

# THE ART OF SILVERSMITH IN THE CITY OF IOANNINA

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The Silversmith in Ioannina has its roots in the depths of the centuries, but it has significant activity since the time of the Despotate of Epirus and beyond. Her great flourished in the 18th and 19th centuries, when Ioannina became one of the largest intellectual commercial and artistic centers in the Balkans. Drawing inspiration from the works of the ancient Greek tradition and the unsurpassed Byzantine art, while expressing the values of the Epirus sensibility and tastefulness, they made their presence strong in this great area of modern Greek Silver Craft. The peculiarity of regional art is mainly expressed by special techniques such as wrought, inflatable or carved, filigree or philangane and savati, techniques that at Ioannina reached the peak of their expressive power. Ioannina's jewellery and utensils offer a warm human visual impression given in a particularly slim and elegant dimension. The silversmith's works today, continuing tradition, creating handmade products of high aesthetics and artistic excellence, matching that of the past.

## TECHNICIANS

The craftsmen of Ioannina have always had a tradition of creating unique art objects, a tradition that has been preserved to this day. In Ioannina, since the beginning of the last century, a special School of Silverware has been operating, with a remarkable contribution to the development and evolution of this art and to the stimulation of the local economy. The Ioanninan craftsmen exported their products to Belgrade, Venice, Bucharest, Prague, Vienna, Skopje and even Russia.

## MANUFACTURING MODES

- In the **embossed decoration**, the silver object, once placed in pitch, is worked on its reverse side (the good is covered with pitch) so that the inflatable decoration is created, without the vibrations affecting the surface as they are absorbed by the tar.



- The **filigree decoration** is created using silver wires which are welded to the surface of the object creating a pattern or forming part of it.



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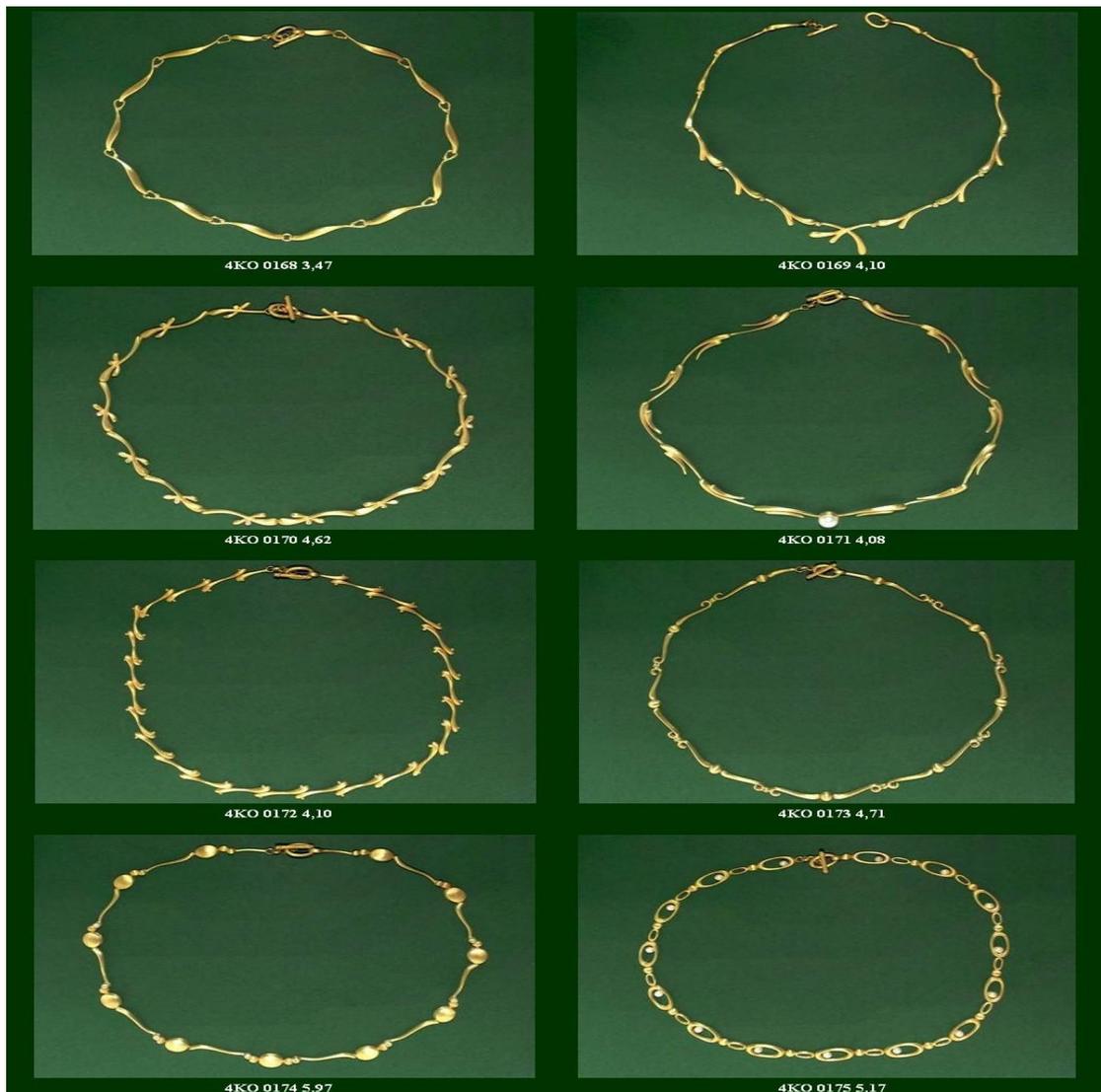
- The **granular decoration** consists of complexes of small granules ("garnets"), which are usually bonded onto the wires. Thus, it is very common for the collared decoration to accompany the fillet.



- With the **enamel technique**, the necessary quantity of enamel is placed on the surface that the craftsman wants and then baked at high temperature so that it melts and gets the desired shape and color.



- The **savat (savati)** comes from a metal alloy, which is placed on the engraved surface of the object and melts at high temperature. The craftsman then processes and smoothes it in a solidified form. It is a technique that has been known since antiquity, it has spread greatly during the Byzantine era and during the Ottoman domination and which is almost abandoned in all towns in Greece except from Ioannina.



SAVATI GREEK JEWELLERY

## TOOLS

- Hammers: in different sizes
- Spitsunia: These are narrow small iron tools for engraving
- Scaffolds: Used for carving silver
- The latch and the roller: to create silver wires
- Mangalas: Narrow tool, useful for polishing
- Camel - burner: Use for welding metals

Other museum we could visit is [KEPAVI](#) (Traditional Crafts Center of Ioannina) in Ioannina.