

DYNE gold, pink- and brown-diamond and emerald Loverglyph custom rings, from \$6,800

When it comes to giving jewellery, life's biggest milestones – engagement, parenthood, promotions and retirement – get a lot of airtime. Less so, gifts for the early markers, such as significant birthdays, exam results, graduations and first jobs. But this is a rising market, catering to a generation with well-defined values and priorities.

Once there was a tradition of celebrating the classic milestones with a proven design that had the all-important “forever” quality – think Tiffany & Co's padlocks, indeed any of Elsa Peretti's little big-hitter pendants, and Van Cleef & Arpels' lucky clover-esque Alhambra fine jewellery. But now, as the tide shifts towards self-reward and celebrating more frequently, there's a new demand for independent, artisanal pieces by jewellers who are doing the heirloom thing their own way.

“Younger people regard jewellery much like they do tattoos,” says Ruby Beales, jewellery buying manager at Liberty, of the boom in modern “milestone” jewellery. She cites Cece Jewellery, which produces bespoke miniature artworks “that capture the spirit of the individual” on enamel-painted gold pendants and signet rings. A bucolic scene might feature an oak tree, for example, signifying strength, with tiny apples made from ruby birthstone gems.

These young buyers want possessions to be meaningful, authentic and socially and environmentally conscious. It's telling, Beales says, that they also come seeking pieces for themselves. Liberty has observed a shift in buying behaviour, “moving away from traditional milestones” in favour of customisable pieces, including charm-based jewels, lockets and narrative-led baubles from designers such as Annoushka, Atelier VM and Marie Lichtenberg that “serve as symbols of personal achievement”.

Elsewhere, Ananya's 18ct-gold Chakra bracelets in gold with ruby and emerald inlays are popular, perhaps because they echo the same themes and gems found in India's coming-of-age rituals. For those seeking more universal symbolism, Nada Ghazal's Doors of Opportunity collection offers talismans such as doors, keyholes and knockers: signs that “don't belong to anyone”, says Ghazal, “but they resonate with everyone.”



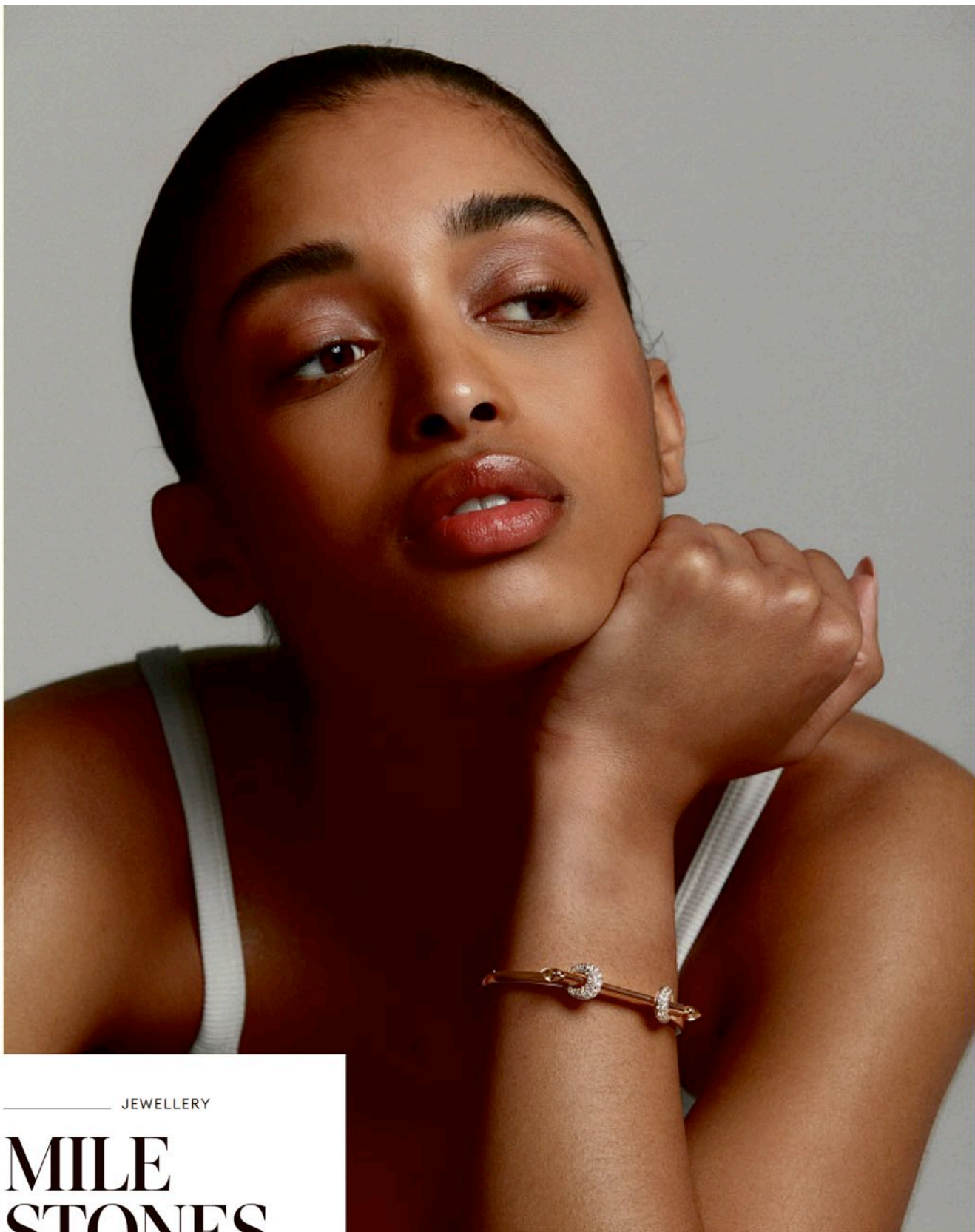
LUCY DELIUS GOLD AND DIAMOND WISHBONE NECKLACE, £9,400



