

HANDS-ON:

How two South Florida sisters are literally molding their way to the top

By Andrea Marie Thompson

Using their hands to mold polymer clay into stone-studded pendants, rings and bracelets, Parkland and New York-based sisters, Claudia and Catalina Pieschacon are on their way to creating a mini jewelry empire that



extends from Miami to Monaco. Founded just over a year ago at Claudia's kitchen table, Cleo & Cat Jewels is literally a hands-on business.

The Lake, trees and flowers



Sitting in their studio space that's been hijacked/partitioned out of Claudia's kitchen, the duo say they are inspired by the lake, tree and flower view just outside. Never relying on sketches, each partner molds and forms the polymer clay into whatever shape and design that captures their imagination at the moment and creates a piece right then, right there incorporating precious and semi-precious stones.

Ocean, Sand and Nocturnal



After shaping a piece and setting its stones, they cure the 50 pieces they make each week in a small conventional oven at 300 degrees. Cleo & Cat's current collections – Ocean, Sand and Nocturnal - are making the rounds on the trade show circuit and their pieces can also be found in 14 boutiques across the U.S and in Europe.

Claudia, a painter and interior designer and Catalina, a former designer for *Ralph Lauren's* home furnishings line, presented a two-day trunk show at New York's luxury goods emporium *Henri Bendel* this Spring, and hope to see their jewelry in other top-tier retail outlets – *Bergdorf Goodman, Takashimaya* - within a year. They also plan to open their own boutiques in New York and Miami within five years.

To view more Cat & Cleo pieces, click on www.cleoandcatjewels.com