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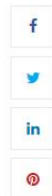
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## 61st Bangkok Gems & Jewelry Fair Shines with Rubies, Emeralds, and Silver

February 23, 2018 by MELISSA ROSE BERNARDO



Some 20,000 visitors are expected at this winter's **Bangkok Gems & Jewelry Fair (BGJF)**. The 61st edition of the biannual show opened Feb. 21 and runs through Feb. 25 at Impact Muang Thong Thani convention center.

According to the Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP), the fair's organizer, exhibitor numbers are up: The 61st BGJF boasts 880 companies (compared with 843 at the 60th BGJF and 730 at the 59th). Among those firms, local participation has increased markedly. This year, the fair has welcomed 764 Thai brands (up from 669 at the 60th show and 607 at the 59th). "The DITP is determined to promote jewelry that highlights the talent of Thai



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**BANGKOK  
GEMS & JEWELRY  
FAIR 61<sup>ST</sup> EDITION**  
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Nowhere is that talent more evident than in the ample silver selections. (There's a reason Pandora and Georg Jensen picked Thailand as their manufacturing base.) Karen Silver Design proudly touted the playful three-dimensional geometric pieces—dangly box earrings!—worn by models in the BGJF opening ceremony fashion show. Among her hottest sellers: a “fresh-out-of-the-oven” collection featuring brushed-finish botanical pendants, earrings, and necklaces that evoke a calla lily. Meanwhile, stunning woven silver minaudières drew us in at Lanna Silver CM, which also featured a wow-worthy display of tribal-style strands in myriad shapes, sizes, weights, and finishes. Those beads were a big hit at the recent JOGS Tucson show.

Of course, Bangkok is colored-stone heaven, and BGJF is living proof: There are more than 300 (count 'em, 300!) booths selling loose gems. Emeralds and rubies are the reigning king and queen of the fair—JCK LUXURY mainstay Takat has dedicated more than half of its ample booth space here to its signature eye-popping emeralds—but we spotted a surprising amount of peridot; piles of Ethiopian opal (but very little Mexican or Australian); some gorgeous tourmaline (Azizi should be your go-to for Paraiba, bicolor, and rubellite); and beautiful spinel in shades including blue, purple, and red (a great alternative price-wise to rubies, noted recent JCK Tucson exhibitor Dazzle Gems).



*Necklaces by Jiratha Dechosathit*

Not looking for loose stones? Don't miss the New Faces showcase, a collection of more than 100 up-and-coming brands of which BGJF is particularly proud—and for good reason. We were especially taken with the sleek, dark wood and gemstone-accented pieces at Tara Ebony Jewelry, and by the woven bead and fringe styles (pictured) at Dechosathit Corp. 789 Co. Ltd.—and completely charmed by designer Jiratha Dechosathit, who teaches jewelry-making to disabled women. The New Faces artists might have only a few pieces on display, but they're worth a very close look.

*(Top image: Lanna Silver; photo courtesy of DITP)*



**MELISSA ROSE BERNARDO** ✉

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