AZLEE gold and diamond Compass charm, \$3,600



Above: LOQUET gold and diamond Baguette Orb locket, £8,000. Below: CECE gold and enamel bespoke ring, from £10,000



JEWELLERY

# MILE STONES

Maria Fitzpatrick marks the new moments that matter

Ghazal grew up in Lebanon, and this first collection since she found refuge for her business in London is



886 BY THE ROYAL MINT gold Bold cuff, £7,445

inspired by a mysterious turquoise doorway folly in the garden that has become her home. “New beginnings are not about throwing out the old for the new, they're about cherishing the old and taking it with you through the door,” she says.

When Dominic Jones, whose pieces have been worn by David Bowie and Rihanna, was appointed creative director of 886 By The Royal Mint, a childhood obsession with treasure crystallised in the concept of a “wearable asset”, which found expression in a cuff shaped like an inverted gold bar. In keeping with the pirate tradition of wearing gold earrings (to have some currency on their body if they ended up in a distant place), it has subtle notches at increments along the underside, denoting the value of the sustainably sourced metal by weight.

“Each piece has a different gauge, so it's unique,” explains Jones of his modern

heirloom, which is much requested by parents and godparents. “You don't expect they'll have to use it, but the symbolism of a monetary gift is there – and the sentiment that they have something to fall back on.”

And the classics still have a place. At Tiffany & Co, Gen Z's favoured collection is Tiffany T in rose or yellow gold (in the

UK, the T-Smile necklace is the generation's most-purchased item). And Harrods' director of buying for fine jewellery and watches Beth Hannaway sees many milestones and first paycheques being celebrated with icons

such as Cartier's Juste un Clou bracelet (perhaps a gift for someone nailing their degree?). She's also seen the rise in “modern heirlooms” such as “Sophie Bille Brahe's delicate gradient diamonds, along with pendants and rings that can



ALMASIKA GOLD, DIAMOND AND ENAMEL TERRA NOVA GLOBE PENDANT NECKLACE, £4,169



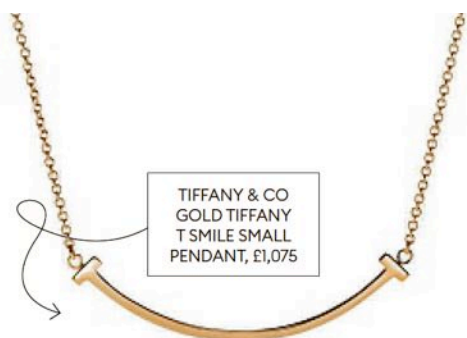
CARTIER gold Juste un Clou bracelet, £3,450

**“YOUNGER PEOPLE REGARD JEWELLERY MUCH LIKE THEY DO TATTOOS”**

ILLUSTRATIONS: WILLIAM LUZ. PHOTOGRAPH: LEO BIEBER



Left: ANANYA gold, diamond and quartz Chakra Icon bracelet, £11,900



TIFFANY & CO GOLD TIFFANY T SMILE SMALL PENDANT, £1,075

be personalised with a secret message at Suzanne Kalan and Azlee”.

