



Publication		
BUSINESS DAY WANTED SPECIAL EDITION		
Page	Date	AVE (ZAR)
11	Thurs 26 July 2018	33537.74



11

interview

READY

FOR THE NEXT

STEP

text
JACQUIE MYBURGH CHEMALY

photography
DAVID ROSS

American Swiss, the jeweller by appointment to South Africans for more than 100 years, is now on the brink of becoming a truly global brand, says marketing director Zimbini Pfeffer

"It's the culmination of what American Swiss has been doing for the past 100 years. Each piece is really the pinnacle of the existing American Swiss collection," says Zimbini Pfeffer, the dynamic marketing head of American Swiss.

"We have evolved along with our customers, and it is their needs, wants, and desires that have given us the confidence to come up with the Masterpieces Collection."

Pfeffer says it is American Swiss's adherence to certain core values that has ensured the brand's success and growth in South Africa and beyond.

"We have always honoured our customers' demand for quality, first and foremost. When someone comes into an American Swiss boutique, it is to buy something precious for an extremely special occasion and celebration — they trust that their valuable purchase is the best quality possible."

With every purchase comes a serious injection of emotion and excitement, and the American Swiss experience is perfect. "We honour the fairy tale that comes with buying your engagement ring, and the magic is a critical part of every customer's American Swiss experience," Pfeffer says.

"Our boutiques are also not closed off with glass doors and security beams. We take security extremely seriously, but the access to our stores is warm and inviting."

American Swiss' nimble design philosophy has played its part in the brand's success. "We see the trends coming long before our customers do. So when they come into the boutique to look for something, it's already there, sparkling in the display case."

The world is currently crazy about the gentle pink tones of morganite, for instance — and American Swiss started including the rare pink gem in its designs three years ago. The

same goes for black diamonds and tanzanite. De Beers announced recently it would be exploring alternatives to diamonds, such as lab gems — American Swiss started stocking Supernova moissanite last year already.

It has been the discerning American Swiss customer who inspired the company to introduce the new Masterpieces Collection of fine-diamond designs, Pfeffer says. "We have been creating some very valuable high-end pieces for some time already, and found that the appetite for these was quite significant."

The Masterpieces Collection features a variety of new designs, including graduated baguette neckpieces and ornate floral diamond suites, as well as a collection of luxurious diamond bangles.

"We know that there is an American Swiss customer looking for something beyond the tennis bracelet, and that's what we have created," Pfeffer says.

It's in listening to its customers that American Swiss has grown into the most important jewellery brand in Africa. And now, with its range offering something for everyone, could American Swiss have its eyes set on global expansion?

The team has developed the capabilities and confidence to take global jewellery trends when they are still in their infancy and introduce them into the market ahead of the competition. This means the brand can comfortably compete with the rest of the world.

"When American Swiss was bought by The Foschini Group in 1967, a lot of things became possible with the support of one of Africa's biggest fashion retail groups," Pfeffer says. "The brand has expanded across Africa, and everything we're building now is most certainly with a view to creating a global brand." 