

Remember your loved one-as a diamond

(Agencies)

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An Algodanza employee shows an example of a diamond next to ashes in Chur August 8, 2008.
[Agencies]

Diamonds really are forever. Algodanza, a small company based in the mountainous southeast of Switzerland, uses the ashes of dead people to make diamonds as a permanent memento for their nearest and dearest.

And with prices starting at less than 5,000 euros (\$7,488), the jewels are not solely the preserve of the jetset.

"Some people find it helpful to go to the cemetery and grieve, and they leave their grief in the cemetery," said Algodanza Chairman Veit Brimer. "There are some people who, for whatever reason, do not want to have this farewell.

"Astonishingly these are mainly Christian people. They say: 'Why should I say goodbye? I'll see my husband in 15 years in heaven anyway,'" Brimer said in his office overlooking the town of Chur and its surrounding steep mountains.

The technology for making artificial diamonds was first pioneered by General Electric in the 1950s, and mirrors nature by subjecting carbon to huge pressure and temperature.