Azlee’s modern fine jewellery is crafted in LA from 18ct recycled gold, and a portion of each sale goes to ocean-preservation charities. The Staircase collection could celebrate taking a step forward – or up – while a custom Fingerprint pendant also ticks the meaningful-experience box.

**ARCHITECTURE-LED SCANDINAVIAN** label Kinraden’s Oxygen collection, in recycled gold, is a fun choice for those taking major exams (save the “Gasp” earrings for results day), while Diane Kordas’s Pop Art rings – a cult choice for women entering the C-suite – would suit a recent graduate. Meanwhile, McQueen and Marina B alumna Sarah Ysabel Narici, of New York’s Dyne, creates bespoke signet rings embedded with glyphs that can encapsulate each success.

Loquet London’s clear-crystal-faced golden lockets can be filled with collectable charms over time – or embedded with a more personal custom motif. Founder (along with Laura Bailey) and creative director Sheherazade Goldsmith has been through three 21sts with her children in the past three years. When it comes to marking milestones, she proposes three key elements: “Something for who they are, usually a birthstone; something for who they were... a childhood memory, nickname, a song; and something to carry into their future.” (There are expletive charms, too, for anyone who needs reminding that mistakes are inevitable.)

A change of direction, a job move or a major journey calls for Almasika’s Globe pendant, representing a shifting “vantage point” or perhaps Sarah Hendler’s pavé checkerboard Crossroads ring. And there’s something quite moving about Azlee’s Guidance necklace, which consists of a handmade gold chain with two charms, a vintage-inspired, diamond-studded gold compass inscribed with “eternity” – and a light beam. Sometimes it’s not just marking out the road less travelled – it’s knowing there’s a path back home. ■HTSI



Above: DIANE KORDAS rose-gold, diamond and pink-sapphire Boom ring, £3,940. Below: SUZANNE KALAN gold, diamond and pink-sapphire ring, £4,380



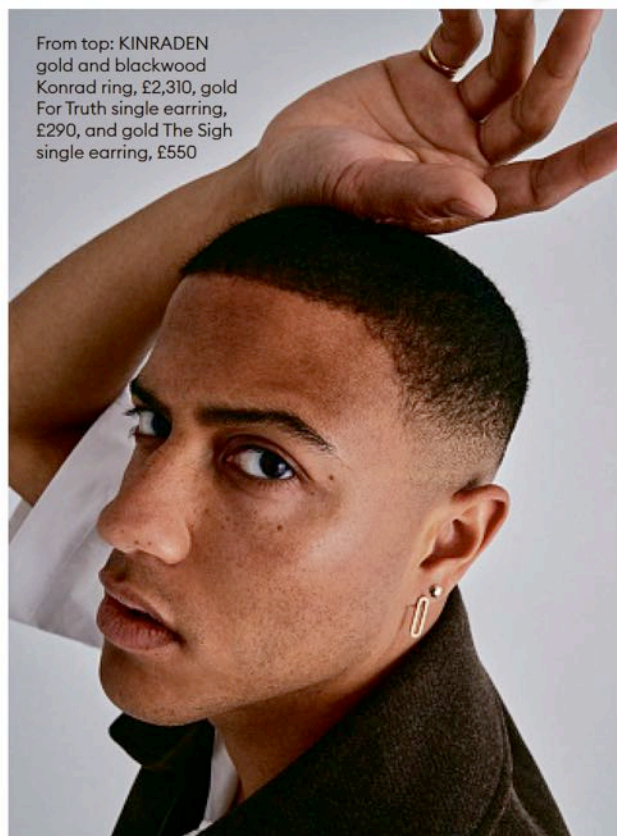
NADA GHAZAL GOLD AND TSAVORITE DOOR OF LUCK NECKLACE, £3,390



Above: SOPHIE BILLE BRAHE gold and diamond Ensemble S ring, \$11,000. Below: SARAH HENDLER gold, pink-sapphire and emerald Crossroads ring, \$2,840



From top: KINRADEN gold and blackwood Konrad ring, £2,310, gold For Truth single earring, £290, and gold The Sigh single earring, £550



WELLNESS

# DOES HYDROGEN THERAPY WORK?

The *FT*’s senior science writer Clive Cookson tests it out

I sit in a London health centre, inhaling air enriched with hydrogen through a tube. At the same time the gas is piped into a pair of goggles where it plays across my eyes in a gentle breeze.

