

The Lure & Lore

of the Tiffany Engagement Ring



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FOR COUPLES IN LOVE

and contemplating a future together, becoming engaged is a natural first step on the road to eternity. And the iconic Tiffany diamond ring is the beacon chosen more than any other to light the way. But it wasn't always so. Not until 1886 did Charles Lewis Tiffany—an incurable romantic himself—introduce to the world the now legendary “Tiffany® Setting.” Known as “the ring of rings,” this quintessential design went on to become the archetype of the modern engagement ring and also the most popular, a familiar and beloved presence in the universal narrative of romance.

This Tiffany Setting is a deceptively simple six-prong design that was a departure from the bezel-set rings of Charles Lewis Tiffany's time. Its graceful architecture lifts a brilliant-cut diamond solitaire above the band to capture the light unimpeded. So monumental was this innovation that, according to Tiffany's executive vice-president Jon King, “It has delighted brides-to-be for over a century, standing alone in the Tiffany engagement ring assortment for 114 years before other Tiffany ring designs joined its side.”

The notion of a ring as a token of love was not entirely new, of course. The ancient Egyptians favored a simple band that symbolized the never-ending cycle of life. After Alexander the Great conquered Egypt in 332 BC, this tradition was assimilated by the Greeks and eventually the use of betrothal rings became commonplace during the Roman Empire. By the time it was a convention of 8th-century Europe, the engagement ring was worn on the fourth finger of the left hand, which was believed to contain a vein—the vena amoris, or “vein of love”—that ran straight to the heart.

It's understandable that such a romantic notion should attach itself to this intimate act of commitment. But only Tiffany thought to highlight the diamond, in all its spectacular luminosity, as a symbol of true love. And



what better way to pay tribute to such a significant event? As John Loring, Tiffany's design director emeritus points out, “The choice of the engagement ring is almost as personal a commitment as the choice of a fiancé. As a tangible, enduring and highly visible proof of love, it must be the one ring the bride and groom both want to symbolize their engagement.”

THE INCREDIBLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING

Alluding to the powerful intensity of diamonds, British novelist Iris Murdoch once wrote “they will show up the wearer if they can.” And yet, a Tiffany diamond is perhaps the only stone in the world capable of equaling the brilliant beauty of a woman in love. It has been said that over a lifetime, she will look at her diamond ring—a treasured

reminder of the promise of eternity—more than a million times. When the diamond is from Tiffany, it remains forever as captivating as at first glance.

Tiffany diamonds are simply held to a higher standard. The industry's prevailing method of valuation—the 4 C's: cut, color, clarity, carat—falls short when confronted with stones of such exceptional beauty, so Tiffany's Gemological Laboratory uses expanded and more demanding criteria that result in the acceptance of only about .02% of the world's stones. These superlative diamonds are cut not for size but for absolute precision, symmetry and to maximize brilliance, which is measured by the amount of white light returned to the eye. Every Tiffany engagement ring is awarded a Tiffany Diamond Certificate, which ensures the authenticity and integrity of the stone and is backed by the company's lifetime warranty. Beyond aesthetics, Tiffany is also committed to its role as a steward of the environment and takes steps to ensure that its materials are always obtained responsibly. Each of these factors helps set Tiffany diamonds apart as the very finest stones available, truly emblematic of a rare integrity and purity of intention.



HIGHLY ENGAGING DESIGN

While the Tiffany Setting remains the most classic example of the modern engagement ring, the legendary jewelry house offers a spectrum of equally beautiful possibilities that appeal to slightly different sensibilities. From

Opposite: The Tiffany® Setting, the ultimate symbol of true love and the most brilliant diamond ring on earth. This page: Sketches of the Tiffany Setting and Tiffany Soleste ring with a double border of hand-set diamonds, matched for color and clarity. Rings at right: Tiffany Legacy®, an exclusive diamond cut inspired by an opulent period design, with bead-set diamonds; Tiffany Bezet, a streamlined bezel setting; Lucida®, a combination of two faceting styles and a setting of clean, sweeping lines; and Tiffany Novo®, based on the famous 128.54-carat cushion-cut Tiffany Diamond.





on the journey to the altar. There, as vows are exchanged, the addition of the wedding band seals the compact between bride and groom. Tiffany's bands are not merely an afterthought but pieces that demonstrate an allure and presence of their own. Created in styles that range from exuberant to quietly elegant, the bands are designed to be compatible with and enhance the beauty of the engagement rings. A perfect example is the Harmony band, whose handcrafted contours follow exactly those of its matching engagement ring.

With a nod to the poesy rings popular in England and France during the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, upon which lovers would have romantic sentiments inscribed, Tiffany hand engraves customized messages inside its wedding bands. It's just another indication of the company's passion for imbuing these symbols of commitment with lifelong meaning. Much of Tiffany's character and renown can be attributed to the quality of its diamonds. The care taken in sourcing and crafting them into engagement rings and wedding bands is equaled only by the brilliance of the stones themselves. Presented in their instantly recognizable—and deeply thrilling—Tiffany Blue Boxes, they are rare gifts of fire and light, millennia in the making and destined to last as long as true love.

A Tiffany love story begins with the finest diamonds on earth. Their beauty endures in a legendary tradition of superlative quality and design excellence. Each ring that is created in this great tradition is symbolic of true love and the promise of a beautiful lifetime together. Left: A round brilliant diamond of 712 carats, D color, internally flawless, with 52 diamonds in platinum.

Tiffany Novo[®], inspired by the famed 128.54-carat Tiffany Diamond, to the strikingly elegant Tiffany Harmony and the exquisite bead-set diamonds that accent Tiffany Soleste, the designs range from supremely classic to softly modern. The sumptuous variety continues with more elaborate designs that express different moods and characters. Rings that stray further from tradition include a glorious tour de force of fancy-shaped diamonds—pear, emerald, heart, oval, marquise—and the lush, intricate creations of Jean Schlumberger, known for his fanciful, nature-inspired pieces. Vibrant emeralds, sapphires and colored diamonds, including a superb cache of rare yellow stones, capture the imagination with their extraordinary radiance.

BANDING TOGETHER

If falling in love is the beginning of this adventure, engagement is an important step



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Rings, clockwise from top: Tiffany Harmony, a round brilliant diamond in a tapered platinum setting; Jean Schlumberger's innovative rope design of 18k gold encircles the diamond; Tiffany Bezet, a streamlined bezel setting; Lucida[®], a combination of two faceting styles and a setting of clean, sweeping lines; Tiffany Legacy[®], inspired by an opulent period design, with bead-set diamonds; Bezet with a yellow diamond in 18k gold; Jean Schlumberger's sculptural diamond ribbons surround a dazzling center stone; Tiffany Novo[®], based on the famous cushion-cut Tiffany Diamond; and Tiffany Embrace, a diamond-encrusted setting and band.

Diamond engagement rings available exclusively at Tiffany & Co.