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How To Buy Antique Engagement Rings

By Christopher Bowne

There are as many good reasons to consider purchasing an antique engagement ring as there are

reasons for deciding when to pop the question. While modern day jewelers struggle to offer customers something unique and contemporary, the bride-to-be may be more inclined to appreciate the style and inherent charm of an antique. Another perfectly acceptable reason for purchasing antique engagement rings is they often offer buyers a better quality diamond at a lower price than purchasing a new ring.

Before beginning your search for the perfect wedding ring, it is best to ask yourself a few questions.

Do you know about the four C's?

The four C's are the criteria professionals use to determine the value of a diamond.

"Clarity takes into account the number, character, and visibility of flaws within the stone. These are often referred to as inclusions. The fewer inclusions, the better the quality of the stone."

Carat is the size or weight of the diamond. The larger the stone, the higher the cost. An advantage to buying antique engagement rings is that in the 1930s and 1940s jewelers often compensated for a smaller sized diamond by setting it in an intricately designed white gold, square-shaped box. These made the stone appear larger.

"Color is a matter of taste. Modern-day standards put a higher value on a clear diamonds, as a rule. In the past, buyers wanted their diamonds to reflect a rainbow of colors, soft pinks, yellow, or green tints. While colored diamonds are still available today, they were considered more valuable in the past. It is also important to note that many of the modern colored diamonds are artificially altered to enhance the color."

Cut is also a matter of taste and another reason antique engagement rings may be the best answer. Over the years, the preference of cut has changed. Additionally, a laser now cuts most diamonds; whereas older stones were normally cut by hand, giving them a more customized, romantic look.

How To Buy Antique Engagement Rings

What is the difference between an antique ring and an estate ring?

Antique rings normally refer to rings that are over 50 years old. Rings less than 50 years old and purchased used are considered as estate rings.

What are the styles of different eras?

Victorian Era (1835–1900) – Victorian era antique engagement rings featured diamonds or pearls set in yellow or rose gold. The ring styles varied from simple elegance to intricate detail. Many settings featured rows of diamonds that were cut with an extra facet in the bottom of the stone. This was known as a mine cut.

Edwardian Era (1900–1920) – With the invention of the oxyacetylene torch, platinum became the preferred metal for the period. The wedding bands were often crafted with lacy and pierced shapes,

milgraining, filigree detail, and scrollwork. Rose-cut diamonds and sapphires were the preferred stones.

Art Deco Era (1920–1930) – Art Deco antique engagement rings feature a streamlined geometric look. They also reflect Egyptian, Asian, and Native American cultures. These rings were often made of platinum featured colorful, contrasting gemstones as well as diamonds.

Where can antique engagement rings be purchased?

Antique engagement rings can be purchased in a number of places: antique stores, estate sales, pawn shops, auctions, and there select vendors online and larger cities who specialize in the purchase and resale of antique jewelry. No matter where you purchase your engagement rings, remember to get a full description of your purchase in writing and look to vendors who offer a written returns policy. You may also ask if the jewelry comes with a certified gemologists report, which provides optimal proof that the jewelry is as described.

Conclusion

When purchasing an engagement ring, it is important to consider all your options, including antique engagement rings.

Christopher Bowne is writer for

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to celtic jewelry.

Finding Antique Engagement Rings

By John Elrow

Old antique engagement rings are those classic style rings that bring back the charm and history of an era gone by. Many couples enjoy the nostalgic feel of something their grandparents may have worn. Others simply like the idea of old-fashioned quality workmanship and styling. Whatever your reason for choosing vintage diamond engagement rings, finding the best rings at the best price is a concern.

Finding Antique Style Engagement Rings

Online auctions and the Internet in general have brought the world home. You can shop the tiniest Italian countryside village or Antwerp's mega diamond dealers - all from your home computer. If you like to shop closer to home where you can touch and feel the rings and try them on for size and style, then there are other great sources for vintage engagement rings. Flea markets or estate sales are two of the top sources for authentic vintage jewellery including diamond or sapphire jewelry in gold or silver.

Authenticating a Vintage Diamond Engagement Ring

Finding a vintage engagement ring is one thing, but making sure it is truly and antique is another. A reputable jewellery appraiser can help. There are telltale signs and markings on jewellery that will tell the trained appraiser when and where and by whom a specific piece of old jewellery was made. Each silversmith or artisan has a symbol that they will engrave in their work to mark it as one of their own. Counterfeiters will try to replicate the marks, but other design features will let the appraiser know if this is the case in a particular antique. The appraiser can then give you a guarantee or certificate of authenticity to go with your vintage diamond engagement ring.

The setting and the diamonds will need to be examined separately. You may find a vintage setting with newer diamonds. This won't necessarily impact the value to you, but it would perhaps indicate that there were either several owners or that the person selling the rings as an antique may have changed stones. The number one consideration in choosing antique jewellery is to make sure you really love it. There are usually no exchanges for vintage diamond engagement rings.

The author John Elrow contributes frequently to

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,an

jewelry information site. John mostly covers topics from vintage to old celtic engagement and wedding rings.



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