

# A RARE GEM

*Graff's Bal Harbour boutique gets the Peter Marino treatment, giving the brand's coveted diamond jewelry a dramatic new backdrop.*

BY TANYA DUKES

It's tough to resist remarkable diamonds. Put them in a setting that shines a spotlight on their beauty and it becomes virtually impossible. With its recently redesigned Bal Harbour boutique, Graff has created an environment that will tempt anyone who passes through its doors to take home, say, a cocktail ring with a flawless diamond or butterfly earrings dotted with violet sapphires.

Peter Marino, whose name is as revered in the realm of architecture as Graff's is in jewelry, designed the sumptuous space. His decades-long habit of creating imaginative environments—including salons for Graff in the U.S., Europe and Asia—that mingle art, sumptuous materials and a sophisticated sense of drama made him a natural choice to reimagine the boutique's look. An inside-out overhaul of the structure made way for an atmosphere that subtly mirrors the coastal setting. "We were inspired by the nearby areas of Biscayne Bay and the Atlantic Ocean," says Laurence Graff, the brand's founder and chairman. "We wanted to create a store that reflects the serene and luxurious ambience of the local area."

Geometric stonework, cushy silk upholstery and hand-painted wall coverings have a sheen of elegant opulence—all in a warm spectrum of cream and pale green tones that reveal the influence of the ocean-adjacent location. Bespoke elements, like chiseled mirrored glass surfaces and custom-made display cases with faceted angles inspired by a diamond, are a nod to the glittering jewelry that is the boutique's main attraction.

Beyond an opportunity to rebuild with a fresh point of view, the renovation provided a chance for expansion, and now offers 1,600 square feet of elegance. The extra elbow room allows space for additional features, including a zone dedicated to bridal jewelry and a private VIP salon. Graff describes the latter as "an intimate and



From above: the newly redesigned Graff boutique; the Love Birds brooch, made with 46 carats of pink and white diamonds; the ocean-inspired tones of the boutique's elegant interior.

dedicated space that allows our clients to take their time getting to know our jewels in a suitably luxurious setting."

The arrival of an exhibition featuring some of Graff's unique jewels and timepieces coincided with the reopening of the boutique. The array included examples that highlighted the brand's talent for cutting and polishing exceptionally rare diamonds, especially jewels topping 100 carats. One example, the Graff Sunflower, a 107.46-carat cushion-cut stone is one of the finest yellow diamonds in existence; another, the Graff Venus, is a 118.78-carat diamond in the shape of a heart; and not to be overlooked is the Graff Fascination, an extraordinary watch comprising over 152 carats of white diamonds framing a pear-shape dial.

But, according to the brand's founder, even after the departure of the roving exhibition, the Bal Harbour boutique has no shortage of spectacular offerings on display. "All of our jewels are special," says Graff. "They each have their own personalities and charisma."