

# India Is The Most Preferred Destination For US-based Diamond Jewellery Retailers

by REGAN LUIS



Customised bridal solitaire rings by Asian Star.

*The USA has long been the mainstay of the Indian gem and jewellery industry. It remained India's top export destination through 2021, accounting for \$12.32 billion of Indian exports in January-September 2021. Priyanshu Shah, Director, Asian Star Co. Ltd., shares his perspective on the US market as the head of one of the country's top exporting firms.*



*Priyanshu Shah, Executive Director, Asian Star Co. Ltd.*

### **What is your outlook for diamond and gemstone jewellery sales in the US this year?**

The first half of 2021 has been extremely good for diamond jewellery sales in the US. In fact, some would say that business was better than the first half of 2019.

One of the reasons for this buoyancy is the growth in consumer spending due to global stimulus and upbeat stock markets. Also, post pandemic, the share of consumer spend on luxury is constrained due to restricted leisure travel, low-key weddings and events, and hence a large chunk of the discretionary spend goes to jewellery purchase.

For Indian jewellery manufacturers, this situation has been to our advantage as India has now become the most preferred destination for diamond studded jewellery for the US retailers in the post-pandemic period. The outlook remains positive for the oncoming holiday season.



*Diamond-studded customised bridal composite rings by Asian Star.*

**Are there any particular categories or price points that have done well or be at least sustainable over the next 6 months?**

Customised bridals have done very well. There is a growing trend where brides are increasingly seeking designs with a personal touch. The bridal ring is no longer just about love and commitment, but also about wearing a ring that tells your story.

Another category showing remarkable potential is men's jewellery. Over the years, Cuban bracelets, necklaces, and pendants have been made popular by rap artists and this trend has been picking up in recent times.



*Men's Cuban bracelet in rose gold by Asian Star.*

**Are there any regions in the US market (Eastern Seaboard, Midwest, South, West) that are performing better than others?**

Across the US, all 50 states saw a jump in consumer spending.

**Any particular materials that are doing well there?**

Nothing in particular, but diamond jewellery demand has definitely picked up in the post-pandemic period.

**How is the US bridal jewellery segment performing?**

Extremely well, especially in the case of customised bridals.

**What are the popular diamond categories (colour, cut, clarity, carat) for engagement and wedding rings?**

In the US, it ranges between GH/SI to GH/I1.

**Are brides opting for centre stones other than diamonds?**

Yes, a few are opting for lab-grown diamonds. This could be due to price sensitivity, especially with the diamond prices rising in the last few months.



*Men's Cuban necklace, channel-set with baguette diamonds, by Asian Star.*

### **What are the most favoured price points through 2021?**

For retail, it falls in the range of \$499 to \$4,999.

### **What are the occasions driving jewellery demand – serious or relationship-type jewellery, or the casual, more self-purchase kind?**

Nearly one-third of women in the US buy diamond jewellery for themselves. Post pandemic, though, the strongest driver of demand for diamond purchases centres around romance and commitment. Diamond sales are strong, with bridal being the primary driver for consumer demand.