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Sun January 23, 2005



Green with Envy: Tulsa University grad's jewelry makes sparkling debut

By Linda Miller
Fashion Editor

If timing is everything, as so often has been said, then Kirsten Goede's launch of her jewelry collection may be split-second perfect.

With accessories often overshadowing clothing these days, the fashion climate seems poised for another eye-catching crystal necklace or pair of earrings.

Women are ready, too.

One customer called Goede, asking for business cards because she got so many compliments on her bracelet and was tired of writing down the information.

"It's just one of those magical kind of accessories," Goede said. "If I wasn't getting that kind of reaction, I wouldn't be doing this."

And it's not something she just jumped into.

Goede, who grew up in St. Louis but graduated from Tulsa University, is a freelance graphic designer in Chicago. She started making jewelry as a hobby four or five years ago.

Then one weekend, she tagged along on a business trip to New York City with best friend Kelly O'Malley, her TU sorority sister. While O'Malley worked, Goede went to the bead district and walked away with some unusually shaped blue and green crystals.

She strung them into a bracelet for herself, and other women noticed.

"People loved these bracelets," she said. "I would get stopped in Jamba Juice and in Field's. I thought maybe I should make these."

O'Malley, who works for a public relations firm in St. Louis, offered to help with marketing and public relations.

Since the launch of Objets d'Envy in October, the jewelry has been featured in a Chicago newspaper and interest among celebrities and fashion magazines has been piqued. Goede is aware of the possible demand that can come with a "celebrity spotting" or magazine mention.

She's ready for it.

"I do have a plan, which I think is brilliant," she said. "I have friends who would like to be stay-at-home moms, and I would love to get them part-time work. I think that would be fabulous."

For now, Goede creates each piece, usually in the evening after she's completed her graphic design work.

"Making jewelry or making something can be soothing at the end of the day," she said.

Though she makes matching necklaces and colorful crystal ball earrings with gold-filled wire, most of the attention has been on Goede's bracelets, which sell for \$180.

"The bracelets are just so incredibly fun to wear. ... They're just so sparkly, so eye-catching," she said. "You can't help but look at them."

What sets them apart is that they're Swarovski crystals, 8 millimeters in size, and in the juiciest of colors.

"It's not a delicate bracelet by any means. You're going to make a statement by wearing it," she said.

The size and the shape of the beads is not common, and they can be difficult to find. Not all importers carry all the colors either, which discourages knockoffs.

Goede offers 10 colors, the newest being Petal, a rosy pink perfect for Valentine's Day. Other shades include Champagne, Bordeaux, Violet, Cerulean, Frost (one bride bought five bracelets in this color for her bridesmaids), Smoke, Grass, Clementine and Lemonade.

Part of the appeal is that the bracelets will go with everything in a woman's closet, from jeans and boots to a little black dress to a ball gown.

"I like casual clothes and a dressy accessory," Goede said.

The jewelry isn't available in Oklahoma yet, but it can be purchased online at www.objetsdenvy.com.

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