This is my first experience of molecular hydrogen therapy, which has been popular in Japan and China for several years and is now picking up in the west. As word spreads of its potential benefits as a wide-ranging antioxidant, wellness centres are adding hydrogen to their menu of treatments.

I am a mainstream science journalist who takes a generally sceptical view of alternative therapies. Yet I was intrigued enough by anecdotes from friends and acquaintances who have benefited from molecular hydrogen to look into the evidence for its effects. Might the gas really have a role to play in healthcare?

My introductory session was at Suhaku Space in South Kensington, where owner Atsue Morinaga, a physiotherapist and acupuncturist from Japan, introduced hydrogen inhalation therapy in May 2023. Then I visited Wellness Lab in Knightsbridge, where director Jaynee Treon, a holistic health practitioner, has offered hydrogen since 2021.

The clinics generate hydrogen in an electrolytic cell that splits water into its component elements, hydrogen and oxygen. The concentrations used – typically around two per cent hydrogen – are far below the levels that can burn or explode in air.

Both centres explain clearly the scientific rationale for hydrogen therapy – how the gas reduces oxidative stress throughout the body, for example by scavenging free radicals such as hydroxyl. I certainly felt better after my sessions, though I was there more in a spirit of journalistic inquiry than to treat specific symptoms. My nose and airways were noticeably clearer, and my eyes felt bright and sparkling. As a strong believer in the placebo effect – if you expect something to make you better, it will – I can’t prove the benefits I experienced were caused directly by the hydrogen, but I am happy to give it some credit.

To demonstrate an immediate effect, Suhaku invites clients to look through a microscope at tiny blood vessels below the skin at the base of their fingernails, before

and after therapy. The hydrogen did seem to untwist some of my more contorted capillaries and improve the flow of blood.

Hydrogen therapy has a long history, with experiments going back more than two centuries, says John Hancock, a professor of biochemistry and molecular biology at the University of the West of England (UWE) in Bristol. “But scientific interest was sporadic until 2007 when Ikuroh Ohsawa and colleagues at Nippon Medical School published a landmark paper in *Nature Medicine*.”

That experiment in Japan demonstrated an anti-inflammatory effect of hydrogen, which reduced damage to tissues suffering oxidative stress. “Since then there have been more than 2,000 studies of potential medical applications,” says Hancock. They have covered diseases that could benefit from hydrogen therapy, including diabetes, arthritis and other inflammatory conditions. No toxic side-effects have been reported.

But all the studies carried out so far have been relatively small, points out Grace Russell, also at UWE. “I would like it to come out of the fringes of wellbeing and lifestyle,” she says. “Data from a larger trial focusing on inflammation, involving thousands of people rather than the tens or hundreds so far, is the key thing needed to bring it into the medical mainstream.”

Russell says one barrier to raising funds for a large clinical trial is that funders like to know the biological basis of a proposed therapy. Scientists are beginning to investigate how hydrogen – a molecule that is biologically inert – may have effects on the body but the mechanisms are uncertain. No NHS hospitals or clinics have adopted the therapy in the UK.

**MY NOSE WAS CLEAR AND MY EYES FELT SPARKLING**

“Some people see hydrogen as snake-oil therapy – which it clearly is not,” she says. “I think there is potential for it at least to mitigate the biochemistry that happens when we are ill.”

In the US, Tyler W LeBaron has run a Molecular Hydrogen Institute promoting scientific information about the therapy since 2013. “Unfortunately there has been a lot of misinformation and pseudoscience,” he says. “But the number of wellness clinics offering various sorts of hydrogen therapy is growing fast in the US.”

One method becoming popular is bathing in hydrogen water. “People take a bath of high-concentration hydrogen water,” LeBaron says. “That’s a really cool method of administration because the hydrogen molecule is so small that it’ll permeate right through the skin.”

Hydrogenated bathing sounds delightful, but for now I am happy to inhale the therapeutic gas. Personally, I’ll continue to give hydrogen a go, though the scientific jury is still out. ■HTSI £40 for 30 minutes at Suhaku; £44 at Wellness Lab