

4. Y necklaces. This classic shape already began its comeback in 2015, and Helena Krodel, senior vice president of creative and brand at TrueFacet, said she expects Y necklaces to continue their resurgence in 2016, as fashion brands such as Chloe continued to use the style on the runways in their most recent fashion shows.

5. Black and white. This will be especially prevalent given the rising popularity of blackened metals, Gizzi said. Brands like David Yurman, Lagos and Armenta all unveiled lines featuring blackened metals for fall/winter collections and many

more are expected to follow in 2015.

Gizzi said that she thinks this trend has a lot to do with punk influences and the impact of rock-and-roll, as well as the popularity of tribal-inspired pieces and traditional Mexican silver jewelry.

6. Unique stones. Also speaking to today's younger consumers are unique gemstone shapes or cuts, both in colored stones and diamonds.

"Uniquely shaped stones, as well as colored stones, are still popular as the millennial bride looks to make a statement and stand out from the rest," Tropila said. "Pears and marquise are being set east-west or just slightly askew to give it extra personalization."

Heart-shaped stones also are gaining traction as celebrities such as Lady Gaga and Iggy Azalea bring them to light.

7. Fanciful. While the use of animals, wings, and feathers are nothing new in fine jewelry, they will "have some freshness for 2016," Gizzi said.

They're not only playing on the fanciful, fantastical imagery, but they're also pulling from symbols of empowerment, such as the use of wings. The added meaning behind these pieces can make the jewelry extra special for a consumer.

"Jewelry that pulls on people's emotions will always have a place for customers."