

JEWELRY

## History and tradition are the backbone of luxury: Amrapali exec

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*Amrapali jewelry*

By DANNY PARISI

MUSCAT, Oman With the constantly growing demand for more luxury goods, Amrapali Jewels is presenting itself as a case for emphasizing care and craftsmanship over efficiency and speed.

Speaking at the Cond Nast International Luxury Conference on April 6, the CEO of Amrapali spoke at length about the origin of the company and their philosophy when it comes to manufacturing. The lesson comes down to the fact that the brand has never lost sight of the deep tradition of craft that runs through Indian culture, and it has benefited from that commitment.

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"Given the nature of our product, which requires fine craftsmanship, we work with legacy craftspeople, sons who have trained with their fathers for years, traditions that pass through generations," said Tarang Arora, creative director and CEO of [Amrapali](#).

### Commitment to tradition

India has a long and deep tradition of jewelry and handmade crafts that runs throughout the country's history.

Mr. Arora began his talk by speaking about the ways in which that tradition informs the brand's business model, from design to manufacturing to its non-commercial work, such as a museum exhibit the brand is contributing to soon.

The brand's inspiration from Indian culture is built right into its name. Amrapali was a figure from early Indian history, a beautiful woman and the pinnacle of grace, art and intellect, who was found beneath a mango tree as a baby.

Mr. Arora explained that the name Amrapali means "gift of the mango tree."



### *Amrapali jewelry*

Amrapali was started by Mr. Arora's father and uncle, history students who channeled their love of Indian artifacts and historical objects into a successful business that refined the best of traditional Indian jewel crafting.

This respect for culture infuses every aspect of the brand, which employs 2,000 craftspeople from around India to handmake all of its items.

Those craftspeople include men and women who have been working on their trade all their lives and who had their skills passed down to them through generations.

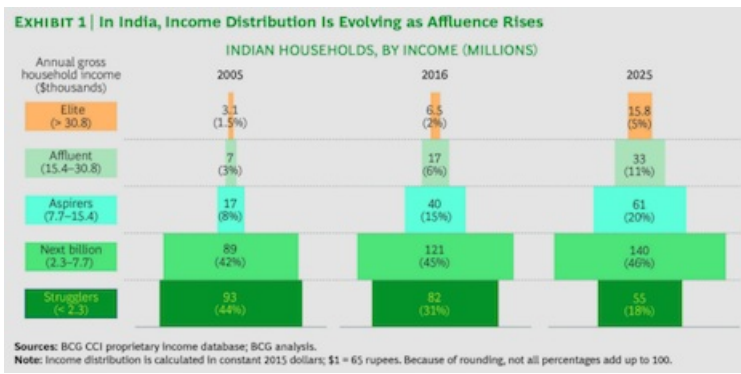
This commitment to history and tradition that extends beyond just the reaches of the brand's history serves as a powerful lesson for fashion brands today, which can dip into their own cultural history and traditions to come up with fresh ideas and to give back to their communities by employing the people whose livelihood depends on those crafts.

### Dignified workforce

As India's economy continues to develop, the luxury industry will increasingly have to turn its attention towards the subcontinent, putting Amrapali in a good position to take advantage of the country's growing demand for luxury goods.

Consumption in India is set to reach \$4 trillion by 2025, according to a report from the Boston Consulting Group, suggesting that luxury brands may do well to invest more resources in marketing and selling in the market ([see story](#)).

Not only that, Amrapali is also taking a Gandhian approach to luxury goods production, as defined by Bandana Tewari of Vogue India, who called on luxury brands to treat their craftspeople with dignity and respect for tradition as Gandhi encouraged.



*India's affluent class is growing*

Ms. Tewari believes this is Gandhi's most vital message for the fashion world. His idea of self-reliance went beyond freedom from colonization. It also meant freedom from factory-made goods that deny the livelihoods of craftspeople around the world ([see story](#)).

Overall, Amrapali shows how dedication to craft and commitment to tradition can take a luxury brand into the next level, without having to rely on cheap production, outsourcing or other manufacturing tactics that may save a dollar in the short term, but deny the crafts created the dignity that comes with a respected workforce.

"It's fascinating to think that at one time, people didn't think traditional Indian jewelry could be fashionable," Mr. Arora said. "My father challenged that belief and was rewarded for it."