



Press release

Alibaba and AWDC partner to bring Antwerp diamonds directly to Chinese consumers

Antwerp, November 6, 2018 – Antwerp World Diamond Centre and Alibaba Group announced that they have entered an exclusive partnership to offer Antwerp certified diamonds to Chinese consumers via Alibaba’s B2C marketplace, Tmall. The cooperation agreement was signed in the framework of the first China International Import Expo (CIEE), which is being held this week in Shanghai.

Chinese consumers love Antwerp diamonds and China is the second largest market in the world for polished diamonds. No other trade center carries with it such an exciting and flourishing history as the Antwerp diamond industry.

The Antwerp diamonds will be available under the name “Shape of Antwerp” on the namesake flagship store on Tmall. The platform is secured at several levels, enabling customers to shop with peace of mind. Each diamond is accompanied by an HRD Antwerp certificate detailing the 4Cs of the stone (cut, clarity, carat and color). Additionally, HRD will laser a QR code onto the girdle of each diamond, which will include its certificate. By scanning this code, blockchain technology will enable the customer in China to follow the journey of the diamond he or she purchased back to Antwerp.

Once consumers have selected a diamond, they can have the stone set into a piece of jewelry. The *Shape of Antwerp* diamonds and diamond jewelry will be sold exclusively via Alibaba’s Tmall platform: [Shape of Antwerp Online Flagship Store](#). The collection will also be on display during the CIEE.

“The growing demand of luxury goods in China is generating tremendous opportunities for international brands and businesses. The diamond market is benefiting from this trend too, as sales are on the rise and China represent now the world's second largest market in the world for polished diamonds,” said Jessica Liu, President of Tmall Fashion and Luxury, Alibaba Group. *“Therefore, we are delighted to be the partner of choice of AWDC, and to give our more than half a billion consumers in China the chance to discover the unique sparkle of diamonds from the world's diamond capital city.”*

“Thanks to the Shape of Antwerp collection, Chinese consumers may enjoy brilliant Antwerp diamonds set in lovely Belgian jewelry designs,” says Ari Epstein, CEO of AWDC. *“We are looking forward to the reaction from the Chinese public.”*

Diamonds love Antwerp

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The cooperation agreement was signed by Nishit Parikh, President of AWDC and Jessica Liu, President of Tmall Fashion and Luxury, Alibaba Group, in the presence of Kris Peeters, Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium and Minister of Employment, Economy and Consumer Affairs, in charge of Foreign Trade and Zhao Ying, Chairman of Alibaba Global Business Group. The signing took place in the residence of the Belgian Consul General in Shanghai.

The **Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC)**, coordinates and officially represents the Antwerp diamond industry, the global leader in the diamond trade. In this role, AWDC promotes the entire diamond industry at home and abroad. AWDC is also recognized internationally as the point of contact, spokesperson and intermediary for the entire Belgian diamond community.

86% of all rough diamonds and 50% of all polished diamonds pass through Antwerp. Diamonds represent 5% of the total Belgian exports and 15% of all Belgian exports outside the EU, making diamonds the most important export product outside the EU.

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