

Trends To Watch

New Split-Shank Rings Add Glitter And Glamour

Split-shank rings have recently been exploding in popularity for both engagement and right hand rings. This attractive ring style has also become a favorite of many celebrities and young Hollywood. These eye-catching designs not only lighten a ring's weight, but also balance the size of exceptionally large diamonds or colored gemstones without being restricted to a possibly uncomfortable wide band.

Split-shank rings are stunning designs that create the unique illusion of more than one ring in a single piece. They come in many attractive styles that curve,

twist, or cross around the center stone. Some styles are braided, others add an open frame around the main gemstone or have crossing lines dipping to another level to produce an elegant wrap effect.

A single split-shank is the most common design, but double and triple splits, which result in three or four band sections, are also available. And many of the splits are encrusted with pavé diamonds, emphasizing the split and enhancing the brilliance of the center stone.



Gemstone Color Profiles

Rich Purple Gems Have Regal Appeal

The color purple, which is a dramatic combination of red and blue, has long been the favorite color of royalty and nobility. It is a deep passionate color that is very much in vogue for jewelry this season.

Luscious purple gems come in tints and shades that range from lavender and lilac to violet, grape, plum, deep eggplant, burgundy, mulberry, and a dark, shadowy mauve. What's more, you have a choice of gems in a wide range of price points.

Purple Amethyst

Amethyst is a wonderfully affordable gemstone with a wide color range from pale lilac to a rich, velvety purple. The most precious form of quartz, amethyst has been treasured for thousands of years and is popular in all kinds of jewelry.

Tanzanite

Purple-blue tanzanite is one of the world's newest gems, discovered only in 1967 near Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. A form of the mineral zoisite, it is a beautifully transparent gem with a soft, velvety texture. Ideal for pendants, necklaces, pins, and earrings.

Lapis Lazuli

One of the world's oldest gems, this rich,

purple-blue opaque gemstone has been mined for over 6,000 years. It is sometimes flecked with grains of bright golden pyrite that shimmer like little stars. Once known as the jewel of royalty, it is popular today for both men's and women's jewelry.

Purple Pearls

Both large Tahitian saltwater pearls and smaller freshwater pearls come in glowing iridescent purple colors. Dark-colored

Tahitians are available in lustrous eggplant and plum hues while freshwater pearls are noted for their lighter purple colors such as lavender and grape.

Purple Garnet

This dazzling and beautiful gem has been popular in jewelry since 3,100 BC. Called rhodolite, this purple variety of garnet ranges in color from pale violet to red purple and a deep, rich purple. It's both reasonably priced and very durable.

Spinel

This hard, brilliant, and sparkling-clear gem is not as well known as it should be. It comes in many beautiful colors including both light and dark purple. Quite inexpensive and durable, spinel is only slightly less hard than ruby and sapphire.

Purple Sapphire

A brilliantly clear and versatile gem, purple sapphire is available in richly intense colors ranging from violet to deep bluish-purple. It is very durable, being second only to diamond in terms of hardness. It is also quite affordable because it is less precious than the famous cornflower blue sapphire.

