

## Internet site offers knock-off designer merchandise

### CYBER SHOP



CARI WALDMAN

If you have traveled to New York City, Los Angeles or Italy, you know street fairs and street vendors are the best sources for designer knock-offs.

Inspired by today's hottest labels and fashion trends, knock-offs offer designer looks at affordable prices. These goods are in no way affiliated with the designers they mimic but make for the ultimate experience in comparison shopping.

So if you don't have a plane ticket in hand or desire to scour city streets in search of these bargains, shop the world of knock-offs from your desk top. Or, if you are clamoring for a designer piece, from Kate Spade to Gucci, grab your mouse and head to my newest favorite shopping web site, anyknockoff.com.

I recommend browsing the site by merchandise category, such as belts, shoes, purses or fragrances, depending on your interests.

I also suggest signing up for the web site's newsletter. And, for users who don't find the knock-off for which they are looking, the site accepts requests and descriptions of trends that customers are interested in seeing duplicated.

Keep in mind anyknockoff.com does not make promises about or offer warranties on merchandise. It also sells goods on an as-is basis.

On the other hand, if you buy a knock-off on the street, the same policies apply.

Here are a few of my picks from a recent visit to anyknockoff.com for wear and use this summer:

■ A narrow "G" unisex belt inspired by Gucci with brushed alloy "G" buckle and a cut-to-fit leather belt strap that measures three quarters of an inch in width. It's priced at \$21, while the designer original runs \$25.

■ A neoprene tote inspired by Prada is priced \$37.00. Original designs run \$375.

■ A neoprene hobo bag, also inspired by Prada, sells for \$44, whereas original versions cost \$575.

■ A summer tote inspired by Burberry has a price tag of \$44. Compare that to \$350 for the original.

■ A miniature modern wallet inspired by Gucci is priced at \$17, much less than the original at about \$100.

Cari Waldman of West Bloomfield is a freelance writer and stylist. Please send your Internet shopping questions to Cari at OECYBERSHOP@AOL.COM.

### anyknockoff.com.

**Merchandise:** Goods inspired by famous brands, fashion trends and top designers, such as Chanel, Fendi, Gucci, Kate Spade, Prada, Paloma Picasso, Prada, Versace, Coach, Louis Vuitton, Cartier, Ferragamo, Tiffany, Erdell and Techno marine.

**Ordering and shipping:** The site offers free shipping with orders of \$100 or more. Merchandise will be shipped via UPS and is subject to UPS standards and regulations and delivery limitations. The web site makes every effort to ship all orders within 24 hours of a purchase, which is good news if you are a fashion addict like me. If an item is out of stock, you will be notified by e-mail. You have a 30-day return policy on any or all of purchases. Upon receipt of returned items, the site will issue a full refund using the original payment method. You will receive a confirmation e-mail including a credit invoice when your return is processed. You can order on-line or over the phone through a toll-free number, (877) 856-6199.

**Drawbacks:** Site contents are offered for sale on an as-is basis. Furthermore, anyknockoff.com makes no representations or warranties of any kind with respect to the site or its contents. It also does not represent or warrant that any information accessible by the site is accurate, complete or current.

## Form and function

### Makeup artist who dabbled in making jewelry stumbles on big idea



STAFF PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER

**Magnetic idea:** Amy Regal of Sylvan Lake presents pieces from her line of magnetic jewelry, AR Fusion. Regal, who works as a makeup artist at Silvin Limited Salon in West Bloomfield, stumbled on the concept while making a bracelet for a salon client. Regal's bracelets click together to form necklaces.

By NICOLE STAFFORD  
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Amy Regal, a makeup artist at Silvin Limited Salon in West Bloomfield, has been taking turns at making jewelry all her life.

And though she's always sold jewelry, some her own creations, from display cases beside her salon work station, her most recent turn has not a business ripe with potential.

Since it wasn't uncommon for clients to ask Regal to make custom jewelry, one brought in a photograph of an expensive bracelet she liked and inquired whether it could be duplicated.

Regal, who lives part time in Sylvan Lake and Boca Raton, gave the project her best effort. Her client loved the bracelet and ordered a second, slightly different, one. Then a funny thing happened when Regal, who had used magnetic clasps on the pieces, brought the two bracelets in for her client's approval. As the client was walking out the door of the salon, she turned around and from across the room requested that Regal make sure the two bracelets were the same length.

Hoping they already were, Regal held up the bracelets and, as

serendipity would have it, the magnetic clasps clicked together, forming a choker-length necklace.

"I rule!" Regal recalls her reaction, instant realization she had stumbled on a big idea, jewelry components that can be put together and pulled apart to create different pieces and wear in a variety of ways.

Today, Regal is looking forward to a formal showing of her work and speaking with Neiman Marcus about a fall trunk show at the retailer's store at the Somerset Collection in Troy.

"I'm just so excited," says Regal, who has dubbed her concept and jewelry collection AR Fusion.

In the meantime, Regal is feverishly developing the concept of magnetic jewelry, given the potential benefits.

