



Passion for Fashion

Certain things are inevitable – like death, taxes and woman’s need to accessorize. As the single biggest merchandise category for most gift stores today, fashion accessories provide inexpensive ways for consumers to show their individualism and personality, while at the same time updating their wardrobe.

“I think that we’ll be amazed by how this trend continues to grow and what kind of products we’ll see in the area of fashion accessories,” says Elly Preston, designer of her namesake company, which specializes in handcrafted accessories. “People are so creative and there’s a real strong commitment of getting away from anything that’s artificial.”

Indeed, many of today’s most popular fashion accessories are drawn from nature; Preston’s designs include freshwater pearls, leather and shells to showcase the jewelry’s natural beauty. Bamboo Trading Company offers beautiful handmade pieces that are created by Mayan women from Guatemala and are completely environmentally friendly. But the trends and styles are as diverse as the personalities – and the moods – of the women who wear them.

From mixed metals and antique-inspired fabrications to innovative designs incorporating runway trends or taking a cue from Hollywood celebrities, today’s fashion accessories ensure that there’s something for everyone.

“What’s hot right now is mixed metals, where you mix gold and silver together, or mix them with coppers or with antique brass and gun metal – that is really hot,” says Marcia Miller, president of I Love Bracelets. “Big statement pieces are also very popular – like a big statement piece right in the middle of your chest.”

Miller’s approach is to create items that can be accessorized by color, such as wearing red earrings with a red bracelet and necklace. And whether they want to create their look using a certain color, specific materials or even a particular look (like vintage or modern), Miller says there is plenty out there to please every buyer.

“Fashion jewelry never goes out of style because everyone always has the money to buy a little trinket to sparkle up a dress,” she says. “Today, people might not be going out to buy a whole new outfit, but they can go buy accessories and still make a statement.”

▲ Clockwise from top: **Chain necklace with two charms** from Waxing Poetic, Portico; **faceted stone ring and coral necklace** from I Love Bracelets, Omni; **jewel bracelets** from Town & Reese, The Mix; **silver cuff bracelet and matching ring** from Bamboo Trading Co., Patrick & Company; **turquoise necklace and disk earrings** from Town & Reese, Portico; **jeweled ring** from Spring Street Design, The Mix; leather/stone bracelet and freshwater pearl earrings from Elly Preston, HomeStyle