

FOUR



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NATURAL BEAUTY

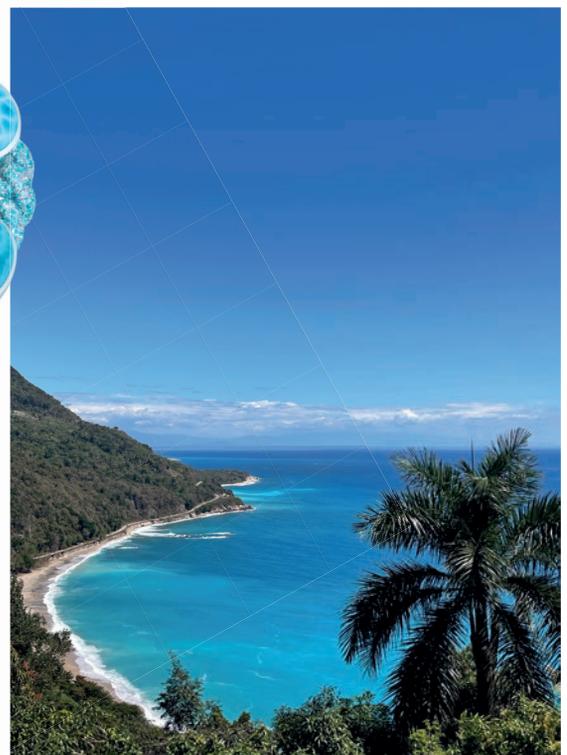
Infatuated with gemstones since childhood, Thomas Jirgens now uses his passion for these precious natural beauties to create striking jewels. His latest collection, Larimar, celebrates none other than the inimitable Caribbean herself.

At one stage or another, all of us have been entranced by the mythical world of fairy tales, legends and magic, especially as young children. For Thomas, this intrigue never quite waned but, instead, blossomed into a career that honours the effervescence of the natural world.

It was thirty years ago that Thomas embarked on his journey to create jewels that not only themselves glitter with grace, but that enhance the innate beauty of the woman who wears them. Geometric yet organic shapes, intense colours and sophisticated designs define Thomas' creations, which have attracted clients the world over thanks to their unique, eye-grabbing semblances.

Inspired by nature, colours — especially those brought about by the four seasons — are always the guiding light in Thomas' ready-to-wear and bespoke pieces. Whether it's gems that encapsulate the fiery African sunrise, the auburn hues of autumn or the stark white and black contrasts of snow-capped mountains in winter, Mother Nature shines through in all her glory in Thomas' timeless, architectural designs.

His latest collection, Larimar, is no exception. His muse for this range, the Larimar gemstone, took him from his showroom in the heart of Munich's high-end shopping





district, Maximilianstraße, to the Dominican Republic to unearth a blue-hued beauty that captures the ocean's wealth of colours unlike any other.

Found deep in the mountains on Hispaniola island, this natural spectacle is not an easy stone to excavate. Narrow shafts, steep slopes and thick rock formations characterise the mining process, which is carried out carefully by hand using nothing but hammers, chisels and shovels. The process is made even more challenging by the fact that the crystals are enrobed in a layer of opaque greyish-brown rock, and can only be identified once cut open, unveiling the colour and purity of the crystal that lies within.

Mirroring the appearance of sunlight reflecting on the water's surface, the gem is a rich aquamarine colour crisscrossed with lines of white and pockets of green and brown. However, this pattern poses difficulties when cutting the stone, as these colourful inclusions caused by interspersed elements such as copper, alter the material's degree of hardness, making it subject to cracking easily. But with a skilled hand and a deft eye, Larimar can be expertly shaped and turned into mesmerising pieces of jewellery that beguile on the body.

Thomas found exactly this expertise with César, a local lapidary who runs a small gem-cutting business with his family in Bahoruco. In February 2021, Thomas spent six weeks with César and his family, training them and working side by side with them cutting the stones.

CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE, TOP Caribbean Waterfalls earrings and Heaven and Earth Twins rings, all part of Thomas Jirgens Juwelenschmiede's Larimar collection; Thomas Jirgens working with raw Larimar in Bahoruco; the Coral Reef earrings, which are part of Thomas Jirgens Juwelenschmiede's Larimar collection, take inspiration from the colours of the sea floor; the Sea Spray ring from Thomas Jirgens Juwelenschmiede's Larimar collection is an ode to the glistening scatter of water and light observed when waves crash; the Caribbean Islands bracelet from Thomas Jirgens Juwelenschmiede's Larimar collection reflects the beauty of the Caribbean, and in particular, the island of Hispaniola in the Dominican Republic, which is the only place where the blue pectolite gemstone Larimar can be found.



He returned in February 2022, spending four weeks with the team cutting new forms for the collection.

Once precisely cut, the gems are sent back to Thomas Jirgens' workshop in Germany, where they are refined by a goldsmith's craftsmanship and the company's state-of-the-art technologies, resulting in unparalleled works of art that are almost impossible to replicate in this quality. One such innovation is Jirgens' Trinity Transformers technology, which allows earrings to vary in length. Elements can be left out, turned around and changed, enabling one earring to be worn in multiple ways.

The Larimar collection, which features these signature earrings, along with rings, bracelets and pendants set in white gold and combined with diamonds and Paraiba tourmalines, is an ode to summer days spent in the Caribbean. From the power of surging waves to the elegance of gently bobbing yachts, all of these facets are evident in the creations, encapsulating Hispaniola's magnetic spirit and serene beauty. **LE**

Find out more about Thomas Jirgens Juwelenschmiede at www.juwelenschmiede.de