



## CADY CARLSON DESIGNS – Remembering: *Custom Reliquary Pendants*



When a dear friend's father passed away over the holidays, she contacted me to see if I could make several pendant capsules to carry his remaining ashes after sprinkling them on his land in New Mexico. Together, we decided to engrave the mountain scene from a provided picture of their travels. She distributed these beautiful tokens to her family members so they can always have a part of him with them.

## *Counting Down to Feb 14...*

Start thinking now about your Valentine's gifts! May I suggest simple dangle earrings for the ladies and perhaps a custom key chain or cuff links for the gents? Maybe a fun bracelet for a kiddo? If you want to go traditional, red gemstones are always a classic but can sometimes be hard to match up with an outfit. Bring in what you're planning on wearing and I'll tailor-make some beautiful jewelry for you! Check out this new inventory item: Lab-Grown Ruby and Opal in Sterling Silver available for \$169 plus tax.



## *Gems for a Lifetime* *Popular Engagement Ring Diamond Alternatives*

You've likely heard me preach the wonders of lab-grown diamonds. They're more affordable (although not cheap), ethically sourced, and gorgeous! But are you aware of the growing trend of alternative gems for engagement rings and other precious jewelry? I'm loving the design requests for gemstone replacements (some of which also come in lab-grown options!) in custom pieces. Here's a list of some of my favorites, based on durability in everyday wear: Ruby, Sapphire, Alexandrite, Spinel, Topaz, and Quartz. The sapphires even come in a beautiful white color for a more traditional look, and all are available in a variety of colors. Emeralds, Moonstones, Opals and Pearls, although beautiful, should not be used in rings that will get a lot of wear.

# In the News...

Last fall I had an amazing opportunity to attend a Jewelry Conference hosted by one of my major suppliers and was delighted to learn a previous custom ring I designed was a featured photo in the conference marketing materials. I learned so much and was able to access its international research on trends and best business practices which I've already begun to incorporate into my business plan. But my favorite part was the factory tour that spanned 1/3 mile long!... The 3rd annual Holiday Show & Art Sale in December was a huge success and I so appreciate everyone who came to support me – especially the casting class members:)... Speaking of, I had tons of fun teaching two Casting with Cady Classes at WaterWorks Art Center last year, and am on the schedule for this year, too. Students of all skill levels learn methods for developing wax models and the centuries-old processes



required to create a finished, one-of-a-kind piece of sterling silver jewelry. After demonstrating the techniques students can then develop their own project(s) such as a pendant for casting. The classes seem to fill up quickly so if you are interested be sure to get on their snail mail and/or email distribution lists or add them on Facebook. In the spring we are even adding a Continuing Casting with Cady class... In celebrating my fifth year of business, (yay, me!) I'm reorganizing a bit and preparing to launch several small production lines. Of course I'll maintain the custom work (my first love), the 3-d printed pieces on Shapeways, and will have all the one-of-a-kind just fun-to make inventory on my online Etsy shop with this logo... As always, if you are in the Brady Arts District check out my work at the AHHA Gift Shop. Each jeweler has a few pieces out and more in assigned pull-out drawers!... Give me a call to arrange to come by the studio and get your jewelry cleaned, or even just share a cup of coffee or tea. *Thanks for reading!*

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