

THE MEMENTO

By Yvonne Gordon
Photography by Tristan Hutchinson



Dublin-based designer Julie Swan can trace her Forgotten China jewelry collection to a fateful gust of wind. She was selling up-cycled china teacup candles and cake stands at an outdoor market when blustery weather knocked over her merchandise. Faced with a pile of smashed ceramics, she put the scraps to use by creating a line of earrings, cufflinks, pendants, and rings.

Now, Swan makes her pieces out of vintage plates, cups, and bowls she rescues from auction rooms and charity shops, never painting them or touching them up with color. "I use pieces that are old and discarded, chipped or cracked," she explains. "Each piece is slightly different; each tells a story." Particularly popular are Irish-made china patterns, such as a delicate floral motifs from Galway's Royal Tara (pictured) or County Wicklow's defunct Arklow Pottery. "It's lovely when people recognize

the pieces or say, 'I remember when Granny had something like that,'" Swan says.

Once she selects a scrap to use, Swan shapes it with a 45,000 PSI water jet cutter, then files it to size, sets it in silver, and finishes it with a touch of resin. The pieces are available at design shops and handicraft boutiques across Ireland—they make for popular anniversary gifts, as tradition dictates giving china to celebrate 20 years of marriage—or you can pick one up from the artist herself at the weekly People's Park seaside market in Dún Laoghaire, a coastal suburb of Dublin. Swan also makes bespoke pieces on commission. "People give me their mum's favorite teacup or their granny's pottery," she says. "I often get tears when I give them back." *From \$52, with free shipping worldwide, forgottenchina.ie*

She Breaks It, You Buy It

A Dublin artist
rescues vintage
Irish china for her
nostalgic jewelry line

