

# ROBERTO COIN

## THE MAN BEHIND THE BRAND

BY CHRISTINA BOHNSTENGEL

*SIX HUNDRED NEW DESIGNS* each year, more than one hundred animalier works, a patented diamond with one hundred facets, and a small signature ruby to complete every piece: these are the hallmarks that define Roberto Coin designs. His luxury jewelry collections—available in sixty-two countries, in more than one thousand stores, with twenty flagships worldwide—are lauded as the best in the world; in 2014, the Pois Moi Collection won Best Italian Jewelry Collection in the World from the International Palladio Awards—the Oscars of jewelry.

But this master artist was not always hailed as a jeweler extraordinaire. His introduction to the luxury lifestyle began in the hospitality industry.

**Sculptural Ring**

*GOLDEN GATE COLLECTION*

Inspired by the architecture and technology of the famed bridge.

**“EVERY WOMAN WHO OWNS  
A ROBERTO COIN PIECE WILL  
HAVE GOOD FORTUNE.”**

After losing his parents at a young age, Coin was off to a Swiss boarding school by the time he was eleven. He trained in the ways of the hotel trade, earning a diploma from Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne, one of the world’s best schools for hospitality management. At twenty-four years old, he and two friends invested in a hotel in the British Channel Islands and transformed it into an elite destination for the international jet set and royals of the world.

“I was personally involved from the beginning, with the layout and interior design, and it became the most important hotel in the Channel Islands,” he told *Elite Traveler* back in 2008.

But he became restless and at age thirty-three sold his stake in all of it and returned to Italy, where his family first planted its Venetian roots in 1503. The service-oriented entrepreneur began honing his sparks of creative genius. “Out of all the places which I could have gone in fashion—it could have been clothes, it could have been bags, shoes, whatever—I fell in love very much with jewelry,” he said to *Montage Magazine* in 2015. I learned the trade [for] seven years before I decided to manufacture.... And that’s when life started.”

In 1977, Roberto Coin founded his eponymous brand in Vicenza—appropriately called The City of Gold—creating pieces for luxury retailers. Nearly twenty years later, in 1996, the master jeweler premiered his own first collection, along with a signature design element: he finished every piece with a 0.3-carat inlaid ruby.

“The Pharos gave rubies to their wives. They believed when the stone touched the skin it would bring good luck, health, happiness, and even fertility,” he explained on a 2014 US promotional tour. “I thought it was a beautiful story, so I began adding them to the Appassionata collection, and eventually to every piece. So, every woman who owns a Roberto Coin piece will have good fortune.”

For Basel World 2015, the world’s most important watch and jewelry trade show, Roberto Coin wowed once again with the eagerly awaited Golden Gate Collection and a patented new clasp that closes automatically, along with the hand-chiseled Princess Collection, the buzzworthy Tanaquilla Collection, and the icon of the luxury label, the Pois Moi Collection.

In addition to signature rubies and iconic



**Bejeweled Cuff**  
*TANAQUILLA COLLECTION*  
 Intricately detailed in the ancient Etruscan style.



**Bangle & Earrings**  
*PRINCESS COLLECTION*  
 Brushed satin-finished gold sprinkled with diamonds. Each piece is hand chiseled.



**Hedgehog Ring**  
*ANIMALIER COLLECTION*  
 Black diamonds and brown sapphires shine on 18K rose gold.

collections, Roberto Coin stands out in a sea of sparkle because of its unusual animal pieces.

Hedgehogs, spiders, frogs, and turtles showcase in the Animalier Collection, while the Limited Edition line features an Arabian horse bracelet covered in pavé diamonds, a lion ring in 18-karat yellow gold with colorless diamonds, pink sapphires, and black diamonds, and an elephant coil with a trunk that wraps around the wrist. “Nature is one of the greatest sources of inspiration, together with life and love. I feel respect and fascination for the animal world,” he told industry trade magazine *JCK*.

Admittedly, the designer extraordinaire finds inspiration and beauty everywhere. After all, he is a world traveler, art aficionado, wine and food connoisseur, history buff, and culturist with a passionate enthusiasm for *joie de vivre*. And it is Roberto Coin, the man, whose humanity guides Roberto Coin, the brand. Take those signature rubies, for instance; they aren’t just any rubies. They are synthetic stones. Conflicts in Burma, and the US government ban on rubies and jade from the country, steered his decision to never use any jewel from any region in turmoil. All are guaranteed to be conflict-free. This kind of socially conscious philosophy extends beyond just the zero-tolerance policy towards conflict gems. He is a member of the Responsible Jewelry Council, has been called to speak about responsible luxury at the UN Pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai, the first-ever World Fair hosted in China, and in 2013, the International Palladio Awards named Roberto Coin Best Jewelry Brand for Corporate Social Responsibility.

“Giving back has always been important to me,” he says. “Perhaps it is because I lost my parents at a very young age and always felt that a part of me was missing. I think charity and being able to give to those less fortunate are such an important aspect of who I am and what our brand stands for.” ■

**A Bevy of Bracelets**  
*PRIMAVERA COLLECTION*  
 In yellow, white, and rose gold with diamond accents.

