

# BC INSIDER



*Maya Walker embraces personal relationships with her clients and her jewelry designers.*

## MAYA WALKER GLITTERS AND SHINES

From Miss Colorado to traveling singer to local jeweler, Maya Walker belongs in the spotlight

**LOCATED IN THE HEART OF BEAVER CREEK,** Maya Walker Jewels is a locally owned and operated business known for its curated collection of heirloom-quality fine jewelry.

Think of any color of the rainbow, and there it is, glittering from one of the cases. Set in silver, gold or some other precious metal, the jewels flicker a welcome to all who enter.



But owner Maya Walker had several unique adventures before delving into the jewelry business. As a child, she lived in Okinawa, Japan before moving to Oklahoma where her father was on staff with the Army's music branch. At the time, he was in charge of bringing in United Service Organizations shows (live entertainment events hosted for members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families) to Okinawa. Following that, the Civil Service offered her father jobs in several states and he chose Oklahoma.

Music clearly runs in the family as Walker met her husband Terry Smith while they both studied vocal performance at Oklahoma

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City University. While going to school, they began singing together in small venues and eventually sent an audition demo to a few hotels and an agency in Vail. In 1986, they moved to the Vail Valley and, like most locals, fell in love with the area and made it their home.

In addition to singing with Smith during college, Walker was a contestant in the Miss America competition and

won second place. Then, one year after moving to Colorado, she won Miss Colorado. “Winning Miss Colorado helped pay for a lot of my education,” Walker says, “and after becoming first runner in the Miss America competition, I paid off my student loans!”

From 1995 to 2007, Walker and Smith took long-term contracts singing in resort hotels and on cruise ships

which took them to Japan, Europe, and around the United States. “We would come home in the winter to sing here and leave for the summers until the rest of the world realized that the Vail Valley is an amazing summer destination,” she recalls. During that same timeframe, the pair also worked at The Charter and the Hyatt in Beaver Creeek, The Lodge at Vail and the Vail Athletic

Club, as well private events like the World Cup and President Ford's parties.

### THE JEWELRY BUSINESS FINDS HER

In 2007, a friend introduced Walker to Jerry Fehr, who was opening a new jewelry store in Beaver Creek called J. Scott. Fehr was looking for someone to help his daughter until he could hire his full staff. Walker says that since they were both professional musicians, they hit it off and he hired her as a sales associate. "I truly enjoyed the job and quickly learned about the business," she adds. In 2008, she was promoted to buyer and manager — a title she held for eleven years. After Fehr retired, Walker had the opportunity to start her own business and opened Maya Walker Jewels in May 2018.

A year after Covid shut down Beaver Creek, Walker was diagnosed with breast cancer and sought treatment at Shaw Cancer Center and had surgery at Vail Valley Medical. "We all have setbacks, but I was fortunate to have my husband not only care for me during chemo and everything that goes with it, but run the shop as well," she says. "We should all be so loved and cared for." Walker is pleased to report that she has been clear for two and a half years.

Throughout the last six years of running her own business, Walker has acquired an extremely loyal clientele — including tourists who visit her store annually. "The jewelry lines I carry are created by designers I have known for years, as well as the new designers they introduce to me," Walker says.



*Maya Walker Jewels is located near the ice rink.*



“The jewelry industry is a close-knit community that does a lot of business with a handshake and your reputation. It’s a bit old school, but I prefer the personal touch from the designers because then I pass that feeling on to my customers.”

**PERSONAL TOUCH**

In addition to carrying fine jewelry from some of the world’s leading designers including Roberto Coin, Marco Bicego, Cassis, Syna, and Cynthia Ann Jewels, among others, Walker says she likes adding small design companies that do not mass produce and mix well with the feel of her store. “I strive to add pieces that people won’t find in the

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average shop back home,” she explains. “It’s nice to mix it up a little bit, even if you are ultra conservative. Add a little texture or color and you can have a totally new look with the same necklace you have worn for years!” She continues, “Most of my customers have a hometown jeweler so I strive to give them that personal touch and customer service that only the owner can give.”

When customers come in to purchase jewelry for

themselves and gifts for others, Walker notes that the key to helping them is to “ask questions and then listen.” She usually pulls items out while they tell her what they don’t want and then, when something moves them, it’s clear right away. “Our beautiful valley brings a lot of the same people back several times a year, so I have a large repeat clientele,” she explains. “I usually know what is on their wish list from prior visits so I

double as a private jeweler for them.” Even after all the years of traveling, Walker says that the Vail Valley is her true home and where her heart is — something that is clear to locals and tourists when they visit her store. — **BY LAURA LIEFF**

**MAYA WALKER  
JEWELS**

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