

# Mary Lou Jewellery

## *Code of Conduct*



## *Our Vision & Ethical Considerations*

At Mary Lou Jewellery we want to create a universe where creativity and imagination meet, from which unique, hand-crafted and responsible jewellery can emerge.

We take pride in creating each piece with the utmost care and attention to detail both in our production and sourcing of materials. At Mary Lou Jewellery we strive to use only the finest materials to bring our customer’s visions to life, hand-picking our suppliers with attentiveness.

Our vision is to create responsible quality jewellery that will last a lifetime. Jewellery that is locally produced in Copenhagen, in a healthy work environment by employees who are taken care of.

We live and definitely learn in our work practice by asking questions and seek out new responsible ways of sourcing, producing and marketing our jewellery. The following passages aims to describe our code of practices, to inform and guide employees within Mary Lou Jewellery, our suppliers and stakeholders.

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## Human Rights

**Legal employment letters** - At Mary Lou Jewellery all employees have legal and accessible employment letters. The employment letters protect and secure the workers by specifying their work assignments and requirements, wage and terms of termination. The Civil Service Act applies to all employees working in Mary Lou Jewellery.

**Fair wages** - This principle aims to respect the right of employees to receive fair wages. Every employer is presented a wage decided in consultation with the owner of Mary Lou Jewellery, Marie-Louise Joensen. Factors such as educational background, work experience and personal qualities form the basis of the salary.

- Every wage and benefit must be paid in a timely manner.
- Salary increase is continually monitored, usually once a year.
- We encourage our suppliers to work towards providing a fair living wage for all of their workers.

## Workplace & Culture

**Modern and healthy work environment** - The purpose of this principle is to create a healthy and modern working environment where employees' health is taken seriously.

- A work week consisting of maximum 32 hours.
- Employees must have daily breaks and are allowed a minimum of 2 days off per week.
- Every employee is encouraged to verbalize their well-being.
- Every employee has the ability to take a day off if needed.
- Focusing on the chance to be able to work from home, if possible.

## *Health & Safety*

**Reduction of hazardous substances** - This principle aims to protect and create a healthy physical environment for all employees. When producing jewellery many substances occur, here among hazardous ones. At Mary Lou Jewellery we strive to use as few substances as possible. The chemicals which we cannot do without in our work, for ultra sonic cleaning, acid vessel and tumbling, we have replaced with natural based materials such as citric acid and neutral dishwashing soap. Eliminating sulfuric acid, harsh chemicals for ultra sonic cleaning and Vitrex. This principle also entails our responsibility as a company, to discharge as little harmful substances into the environment as possible.

**Available protective equipment** - All workstations in Mary Lou Jewellery is provided with the necessary protective equipment such as masks and safety gloves while working with epoxy glue, warm wax, silver cleaning and when testing gold with trying acid.

Hearing protection is provided while hammering or whenever loud sounds occur in the workshop. We aim to minimize the use of ultrasonic baths through out the day to avoid sound disturbance.

**First aid and fire** - There is always band aid, lotion, eye cleanser and fire extinguisher available in the workshop.

**Clean air** - This principle aims to create a healthy work environment. In addition to the legally required extraction system, we practice daily ventilation of at least three rounds. In the summer time all workstations are supplied with fans.

**Stretches and change of scenery** - All employees are encouraged to change their work positions and tasks to avoid injuries. Stretches are reminded of daily.

## *Environment & Chemicals*

**Waste management** - At Mary Lou Jewellery materials and other waste products that occur during our work practice are sorted to the best of our ability. Everyday waste such as paper, plastic, glass, cardboard and leftover foods is sorted. Any waste material during production such as metal splinters, saw blades and drills are also sorted according to national waste executive order. Any toxic waste materials is sorted directly as hazardous materials. This principle entails our responsibility as a company to work towards a healthier and more sustainable environment, by sorting our waste and harmful substance correctly.

**Reduction of waste** - The principle is part of our sustainable actions. A small initiative out of many. At Mary Lou Jewellery we strive to the best of our ability to reduce our everyday waste in the workshop and store. Any received packaging in form of plastic bags, cardboard boxes and shipping envelopes is re-used.

Every snip from giftwrapping is saved and cut to smaller pieces for labeling. Drills that are broken or worn out won't be sorted as metal waste right away, with the possibility of reshaping the drills to other purposes.

Grocery shopping is done once a week, supplying lunch and snacks for the entire week. The purpose is to reduce our food waste aiming no food waste at all.

**Handling of chemicals** - Every employee are informed about the use and correct handling of hazardous chemicals and the consequences resulting from incorrect use. All hazardous substances are stored safely in closed boxes in the workshop. Any material that has been in contact with hard or toxic chemicals are stored in an airtight container, until ready to be emptied through correct sorting.

At Mary Lou Jewellery we have conducted a Restricted Substance List (RSL), to ensure that our employees, customers and suppliers are aware of which substances that are present in our production. Another reason for creating a RSL is to keep track and reduce the use of hazardous substances in our supply chain (Link to RSI).

