

ELENA KRIEGNER



by Laura Carpenter
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For jewelry designer Elena Kriegner, her love for sparkle mingles with a mature appreciation for the modern world and the modern woman.

groomer Kathryn Alecci

At the tender age of six, Elena Kriegner somehow knew she wanted to design jewelry. By the time she was 12, growing up in a tiny town in Austria, Elena was like most other little girls: she dreamed of princess-like things. But unlike them, she had her village buying up every necklace, bracelet and earring she produced. Her creations were so unique and her passion for jewelry making was so strong that she passed the entry exam of a prestigious European jewelry design school at an early age and trained for many years in the craftsmanship and study of goldsmithing. She graduated as a goldsmith and continued on to become a Master Jewelry Maker.

Fast-forward through globe-trotting years of influence and adventure and eventually, like many people from the far corners of the world, she was bitten by the NYC bug. "It is a very international and friendly city. I'm sure some Americans say that's not the case but compared to Europe, New Yorkers are very friendly. It's the energy, the city, the bustling life," that draws her. Does New York influence her work? "How could it not? I'm not just sitting here creating the exact skyline, but the architecture and just looking at the skyline of New York – you can see the straight lines in my designs." But it's not just the skyline that inspires Elena; as with most artists, inspiration is everywhere and in everything. She even recently found inspiration from a window, particularly, "how it opened. You know, you just lift it right up. I was looking at the window one day and I thought, 'That's interesting, maybe that could work for a ring.'" So simple, yet so brilliant.

In a fashion-centric city like New York City, Elena has established a unique spot for herself. Looking at Elena's collections, you can easily see how her life experiences play into her designs as well as her love for the city. The juxtaposition of growing up in a tiny, quiet village and now living in one of the biggest, most exciting cities in the world allows her to draw inspiration from both places. Her love for sparkle when she was a child mingles with a mature appreciation for the modern world and the modern woman. With rings that can be worn as necklaces and interchangeable stones and pearls, Elena understands the importance of recycling. Her designs are high quality, sleek and practical, but with endless possibilities, allowing you to wear a piece as a ring one day, turn it 90 degrees, and wear it as a necklace the next. These are designs ahead of her time.

From a small girl in Austria fantasizing about sparkly items, Elena has transformed herself into one of the most up-and-coming jewelry designers here in New York City, offering style, uniqueness and practicality. When asked where she would like to see her business go in the next five years, she told me she is excited for the future. "The funny thing is that people keep saying that I am ahead of my time. People are not ready for that." Don't worry Elena, they soon will be.

