

BIRKS Unveils the First 131 Ontario Certified Diamonds - Reinforcing its Commitment to Canadian Diamonds

TORONTO, April 26 /CNW Telbec/ - BIRKS will unveil the first 131 diamonds certified by the Government of Ontario, Canada at a private event to be held this evening at the BIRKS Toronto flagship store. These impressive diamonds come from Ontario's first ever diamond mine, the De Beers Canada Victor Mine.

In addition to originating from the province of Ontario, these crystals have been cut and polished at Crossworks Manufacturing Ltd., located in Sudbury, Ontario. The entire process, from the extracting of the rough crystals to cutting and polishing the diamonds, takes place within Ontario as outlined in agreements signed between government and industry. This event will mark the first time that diamonds will complete the journey from the mine to the consumer within the Province of Ontario.

The Ontario certified diamonds will only be available for purchase at the BIRKS Toronto flagship store from April 26th until May 1, 2010. They will be sold as loose diamonds, and clients will have the opportunity to mount them whichever way they choose using platinum or Sustainable Canadian Gold etched with the maple leaf logo and "BIRKS 750".

Each Ontario certified diamond comes with a certificate from the Government of Ontario, Canada indicating the diamond number, which is also etched in the diamond itself. Each diamond will also come with a BIRKS Diamond Certificate and laser engraving on the girdle with a maple leaf - visible with 10x power magnification.

After the event, the Ontario diamonds will be amalgamated with BIRKS' Canadian diamonds and sold under that banner. This will allow BIRKS to offer a greater selection of Canadian diamonds. As well, in May, BIRKS will start offering Amorique jewellery and engagement rings with Canadian diamonds. The Amorique diamond(R) is BIRKS' proprietary cushion-shaped, fancy-cut diamond.

"BIRKS is pleased to offer our clients an increasing number of Canadian diamonds in our assortment. As an iconic Canadian institution, we believe Canadian origin diamonds resonate with our clients and are clearly supportive of our overall sustainability efforts," stated Thomas Andruskevich, President & CEO of Birks & Mayors Inc.

About BIRKS

Birks & Mayors, Inc. (Amex "BMJ") is a leading operator of 64 luxury jewellery stores in the United States and Canada. As of April 26, 2010, the Company operated 33 Birks stores across most major metropolitan markets in Canada and 29 Mayors stores across Florida and Georgia, as well as two retail locations in Calgary and Vancouver under the Brinkhaus brand. Founded in 1879, BIRKS is Canada's premier luxury brand and is the Official Supplier of Jewellery for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. For more information, please visit www.birks.com.

BIRKS' commitment to sustainability was commended in July 2009, when BIRKS was awarded a Sustainability Star from the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic & Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC). As an active participant in the Kimberley Diamond Process, BIRKS ensures the integrity of the diamond supply chain. BIRKS partnered with Mammoth Tusk Gold in an initiative to ethically source gold directly from a certified Canadian placer gold mine thus empowering the local community. In February 2007, BIRKS announced its endorsement of the Boreal Forest Conservation Framework, a vision and commitment to the long-term sustainability of Canada's Boreal region. Finally, BIRKS endorses the No Dirty Gold campaign's Golden Rules, a set of social, environmental, and human rights principles to guide more responsible gold production.

About Crossworks

Crossworks Manufacturing, a member of the HRA-SunDiamond Group of Companies, operates three diamond polishing facilities in Canada that are located in Sudbury, Yellowknife and Vancouver. Crossworks purchases rough diamonds from the mines located in Canada through agreements with the Diamond Trading Company (D.T.C.) and Rio Tinto Diamonds. In 2009, Crossworks began polishing an allocation from the Victor Mine in Ontario through an exclusive agreement with the Government of Ontario and the D.T.C. that makes it the only company in the world to provide diamonds that are Mined, Cut and Polished in Ontario. Currently, the Group is the largest manufacturer of branded Canadian diamonds in the world with distribution throughout North America, Europe and Asia.

About De Beers Canada

De Beers Canada operates the Victor Mine in Ontario and the Snap Lake Mine in the Northwest Territories. De Beers Canada also has a joint-venture project in the Northwest Territories currently undergoing a feasibility study, as well as targeted exploration strategy within Canada. The De Beers Canada Victor Mine was named international "2009 Mine of the Year" by Mining Magazine. De Beers Canada was also named a winner of the 2010 Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada Environmental and Sustainability Award. Committed to Sustainable Development and Working with Communities, De Beers Canada has a number of formal agreements with First Nation communities in Canada, including seven signed Impact Benefit Agreements related to the Victor and Snap Lake mines. For more information, visit www.debeerscanada.com.

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