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Darling bud: diamond brooch, Hemmerle

WATCHES & JEWELLERY



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INSPIRED BY NATURE

Hemmerle's latest collection takes its cue from soothing herbal teas. By Kim Parker

Hemmerle is renowned for its craftsmanship and for its innovative use of unconventional materials, such as wood, copper and aluminium, in its high jewellery collections. But for Christian and Yasmin Hemmerle, the fourth generation of the family-run jewellery company, it's equally important to be known as the brand that dares to move at its own pace.

"Nowadays, everyone is in such a rush," says Yasmin Hemmerle from their Munich headquarters. "We don't believe in telling our craftsmen that there's a deadline for creating something. Our goldsmiths and gem setters each have their own way of working. They pour their heart and soul into every piece, so it simply takes the time it takes. That's how all our jewellery is made."

Work on the brand's latest collection, Infused Jewels, began four years ago. Building on previous botanical-themed collections (such as 2014's woodland flora-inspired Nature's Jewels and the vegetable patch-themed Delicious Jewels collection from 2011), Infused Jewels was created as a tribute to the healing powers of plants used in herbal tea. "I've been fascinated by homeopathy for years and we drink lots of ginger and turmeric tea at home, so the idea came very naturally, long before the global emphasis on wellbeing that arose during the pandemic," says Hemmerle. "We loved the idea that tea is a part of every culture and it's a drink for social or contemplative times. Coffee gives you a quick boost, but tea is something to be savoured, like good jewellery."

Cue 13 one-of-a-kind pieces (3 brooches and 10 pairs of earrings), which include a rose head,

complete with delicate aluminium and white gold petals and diamond stamens, articulated earrings that resemble cascades of pink-tipped ginger blossoms and a pair of blueish-purple tsavorite set amid fronds of patinated bronze rosemary leaves. The sole abstract design, a pair of hollow, tsavorite-studded earrings covered in a lavender motif, contains hidden latches that allow their interiors to be filled with the scented flowers – like miniature pomanders.

"I thought it would be fun to give someone a moment of mindfulness every time they turned their head," says Hemmerle.

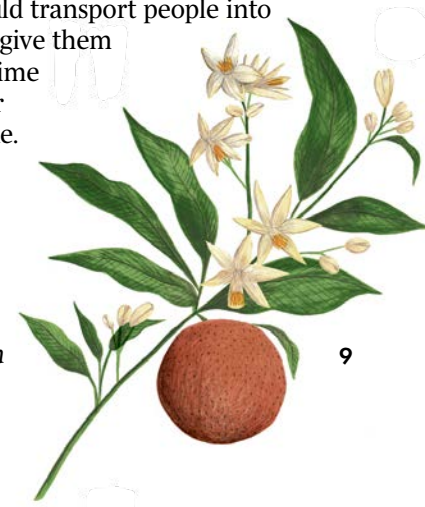
As with previous jewellery collections, the Hemmerles have taken a multilayered approach to this project and commissioned a custom tea blend to accompany the jewellery from Romana Auth of Kräutergarten München, Munich's first ecologically certified herb house. Another local manufacturer, Nymphenburg, a one-time porcelain supplier to the Bavarian royal court, was commissioned to create 13 handpainted tea caddies, one for each of the jewels. And in

a first for the company, Hemmerle collaborated with Nymphenburg to provide the porcelain for one of the jewels in the collection. "We were intrigued to see what we could achieve using porcelain in our jewellery, which we haven't done before, so we worked with them on the petals for the orange blossom brooch," says Hemmerle. "It took us a few tries to get it right, because the crafts of goldsmithing and porcelain-making are so different, but it turned out beautifully. Porcelain gives such an organic richness to the piece."

Other jewels took even longer to perfect. Hemmerle's goldsmiths worked for more than 150 hours on one initial design for a cinnamon-inspired bracelet, "but it just didn't look right," says Hemmerle. "In the end, we opted to use real cinnamon sticks as a base for an incredible diamond and turned it into a brooch. We just couldn't improve on nature in that instance."

As a final flourish, the Infused Jewels project also encompasses a book, *The Herb Garden*, with a short story by the actress and poet Greta Bellamacina and illustrations by the British artist Rosanna Tasker.

"We wanted to create a modern fairytale, something that could transport people into another world and give them a moment of 'me' time as they sipped their tea," says Hemmerle. "I'm going to enjoy our bespoke blend while I read the book with my son. It will definitely be worth the wait." ■ POA; hemmerle.com



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