

# FASHION

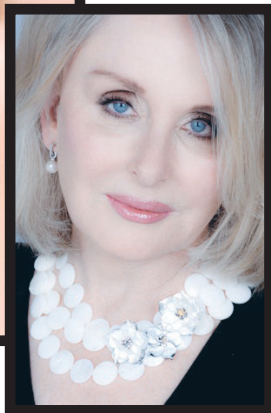
★★★★ THE BEVERLY HILLS COURIER ★★★★★

## Big On Style Without A Big Budget



Left: The designer's most exclusive piece, Golden Solitude, \$5,400, includes purple amethysts, smokey quartz, yellow topaz and gold bars. Other pieces range from \$95 to \$1,700.

Photos by Anyes Galleani  
Make-up by Nancy Jambazian on Yauna



Right: Caldwell Sutherland in one of her one-of-a-kind mother of pearl necklaces.

By Amanda Peabody

Jewelry is most women's guilty pleasure. It sparkles and shines, it doesn't care if you have gained a pound or ten, it doesn't talk back. But in this economy, with a recession stretching well over a year, spending with abandon is a thing of the past. For Bel Air-based Caldwell Sutherland Designs, you can have stunning jewelry, made of the finest materials and stones, at a price that respectable.

"As great as diamonds and gold are, that's not what people want right now," said the designer, Caldwell Sutherland, herself wearing her own design. "They want freshness and affordability."

Sutherland's necklaces (and soon-to-be collection of bracelets, cuffs and earrings) are hand-worked masterpieces, replete with precious stones and mother of pearl accents. "I'm calling them my statement pieces," she said. And make no mistake, these pieces, each large in size yet sophisticated and refined in design and engineering, catch the eye and stop conversation.

From the moment I met Sutherland, I was unable to draw my eye away from her stunning necklace laced with mother of

pearl flower petals. The piece, although large, was not at all imposing and still captured a femininity and subtlety despite its size.

Each piece is painstakingly handmade in Sutherland's studio and can take countless hours to produce. "It's a very involved process as far as structuring and engineering," she said, with each piece requiring sometimes multiple revisions before Sutherland is satisfied.

Perhaps it is Sutherland's deep roots in design that beg her to be as meticulous in crafting her product as her taste is flawless. Coming from a long line of designers and architects (her great uncle, Frederick Law Olmsted, is credited with building New York's Central Park), you can easily infer that the art of design is in her blood. Previously, Sutherland's served as an interior designer, decorating the country over with her flawless taste. From that profession and skill set came her love for the art of jewelry, which is perfectly complemented by her background in interior and contracting (Sutherland is among the first women in California to have received her contractor's license). Her construction background further affords her to fully under-

stand the balance between proportion and structure, a balance that can easily be lost on some of these pieces to a lesser designer.

But for Sutherland, the real joy comes from seeing her designs worn by her clients. "It's fun for me to see people buy multiple necklaces, that what makes me feel successful," she said. "I am just really loving where I am and what I am doing with this."

Sutherland sources precious and semi-precious stones from around the world for her jewelry, often finding the beauty in stones otherwise discarded. It is from the stones that she designs, not from a predetermined idea. Her ideas flow organically, all tinged with a nod to the past, mostly art deco inspired. With some pieces starting at just \$95, it is possible for every woman to own and wear her collection. "It's fashion on a good budget," she proclaims proudly. "My pieces are extremely affordable and very wearable. You can wear them from day to night, with jeans or with dresses."

Sutherland's designs are available by appointment only. To view her complete collection or to schedule, visit [www.caldwellsutherlanddesigns.com](http://www.caldwellsutherlanddesigns.com) or call 818-788-5566.