## Materials & Transport

**Precious, solid metals** - This principle has been a core value of Mary Lou Jewellery since its beginning. By working with only precious metals we secure that our end product is durable, long lasting and capable of lasting a lifetime. We don't do fast fashion - compromising with materials that only functions for a short period of time, isn't an option for us. Every jewellery piece is handcrafted in the workshop in either 14, 18, 21 or 22 karat gold and also in solid silver on demand.

**Untreated, precious stones** - We strive to only sell and buy untreated, precious stones. We like the idea of the stones being natural without any artificial treatment, for example when the stone is heat treated in a lab. We use unheated sapphires and natural diamonds in our products. We have a close collaboration with both our sapphire supplier and diamond supplier, securing a constructive dialogue when it comes to the stones origin, extraction and shipment.

- A large selection of our jewellery is made with natural, untreated sapphires from the Ilakaka region of Madagascar.

The fairy-tale sapphires and their rainbow colors are created solely by nature's own forces making each individual sapphire completely special. Ilakaka is a unique area as it is the only place in the world where nature itself creates sapphires in all the colors of the rainbow. The sapphire is a hard gemstone and therefore very useful to place in a piece of jewellery you want to wear every day. The sapphire is not easily scratched and it takes a lot for it to break.

- When it comes to diamonds we mainly work with natural, round diamonds of the quality TW/VS and W/VS when creating our jewellery. The designations TW/VS and W/VS refer to the diamond's color and inclusions. 'TW' and 'W' means either that the diamond is rare white or white.

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'VS' means that there are very small inclusions in the diamonds. Inclusions are small particles that sit inside the gemstone. When working with diamonds with very small inclusions (VS), it is not possible to detect the inclusions with the bare eye.

The majority of diamonds we work with are brilliant-cut, which is the most widespread and modern cut today. When the diamond is brilliant cut the gemstone has had 58 top and bottom facets cut, creating a beautiful light reflection that sparkles magically. The diamond is the hardest gemstone available, so in addition to its beautiful shine, it is a gemstone that lends itself well to jewellery that will last a lifetime and more.

**Responsible pearls** - This principle speaks into Mary Lou Jewellery's devotion to only use natural, responsible materials.

Every single pearl that is used for a design is handpicked by us, at our supplier.

Our supplier work directly with the pearls farms from which they select their pearls. The pearls are cultivated in pearl farms, located in Japan, China, Vietnam, French Polynesian and Tahiti. While cultivating the pearls all pearl farms consider both the social and environmental impact within their practice.

All pearl farms are working towards a more sustainable practice, but not every farm can be labeled as sustainable, but are at least traceable.

When it comes to pearls you can divide the subjects into natural pearls and cultured pearls. In the case of natural pearls, there has been no human influence in the cultivation of the pearl. Many thousands of clams must be opened to potentially find one small natural pearl, which is why natural pearls are extremely rare. With cultured pearls, the mussel is helped to form mother-of-pearl around a foreign body, while the mussel continues to grow the pearl in its natural environment.

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Here, a small mother-of-pearl ball is placed in the mussel's soft parts from which the mussel itself, under clean conditions and careful care, forms mother-of-pearl around the small ball. So even though this type of cultivation is human-influenced the cultured pearl is still a natural product.

However a Keshi pearl which we also use, is pure mother-of-pearl and very close to a natural pearl. It comes from the South Sea, Akoya and Tahiti oysters by coincidence when the pearl oyster has managed to belch out the inserted nucleus, but the process of creating the mother-of-pearl continues. The name 'keshi' can only be used for pearls coming from a saltwater pearl.

We work with both saltwater cultured pearls and freshwater cultured pearls. Pearls such as South Sea pearls, Tahitian pearls and Akoya and Keshi pearls. The pearls come in many different shapes, colors and sizes.

**Responsible and recycled gold** - We are currently provided with bio gold from a Danish supplier. Bio gold is recycled gold from old jewellery and dental subjects within the industry. This means that no new gold is extracted from earth, depleting on its resources. At Mary Lou Jewellery we encourage our customers to look through their jewellery selection at home, with the possibility of using their own gold in a new recycled jewellery of their wish. In this way we can either up-cycle old jewellery or recycle the gold itself to a completely new piece.

**Transport** - At Mary Lou Jewellery we use transportation in the delivery of our materials, packaging and tools. The transportation can be divided into two categories.

The first being the transportation of the materials from their origin places to our suppliers hands. The second being the transportation from the hands of our suppliers to ours. The transportation chain is therefore complex





## Materials & Transport

with several actors, which leads to emissions in the transport of these subjects.

Our precious stones are flown in from either Sri Lanka, South Africa, Congo, Siberia, India, Brazil and Russia to Antwerp.

The pearls are flown in from Asia to our pearl supplier in Copenhagen. Our gold supplier has their gold refined in EU and transported via flights or trucks to their locality here in Denmark. Our packaging is produced in Denmark and transported through local shipping companies such as GLS and Postnord. We cycle to all of our suppliers in Copenhagen and pick up our order when it has arrived.

