

Rough to Radiant: A Tale of Sapphires



A yellow sapphire ring perfect like a rose

Exotic Jewels by Farook Gems bring decades of experience in the rough stone sector into their new jewellery venture.

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Photographs Vishwathan Tharmakulasingham



Shazeen Farook, Proprietor,
Exotic Jewels

Large eyes of blue sapphire locked by white diamonds make up a glittering riviere. A yellow sapphire ring glistens like an amber rose in a cold morning.

These pieces of jewellery were my introduction to Exotic Jewels by Farook Gems. The precious designs were really exotic, capturing the true sparkle of the stones that made Ceylon a romantic legend in the eyes of the world.

Exotic Jewels is only one-and-a-half-years-old, but people behind the name have for generations dealt with the famous Ceylon sapphires, and know these scintillating stones intimately. The parent company, Farook Gems, was established in the 1970s. It has marked its presence globally in countries including the US, China, Thailand, Indonesia and Europe. However, they only dealt in rough sapphires, therefore when their jewellery arm, Exotic Jewels, was established, it was clear that something beautiful would be born: a mix of pristine stones and great design.

Farook Gems was originally based in Kahawatte, a town near Ratnapura famed for beautiful stones. It was there that Shazeen Farook who is now at the helm of Exotic Jewels learnt the ropes. The transition from cut and polished stones to jewellery for Shazeen, was an easy one.

Each precious piece that comes from Exotic Jewels goes through a process. The in-house design team first does the sketch, then a drawing, which is sent to the production line. If the jewellery manufacturer finds even the slightest error, the process begins again till the exact desired effect shines forth. Finally, Shazeen gets the approved design and will bring together the diamonds and sapphires to create a piece that will dazzle. Perfectionism is vital. The meticulously crafted works of art glistening in the showroom are proof of the thought, detail and care that has gone into the making of these precious jewels.

A mere glance and it is apparent that the jewels here have a unique texture. They do not stay within the easy confines of the basic cluster designs. The styles by Exotic Jewels are very broad, created under the personal, keen attention of Shazeen. 'Minutiae' is the key word as he knows that minute details make up a magnificent whole.

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For Exotic Jewels, the end user, the individual who is going to wear and cherish the precious item of splendour that they have forged, is what ultimately matters.

The motto is clear: "From a mine to mine." They ensure that each stone has a safe, fabulous journey from the pressing darkness of earth to the sparkle of the jewellery of a diva.

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