

## YOUR NORTH SHORE GUIDE *to* FASHION & STYLE

# LOOK

FASHION FILE  
Kiss & Makeup  
in West Vancouver  
hosts free makeup  
consultations to  
benefit Beauty Night,  
Feb. 12-14  
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NEWS photo Cindy Goodman

**NORTH Vancouver jewelry designer Jessica Reiss displays several pieces from her green jewelry line, Ecocessories ([www.ecocessories.ca](http://www.ecocessories.ca)). Reiss recycles pre-loved, donated jewelry into new stylish and sustainable one-of-a-kind pieces.**

### NORTH VANCOUVER'S ECOCESSORIES

# Shine on

**Caroline Skelton**

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#### **JESSICA Reiss wants to start a revolution.**

Instead of stashing old jewelry in dresser drawers or jam jars to collect dust or, worse, tossing it in the trash, she wants women to consider a greener option: recycling it.

"I really want to start a movement here. I think that there's a real opportunity for women to recycle jewelry. I would love to see every woman, when they do buy a new piece of jewelry . . . that they recycle a piece as well."

Reiss has launched a web-based business making new jewelry out of pre-loved pieces. Through Ecocessories ([www.ecocessories.ca](http://www.ecocessories.ca)) she collects donated jewelry, separates it into its component parts, and gives each a new life in a new design.

Vintage clip-ons become striking, contemporary earrings accented with bright,

coral-toned beads; big buttons get a new life on a delicate silver bracelet; a garage sale tin pendant is new again at the end of gorgeous vintage and fair trade silver chains.

Reiss's newly launched e-commerce site offers an extensive collection of her whimsical bracelets, necklaces, earrings and other work, including handmade knitwear, home decor and artwork. She also offers custom jewelry designing, for those looking for a one-of-a-kind gift for a friend — or a special treat for themselves.

"The whole goal in this is to reduce waste in the world," says Reiss, who makes an effort to use every bit of jewelry that comes her way, replacing broken clasps and the like where necessary.

The idea for the business came from a stroll through last year's EPIC Expo in Vancouver. While some green categories were well represented — green clothing, for instance — Reiss didn't find much jewelry on offer. She immediately saw an

*See Designer's page 20*

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## LOOK

## Designer's blog netted avid fans

From page 19  
opportunity.

"I knew that there were some other people using reclaimed parts of antique jewelry or vintage pieces in their work — but what I want to do with Ecocessories, and what I've been working on since April, is starting a business that recycles all types of jewelry," she says.

She soon embarked on the "huge learning curve" of honing her skills as a jewelry designer. She read up on techniques, and started experimenting and finding her style, finding a passion for asymmetrical design. She also became an enthusiastic pupil in a silversmithing course through North Vancouver Continuing Education, which she found incredibly inspiring.

Soon, she was giving out her creations as gifts to friends and family, who in turn encouraged her to start selling them to the general public. "I didn't let anybody pressure me into moving too quickly, because I knew it was all a process," says Reiss.

So she patiently built up her skills, and meanwhile, built up an avid following via a blog, in which she chronicled her experiences and thoughts on her business, or posted tutorials on jewelry design to help others get in touch with their creative side.

"I want my personality to be infused in my business, because it is personal," says Reiss. "Everything is handmade. And I tried to concentrate on investing my own positive energy and passions into every single piece that I make."

Her online followers have also generously supported her efforts by mailing her their own vintage jewelry for use in her new pieces. Reiss is more than happy to receive any jewelry donations — the donor need only send her an e-mail letting her know the package is in the mail, and the shipping cost required to get it there, and when it arrives, she reimburses their shipping cost.

"So I end up with these amazing, inspiring materials, and . . . it's a solution for them to reducing clutter in their lives," she says.

The next step for Reiss is following up on offers from local stores hoping to carry her work. Following that, she soon hopes to start selling jewelry (and collecting materials) at a local market. A great supporter of Vancouver's thriving handmade community, she has worked frequently with other local businesses, and hopes to continue selling her work in the North Shore community.

But for now, her main focus is capturing the imagination of women, and sparking a wholesale change in the way we look at jewelry.

"Like any fashion item, you buy it for an outfit or for an occasion, and then it goes out of style. Well, wouldn't it be great if you had another purpose for that?"

For more information, see [www.ecocessories.ca](http://www.ecocessories.ca). In celebration of the site's grand opening, shoppers will receive a free pair of earrings (up to \$15 value) with the purchase of any necklace until Feb. 15.



NEWS photo Cindy Goodman

**JESSICA Reiss puts the finishing touches on a necklace from her sustainable jewelry line, Ecocessories.**

## fashion file

**Spread the Love:** This Feb. 12-14 at Kiss & Makeup it's out with the old and in with the new as staff at the West Van beauty boutique edit hair and makeup bags to benefit Beauty Night Society. Book a complimentary makeup application and hair-care consultation at Kiss & Makeup (in the Village at Park Royal) before Valentine's Day and enjoy a gift with purchase from Cargo cosmetics. Beauty Night is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization that provides makeovers and other wellness programs to marginalized women. During the appointment Kiss & Makeup will gratefully accept new makeup and hair-care products for donation to Beauty Night. For more information about Beauty Night visit [www.beautynight.org](http://www.beautynight.org). Call 604-922-6292 to book an appointment.

— Compiled by Layne Christensen

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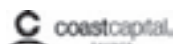
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