



Calgaro extra-long link necklace in 18-karat gold features citrine quartz stations. [Calgaro.it](http://Calgaro.it).

By Lorraine DePasque

As always, jewelry that premiered at “Vicenzaoro First” (January 11-18) in Vicenza, Italy, was appetizing. Nonetheless, the specialty on this show’s menu was easy to read: *Lite Italian*. Pieces were perforated, ovals were open, links were lacelike. Cutouts everywhere — all in the name of jewelry that’s less in weight and, subsequently, lower in cost.

Given the prevailing prices of precious metals and the difficult global economic reality, this open-minded embrace of openwork wasn’t astonishing. Still, what was somewhat surprising — and heartening — was the Italian jewelers’ willingness to expend money and time in order to continue its tradition of innovation. Fashion-forward Calgaro, for example, premiered a new collection — called “Perfect Soleil” because its round rings are reminiscent of the sun. But, in fact, it’s really quite an especially appropriate name since its distinctive innovation shone like the sun. The collection is based on groundbreaking technology that gives each piece a heavy look but an almost astounding lightness in actual weight. The Vicenza-based company emphasizes that it is not electroforming, a technique that some manufacturers use to produce hollow gold. It is, instead, a proprietary new process and, somehow, thanks to Calgaro’s commitment to R&D, the open and hollow discs have the ability to hold bezel-set diamonds.

In Italy, this Mediterranean country historically known for its high aesthetic, trendsetting jewelers are also, more and more frequently, combining precious

# LITE ITALIAN



These open oval drop earrings in 18-karat gold with diamonds are from the Marco Bicego “Jaipur Collection.” [MarcoBicego.com](http://MarcoBicego.com)

metal (mostly 18-karat yellow or pink gold since, right now, that continues to be the fashion trend) with raw and rough-cut stones (also less expensive than closer-to-perfect polished gems), semi-precious cabochons (which don’t show flaws like some lesser-quality faceted gems might), and alternative non-precious materials (particularly ceramic, wood, rubber, and titanium).

Brescia-based Jarretiere, which has won awards and accolades for its inventive colors of gold, launched a line incorporating ceramic into its signature bracelets and rings that stretch and expand like garters to fit each individual wearer. (The word *jarretiere* is French for *garter*.) So, this year, as another sign of the times, the newest collection of Jarretiere is primarily more affordable in ceram-

ic/18-karat gold/diamonds — all over its usual core of stainless steel springs. Still pretty but, for now, just more practical.

When describing Italian jewelry, does using the word *practical* seem almost sacrilegious? It isn't. Most of the country's manufacturers agree that it's simply the result of the Italian jewelry community doing what it does best: being imaginative and sensible in unimaginable economic times that don't make sense.



Semi-precious cabochon gems that evoke the sunset shades of Capri are key to Roberto Coin rings in the new 18-karat gold "Capri Plus Collection." RobertoCoin.com

Nanis perforated heart pendants in 18-karat gold from the "Q-ori Collection" are truly open-hearted! Nanis.it



Fibo International men's pendant mixes rubber with 18-karat gold. FiboGold.com.



Multi-strand bracelet from Calgaro is in 18-karat rose gold with amethyst stations and diamonds set in new lightweight gold circles. Calgaro.it.



Luca Carati's 18-karat open-worked pink gold ring has a filigree look and is from the romantically inspired "Elizabeth Collection." LucaCarati.it.



Jarretiere double-strand stretch bracelet in 18-karat gold with diamonds combines chocolate-colored ceramic. Jarretiere.it.



"Olga Collection" ring in 18-karat gold from Nanis has open oval top and diamond accent. Nanis.it.

# LITE ITALIAN



Piero Milano 18-karat gold necklace and earrings from the "Botanica Collection" have a substantial overall look but airy undertone. Piero-milano.it.



Two cut-out rings are from Talento's "Ricami Collection." TalentoGioielli.it.



La Pepita's openwork earrings in 18-karat gold are dotted with bezel-set diamonds. LaPepita.it.



A charm bracelet in 18-karat white gold from Utopia's "Notturmo Collection" spotlights a single but statement-making South Sea pearl. Utopia-jewels.com.



Affordable white mother-of-pearl is an important element in this necklace of interlocking open ovals from Talento. TalentoGioielli.it.

From the "Elika Collection" of DADA Arrigoni, diamond earrings in 18-karat white gold have a sensual but slim open silhouette. DadaGioielli.it



Nanis "Q-ori Collection" ring in 18-karat gold and white pavé diamonds is perfect in its perforations — on top and on the shank. Nanis.it.

Slim and open hoop earrings from Mattioli are from its "Vertigo Collection." MattioliGioielli.it.

