

Kate's royal ring: Engaged in style, history

By [Donna Freydkin](#), USA TODAY

It's the rock of global renown. Kate Middleton's engagement ring, a pedigreed sapphire and diamond bauble once worn by Princess Diana, has garnered worldwide attention and created its own cottage industry of knockoffs.



By Arthur Edwards, AFP/Getty Images

Priceless: Kate Middleton's engagement ring belonged to Princess Diana. It features an 18-carat sapphire with 14 smaller, white diamonds.



Gemvara.com

\$3,000-plus at Gemvara.com: The Princess Kate ring, with real gems, can be customized.

Everyone, it would seem, wants a piece of the royal romance.

"The ring is gorgeous. It's been worn by the most famous princess in the world and will be worn by the next most famous princess in the world," says jewelry designer [Jennifer Meyer](#) Maguire, whose creations are worn by [Jennifer Aniston](#), [Kate Hudson](#) and [Katie Holmes](#). "How many times in your life can you be part of a real-life fairy tale?"

The ornament itself, says Fred Leighton CEO Greg Kwiat, is fairly traditional and not particularly cutting-edge in its appearance. But that doesn't matter.

"It's not the style that has sparked people's imaginations. It's the fact that it belonged to Diana that made everyone enraptured. It's a fascinating story and bestows on Kate the idea that she's the new Diana, the new people's princess," he says.

And then there's what it represents: true love.

Engagement rings in general, says jewelry guru Judith Ripka, "are an expression of love and commitment. What's interesting about an engagement ring is that it is the one piece of jewelry that most women wear every day for years and years without changing it. So, she has to love it! "



QVC.com

\$39.54 at QVC: The Kenneth Jay Lane Princess Ring, with simulated sapphire.



HSN.com

\$29.95 at HSN: The R.J. Graziano "Posh Princess" ring, with cubic zirconia and simulated sapphire.

Indeed, for many, the ring is the physical manifestation of what seems to be a picture-perfect love affair involving a telegenic young couple. They're charming. Gorgeous. And just beginning their seemingly blissful life together.

There's also the irresistible history of the gem, a tale as brilliant and blue as the rock itself.

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"The world had a love affair with Princess Diana, as a woman who stepped into a royal role at a very young age, carrying herself with style and grace. Princess Diana captivated all with her smile, compassion and endearing ways, and today, all eyes are on Kate to see if she will follow in her footsteps," Ripka says.

"The ring exudes Kate's classic style, while honoring Princess Diana's timeless elegance. Sapphires have long

symbolized truth, sincerity and faithfulness, making it the perfect stone to represent the beautiful marriage to come."

Most of us will never slip on, much less own, a sparkler once worn by perhaps the most famous royal in modern history. The rabid interest in Middleton's attire and demeanor has certainly benefited some retailers, especially those selling ring replicas.

A piece of the romance retails for every price. [HSN](#) is selling the R.J. Graziano Posh Princess faux sapphire ring for \$29.95. [QVC](#) has its own version from Kenneth Jay Lane for \$39.54. And for the heftier price tag of \$3,554, you can opt for real sapphires and diamonds to create your own Middleton-inspired bauble from [Gemvara.com](#).

Ultimately, though, a ring is only made up of stones and metals. It's the relationship that it represents that is a living, thriving entity.