

JEWELRY

Only Natural Diamonds, Van Cleef & Arpels explore one of world's largest diamonds

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A pair of natural diamond earrings from the group's exclusive "Lesotho Legend and Van Cleef & Arpels' Diamond Legacy" campaign film. Image credit: Only Natural Diamonds

By AMIAH TAYLOR

Natural Diamond Council's consumer-facing digital platform Only Natural Diamonds is offering an exclusive look at the jewelry crafted from the fifth-largest gem-quality diamond ever mined.

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The 910-carat jewel was discovered in the Leteng mine in Lesotho, South Africa in 2006. The single diamond had the unparalleled quality of being able to yield many high-carat pieces of jewelry, and thus, much deliberation went into how to maximize the potential pieces that would be generated from the stone.

"There is no better way to represent the stars at night," said Nicolas Bos, president at [Van Cleef & Arpels](#), in a statement.

"There is no better way to match the darker colors of sapphires or black onyx," he said. "I cannot imagine that [we'd] create jewelry without diamonds."

Legendary jewels

Only Natural Diamonds' "Lesotho Legend and Van Cleef & Arpels' Diamond Legacy" campaign film was captured by British artist Simon Procter, known for previous collaborations with designers Karl Lagerfeld, John Galliano and Vivienne Westwood.

The spot depicts an interview with Mr. Bos as he breaks down how the Lesotho Legend diamond was converted from a rough stone to several choice cut diamonds over the course of a year.

The Lesotho Legend, a singular D color, type 2A rough diamond, was purchased by French jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels in 2018.

"Diamond for us is not crystallized carbon," Mr. Bos says in the campaign film.

"It's a marvel of nature that was born at the heart of the Earth millions of years ago and has been cut and perfected by man."

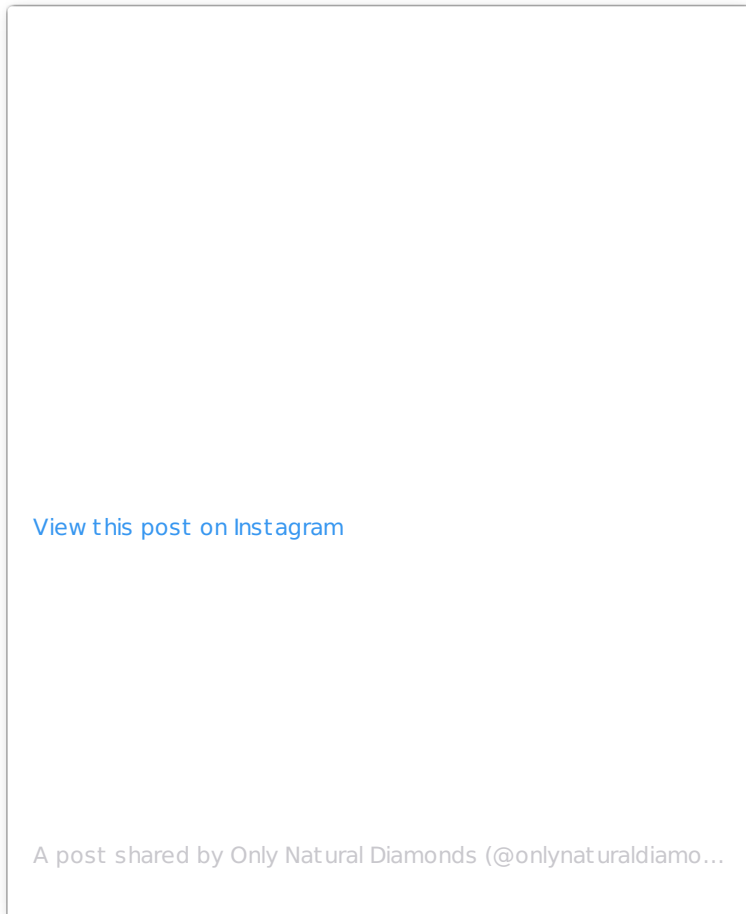
OND's "Lesotho Legend and Van Cleef & Arpels' Diamond Legacy" campaign film

3D mapping was utilized in order to maximize the use of the stone and create shapes and sizes according to the French maison's preference.

The ultimate result was a plan to yield 67 stones total from the diamond while minimizing unnecessary gemstone waste.

While the temptation may have been present to create the largest diamonds possible from the ample parent stone, Mr. Bos shares that bigger is not always better in the fine jewelry business.

"Going too big for a diamond that is going to be set on a necklace does not necessarily mean something for us because there are certain sizes that we feel are probably very interesting as specimens but they lose the elegance and lightness that we look for," Mr. Bos explains.



This necklace was one of 25 pieces created from the Lesotho Legend stone

For necklaces, the house is partial to emerald or oval shapes for center stones, using each to maximum effect in this collection.

One of the crown jewels produced from the Lesotho Legend diamond was "The Collarette Mystrieuse," a necklace that features a 51.18-carat emerald-cut diamond, surrounded by complementary diamonds and rubies and bordered with pink sapphires and square cut diamonds intended to mimic lace.

The clasp is hidden by a diamond-encrusted bow and draws inspiration from haute couture fashion.

The world of diamonds

French jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels has been infusing movement into its designs since 1906 and its stand-out necklace "The Collarette Mystrieuse" is no exception.

In the same vein, the maison recently unveiled a free exhibition in London, "The Art of Movement: Van Cleef & Arpels, Living Moments, Eternal Forms," which emphasizes dance and motion ([see story](#)).

The Richemont-owned brand is not shy about collaborating with peer organizations or adding beauty and glamor to celebrity style. Only Natural Diamonds' latest digital cover star Jurnee Smollett wore a Van Clef & Arpels necklace studded with brilliant white diamonds for her editorial look ([see story](#)).

Van Cleef & Arpels also produces its own digital content. The "Go beyond the classroom!" video series offers interested consumers jewelry education and masterclasses ([see story](#)).

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