Some individuals believe magnets alleviate arthritis. But most women have struggled with the clasps on necklaces and bracelets.

"So not only did I eliminate the need for a husband, but you can pick up a whole new set of silverware on the way out of a restaurant," jokes Regal.

In addition to bracelet sets that click together to form necklaces, Regal is currently making belts, disco purses, earrings and extension components. Most of her



**Three in one:** The bracelets in Regal's jewelry collection click together to form necklaces of different lengths.

designs, which run \$85-1,000, feature sterling silver, cultured and freshwater pearls and marcasite.

She also works with Czech and Chinese glass beads, Swarovski crystals and 14-karat gold plated beads. One series of pieces is solely comprised of sterling silver and gold-plated beads.

The bracelets and extension pieces can be put together and purchased in an infinite number of combinations.

However, Regal suggests buying a set of three bracelets, one dressy, one casual and a third that suits both pieces. Wearers can form one 16-inch choker with two of Regal's bracelets. With three, they can make one 22-inch necklace or two different 15-inch chokers.

Regal also makes bracelets in sets of three designed to complement one another and provide wardrobe versatility.

"Mostly, I've been working on pieces I can replicate and mass produce. My desire is to sell them through stores on a wholesale level."

Still, Regal can't help but experiment. "I didn't have belts a month ago. I didn't have earrings a week ago," she remarks.

Indeed, her approach entails both having fun with AR Fusion and treating it as a viable business. On the one hand, she's spoken with an agent, on the other, she's sold bracelets off her wrist in the lady's room of a bar.

"Where would I ultimately like to be? In a department store, of course. Right now, I'm just riding the wave."

To order AR Fusion jewelry or obtain additional information, call toll-free (866) 611-9300 or visit [www.ARFusion.com](http://www.ARFusion.com) on the Internet.

## ADDED ATTRACTIONS

To schedule a mammogram or obtain additional information, call (734) 762-9324.

### SUNDAY, JUNE 3

#### GOLF GIVEAWAY

Stop by any local Art Van Furniture store and register to win a golf getaway package at Shanty Creek including a 2-night stay and 2 rounds of golf for two people. Register through June 17. For details, call store nearest you: (734) 478-8670 in Livonia; (248) 649-2900 in Royal Oak; (248) 569-3770 in Southfield; (248) 674-4731 in Waterford and (734) 425-9600 in Westland.

#### HOME & GARDEN SHOW

The Somerset Collection's Home & Garden Show 2001 continues through June 24, North Grand Court. The event features a two-story Italian-style home facade and a 6,000-square-foot garden. For more details, call (248) 643-6390.

### MONDAY, JUNE 4

#### MAMMOGRAM TESTING

The Karmanos Cancer Institute mammography van visits the Women's Health Boutique, 31209 Plymouth Road in Livonia, to administer mammograms and distribute breast health awareness information.

### FRIDAY, JUNE 8

#### COSMETICS EVENT

Bring your favorite cosmetic to the Nars beauty counter at Saks Fifth Avenue, the Somerset Collection in Troy, and a Nars makeup artist will incorporate it into a new look for summer, through June 9, Cosmetics & Fragrances, first floor. Call (248) 614-3356 to book an appointment.

#### JEWELRY TRUNK SHOW

Saks Fifth Avenue, the Somerset Collection in Troy, hosts a trunk show of Roberto Coin fine jewelry with a designer representative, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. through June 9, Fine Jewelry Collection, first floor. To schedule a personal appointment, call (248) 643-9000 ext. 219.

### SATURDAY, JUNE 9

#### FAMILY BINGO AT MALL

Livonia Mall hosts family bingo with prizes, 11 a.m. free to the public. For more information, call (248) 476-1160.

#### RETAIL BENEFIT EVENT

Roz & Sherm, 6536 Telegraph Road in Bloomfield Township, hosts the 3rd Annual Michigan Parkinson Foundation Art of Food and Wine event, 7-9 p.m. Tickets are \$75 and include wine tasting, hors d'oeuvres, coffee and dessert. To reserve tickets, call (248) 433-1011 or (800) 862-9781.

### SATURDAY, JUNE 14

#### DANA BUCHMAN COLLECTION

View Dana Buchman's fall 2001 special order collection including misses, petites and plus sizes, with assistance from a designer representative, through June 16, Designer Bridge Sportswear, second floor. To schedule an appointment, call (248) 614-5340.

### SUNDAY, JUNE 15

#### SPORTS SHOW

Livonia Mall hosts a sports card and collectibles show with autograph signers for Father's Day weekend, through June 17. Mall hours are 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Saturday and 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday. For additional information, call (248) 476-1160.

#### ANNUAL JEAN TRADE-IN

Guys N' Gals clothing store at 6333 Orchard Lake Road in West Bloomfield sponsors their 12th annual jean trade-in clothing drive, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Exchange clean, used jeans without holes for a new pair at half the retail price. Collected jeans are given to Oakland County's homeless population. For additional information, call (248) 851-1260.