We strive to decrease our orders by carry out larger orders and making sure we are up to date with our stock and regularly anticipate the needs of materials in the future.

We encourage our suppliers to buy larger amount of relevant subjects to decrease transport and emissions.

## Suppliers

**Sapphire supplier, Wennick-Lefevre** - Our Danish sapphire supplier Svend, from Wennick-Lefevre, has since the late 00s and early 10s, invested in and collaborated with local partners from Madagascar and Sri Lanka, who respectively mine and polish the sapphires locally. It is a pleasure for us to work with sapphires from Wennick-Lefevre, as we can trace the sapphires' path all the way from the mine in Ilakaka, to the grinding mill in Sri Lanka, to our hands in Denmark. We can thereby follow the conditions and together, in our work in the organization Copenhagen Commitment, continue to improve and support the local community in Ilakaka, where the sapphires originate.

The gems are cut at Svends co-owned cutting factory Sunrise facets, in Sri Lanka, which is co-owned and driven by a woman, Nilanthi. She has created a workshop for women, where she educates women in cutting stones and all the workers are women.

## Suppliers

**Diamond supplier, PURE Diamonds** - Our diamond supplier is the Danish company PURE Diamonds, which is owned and managed by Claus and Ole. As the only diamond dealer in Denmark, PURE Diamonds is registered as a member of the Beurs Voor Diamanthatel, Antwerp, which is among the world's oldest and most prestigious diamond exchanges. They are also associate member of the WFDB – World Federation of Diamond Bourses. PURE Diamonds only deals with diamonds that come from certified dealers, and all their diamonds are checked by the Hoge Raad voor Diamant (HRD) in Antwerp before being traded. We work closely with Claus and Ole and have a good and constructive dialogue regarding the diamonds we purchase for our products.

**Pearl supplier, Marc' Harit** - Our pearls are supplied by the Danish pearl company Marc' Harit, owned by Kira Høg Kampmann.

Marc' Harit is a top player when it comes to responsible cultured pearl farming. In collaboration with responsible pearl farms, Marc' Harit works with three categories within their pearl classification. Here they categorize the pearls based on their traceability and the way in which the pearls have been cultivated. In this way, a clear transparency is created in the pearls' origin and cultivation conditions. As well as monitoring the socially and environmentally responsible conditions the pearls are created by and in. The company regularly visits the pearl farms from which the pearls are grown, and in this way, can inspect the conditions and at the same time guarantee that the pearls which are to be sold as responsible pearls, are in accordance with responsible principles.

**Gold supplier, Frits Pedersen** - Our gold are supplied by the Danish company Frits Pedersen. Frits Pedersen only sell recycled gold from the jewellery, watch and dental industry, also referred to as biogold.

## *Suppliers*

Our vision for 2024 is to be able to offer our customers the possibility to purchase eco fair-minded gold through the German company FAIREVER. By using fair-minded gold in our production we can ensure our customers that the gold is extracted from both socially og environmentally responsible conditions, by knowing the complete origin of the gold.

## *Areas to Improve*

The jewellery industry is a difficult industry to navigate in and has a lot of improvement areas - and so do we at Mary Lou Jewellery.

We do our best to ask questions and seek out new ways to improve old, non-responsible ways of running a jewellery business, so we can pass the planet on to the next generations with good conscience. We want the responsible approach to shine through both within our selection of materials, production and delivery.

### **Materials, gold**

To support our vision in regards to our materials and transparency, we wish to offer our customers the opportunity to purchase ECO fairminded gold from the german company Fairever. Besides offering bio gold from our main supplier Frits Pedersen, we wish to fill our main stock of materials, including gold wires and casting grain, with gold from Fairever.

## Areas to Improve

By knowing the origin of the gold, we can ensure our customers and support our responsible approach.

### **Materials, gemstones**

We are currently researching the opportunity to buy gemstones, with particular focus on diamonds, where it is possible for us to trace the diamond all the way back from the mine to our hands. At the moment it is very difficult to trace the specific value chain of a diamond. It can be sourced one place, transferred to different markets and polished a third place before it comes to Antwerpen where it is sold and distributed. Larger diamonds are given and traded through certifications which can help buyers to navigate within the diamond industry. But because of the diamonds complex value chain, it is impossible to ensure every single condition under which the diamond is sourced and traded.

We would like to collaborate directly with a sustainable mining company, where we are able to follow every single step the diamonds go through, before we use it in our jewellery pieces.

### **Production**

We wish to down scale any harmful chemicals in our production, including testing liquid, epoxy glue and flux, still knowing it is impossible to completely eliminate it in our work. We wish to be aware of future chemicals that can work as less harmful alternatives.

### **Delivery**

We aim to minimize our national and international deliveries of orders that requires transportation emitting carbon dioxide. This we support by:

- *Striving to only place one order per quarter and supplier.*
- *Encouraging our suppliers to minimize their use of transportation when importing their materials.*