

‘Time For India To Discover Precious Polish Amber’

Ada Dyndo, chief of Polish Investment and Trade Agency’s Mumbai office, aims to strengthen Indo-Polish ties in the gem and jewellery sector and popularise amber, the ‘Gold of the North’. *Solitaire* caught up with Ada at IIJS.



Ada Dyndo

Give us a brief introduction about Poland’s jewellery history.

Poland has unique jewellery to offer, especially when it comes to amber and silver. The northern region of Poland next to the Baltic Sea is home to the largest known deposits of amber. Amber (bursztyn in Polish) is fossilised tree resin, known as ‘The Gold of the North’ or the ‘Gem of the Baltic’. That’s because of its transparent or opaque colour which can vary from ivory to all shades of reddish brown to almost black. It’s simply beautiful!

In the past, along with salt, amber was considered Poland’s main natural resource and the Gdansk Bay area was considered to be the centre of the European amber trade and crafts. For decades, amber has been highly appreciated internationally and even used for crafting amulets and talismans during the ancient Greek times.

It is also believed that Baltic amber has healing properties. Scientific research has proven Baltic amber’s beneficial effect on human health. It has anti-bacterial and antiseptic properties, supports detoxification processes and acts as an antioxidant.

What is the volume and value of the existing business in the gem and jewellery sector between India and Poland?

Poland is the biggest producer of amber jewellery in Europe and the third-largest of silver jewellery. As a matter of fact, 70% of global sales of Baltic amber products come from Poland. The majority of jewellery production is intended for export. The Polish export is valued at €1 billion (₹7,968 crore) annually and jewellery products are being sold to 80 countries worldwide. In 2017, Poland exported to India various jewellery products worth almost €30 million (₹239 crore).

Moreover, fashion and jewellery industries have been chosen as sectors of the Polish economy holding promise for international success and recognition.

Since 2017, the Polish Investment and Trade Agency has been supporting Polish companies in promoting their products and services during trade fairs and industry events. We help Polish companies to reach out to new business partners and expand internationally, also to India. The Polish Pavilion at the IIJS is part of this programme and we expect that Polish amber products will spark attention from Indian visitors.

What do Polish jewellers find interesting about the Indian market?

The gems and jewellery sector in India plays a significant role in the Indian economy,

contributing to around 7% of the country's GDP. Its market size is about \$75 billion as of 2017 and is expected to reach \$100 billion by 2025. Polish producers are aware of the fact that it is one of the fastest growing sectors in India and that it can offer a lot of opportunities for their jewellery products.

Secondly, India is a very diverse market with people who pay attention to their appearance and appreciate and wear high quality jewellery. Personally, I have always admired the attention that Indian women pay to details and the ability to match the jewellery with their outfits. I am sure that Indian visitors will be highly interested in Polish products such as the Tears of Times collection of amber necklets.

What are the primary gem and jewellery products that Poland specialises in and hopes to sell in India?

Today, amber jewellery is the most recognisable category of jewellery associated with Poland. It also means that amber-decorated items are one of the most ordered gifts by foreign guests. For example, in China, the adjective "Polish" is a synonym of high quality and it relates to both amber jewellery, and

the quality of Polish workmanship and design.

The strength of the Polish jewellery market lies in its flexibility, creativity in design, following fashion trends and implementing them in the jewellery sector. Visitors at the IIJS will have a chance to see examples of elegant and sometimes even extravagant design of amber and silver jewellery made by Agata Calka, one of the exhibitors at the Polish Pavilion during the IIJS in Mumbai.

The other Polish company, Amber Vision, specialises not only in jewellery, but also in religious items made of amber. During the IIJS, Amber Vision showed amber prayer beads for Buddhists (mala) and Muslims (tasbih).

Tell us why Polish exhibitors have chosen to exhibit at IIJS. How many exhibitors are there in the Polish Pavilion? What products are they exhibiting at the show?

Polish exhibitors regard IIJS in Mumbai as the best opportunity in India to show their products because of its scale and worldwide recognition.

Three different exhibitors have come to Mumbai to show their products at the Polish Pavilion – Tears of Time, Amber Vision and Agata Calka. However, the Polish Investment and Trade Agency ensures that Indian visitors will also have a chance to obtain information and promotional materials from other Polish companies. Most of these companies have already expanded from local family workshops in Poland to jewellery brands with stores present in the major cities of China. The preciousness of Polish amber has already been

Tears of Times amber necklet.

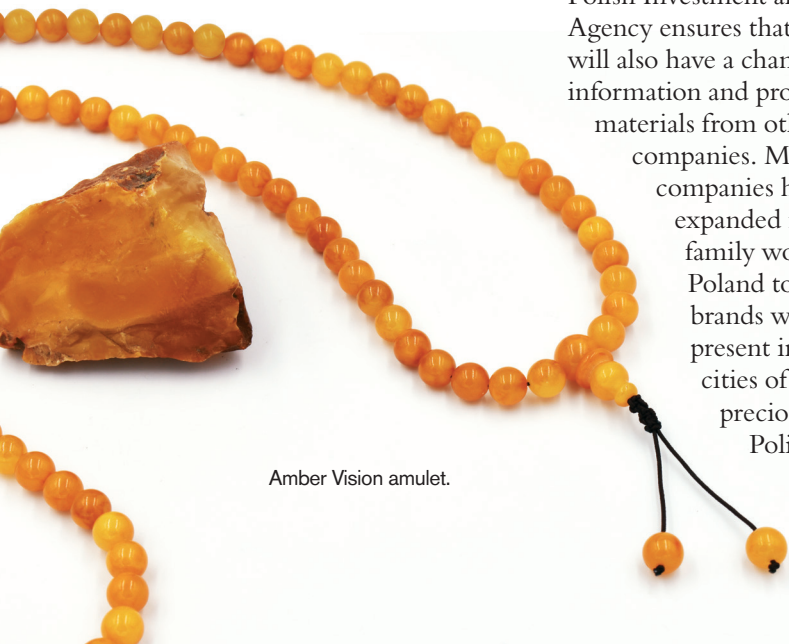


recognised around the world, now it's time for India.

How are Polish companies supported in order to enter the Indian market?

In 2016, the Polish government deemed India as one of Poland's topmost prospective export markets. Being fully aware of India's potential, Polish Investment and Trade Agency has decided to launch its Foreign Trade Office in Mumbai in 2018. This decision aims to strengthen the economic relations between the two countries, and allows Indian entrepreneurs to discover what Poland has to offer.

The Mumbai-based trade office provides support to Polish exporters and investors who are looking for new business opportunities in India. Its role is also to attract Indian investors to the Polish market. The Mumbai-based trade office will not only be an information centre, but also a proactive consulting partner helping Polish companies to take their first steps into the Indian market – for example, by supporting Polish amber companies in finding partners or clients in India. ■



Amber Vision amulet.