

Jewelry BURGER! Jewelry BURGER!

It's what's on the menu from a designer who tries not to take it all too seriously.

BY JILL NEWMAN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MELANIE DUNEA

When a friend approached Nadine Ghosn to create a five-carat diamond ring for his wife, the jewelry designer explained that she doesn't work with solitaire stones. Instead she went with her own interpretation of the request: a ring of five carrots—yes, the vegetable—set with orange sapphires and pavé diamonds. How did the friend's wife react to the gift? "She loved it, because it was harboring their inside joke," Ghosn says.

Such is the tongue-in-cheek sensibility that has enabled Ghosn to conjure a series of unexpected pieces—from produce to hamburgers,



Jewelry designer Nadine Ghosn, photographed at Minetta Tavern in New York City.

RIGHT: CAROLINA HERRERA DRESS (\$3,990); NADINE GHOSN EARRINGS (\$3,250), NECKLACE (\$7,860), RINGS (FROM \$11,800), AND BRACELETS (FROM \$2,850). ABOVE: NADINE GHOSN RINGS (\$5,150 EACH), NADINEGHOSN.COM. FOR DETAILS SEE PAGE 117



STYLED BY MARYKATE BOYLAN. HAIR AND MAKEUP BY MAYSOON FARAJ AT MAYSOONFARAJ.COM. PETER CALVIN (RINGS)

sushi, and pencils forged in precious metals and gemstones. The pandemic, especially, turned out to be a ripe time for Ghosn's business. Just as clients were craving talismans of optimism and joy, she launched a Lego-inspired collection with agates carved in the shape of the brightly colored building blocks and set in stackable rings with diamonds and sapphires. They were an instant social media hit, and orders came in from around the world. "There is a lot of polarity: You either love it or hate it," Ghosn says of her style. "I create pieces that are fun and colorful, because nobody *needs* jewelry. It's an expression; it's very emotional."

Despite the wholesome overtones of toy blocks, Ghosn had the idea while struggling to rebuild her life after a family crisis. If her last name sounds familiar, that's because her father is former Nissan chairman Carlos Ghosn, who in 2018 was charged by the Japanese automaker with financial wrongdoing. Then, a year later, in a straight-out-of-Hollywood twist, Ghosn, who had been free on bail and awaiting trial in Japan, fled the country by hiding in a box and boarding a private jet. He resurfaced in Beirut, where, as a Lebanese national, he has been living as a fugitive. (Lebanon and Japan do not have a bilateral extradition agreement.) But the people who helped him escape, American father and son Michael and Peter Taylor (the former an ex-Green Beret), were arrested in the U.S. in 2020 and extradited to Japan earlier this year. In July, Taylor Sr. was sentenced to two years in prison and his son to more than a year.

While her father's saga continues, Nadine has kept her own life and her burgeoning business moving ahead, using wit and talent to put a whimsical spin on the mundane. "I'm always observing. I like to capture the zeitgeist," says Ghosn, who launched her jewelry line six years ago while living in New York, a city brimming with inspiration for quirky iterations of everyday objects. The ubiquity of headphones dangling from New Yorkers' necks, for example, inspired a gold and diamond sautoir, which caught the attention of the now defunct Paris cult store Colette. Next came a seven-layer



LEFT: ARIAS NEW YORK DRESS (\$650); NADINE GHOSN EARRINGS (\$6,685), NECKLACE (\$7,860), AND PINKIE RING (\$28,380). ABOVE: NADINE GHOSN STACKABLE RINGS (\$13,880). BELOW: NADINE GHOSN STACKABLE RINGS (FROM \$2,865 EACH), NADINEGHOSN.COM

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hamburger ring, after she noticed how much New Yorkers love burgers. Hers, made with a puffy gold bun set with diamond seeds, an undulating layer of gold and green tsavorite lettuce, and a slice of ruby tomato, is decidedly more diet-friendly. Ghosn dreamed up the pencil bangles and rings while she was applying to the MBA program at INSEAD in Singapore.

She says she learned her most important lessons, though, from Dad. (Before his dramatic downfall, Ghosn père was credited with turning a struggling Nissan into a global automobile behemoth.) "He taught me to keep moving forward," she says. So where will she next train her Warholian eye? Pepperidge Farm Goldfish crackers. T&C



TOWN & COUNTRY

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