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Summertime – and the Givin' is Easy!



It's that time of year again when backyard BBQs, swimming pools, and baseball games bring families together for summertime fun. It's also the time of year when holidays and anniversaries are perfect excuses for purchasing a gift of jewelry!

Going on holiday? Although jewelry can remind you of a trip to a far-away land, you don't want bad memories from impulsive purchases. Try this – you're going on a cruise to Mexico. Purchase an opal from your AGS jeweler and then surprise her with the wrapped package your first night out! You're assured of sweet dreams with that gift!

Have an important anniversary coming up? Hint: they're all important! Imagine this – it's your 15th anniversary, which traditionally is crystal (at the Hallmark store). But, ruby is the gemstone of the

15th anniversary. Wrap a ruby ring or ruby earrings and present them in a crystal vase – with flowers on the side! More sweet dreams!

Sometimes, how-to-do the givin' is as important as the gift. Take it easy this summer and let us direct the fun. Our staff is full of ideas!!

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Peridot – the August Gem

Egyptians called it the “gem of the sun” but its color is a cool, yellowish-green. Gemstone lore says it will soothe your spirit, yet it is born from volcanic action. Most of the peridot (pronounced PEAR-a doe) today is mined in Arizona, one of a few birthstones that actually are found in North America. Other sources have included Burma and Pakistan.

You want to take care when setting and wearing peridot. It's a delicate gem that doesn't like extreme temperature changes and it's not well-suited for daily wear in a ring. Don't clean your peridot jewelry in an ultrasonic or allow a jeweler to use a steam cleaner. Warm, sudsy water and a soft brush are best. When storing it in your jewelry case, keep it separate and protected from other gemstone pieces to avoid damage.

When choosing a peridot, look for a clear, transparent vivid yellowish green. Various shapes and sizes can be faceted like traditional gemstones or polished with a domed top, known as a cabochon. With either style, look for the inner beauty to bring out the quiet excitement of this month's birthstone.



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Message On a Diamond



Diamonds are often given to mark life's greatest occasions. For centuries this precious gem has symbolized the commitment of everlasting love, and now modern technology allows a diamond to become more personalized and protected, through laser inscription.

A laser inscription is not visible to the naked eye, but can be seen using a jeweler's microscope. Inscribing your stone with a personal message or commemorative date not only adds sentimental value, but security. You will be able to identify

your diamond before you leave your jewelry for a repair. This will assure you that your diamond is returned to you after the service is complete.

At the AGS Laboratories, inscriptions are done using an excimer laser. Diamonds absorb energy at 210nm, but the excimer laser used is 193nm, eliminating the risk of damage to the gem. Since 100% of the laser's energy is absorbed by the gem's surface, there is no chance of chipping or breaking the diamond. The inscription itself does not affect the color or clarity grade of the diamond either.

For round brilliant cuts, the largest area of the girdle is selected for the inscription. An inscription on any other area of a round brilliant cut runs the risk of causing a reflection, which could affect the color grade and/or the clarity grade.

When inscribing a fancy cut diamond, the technician will mark the stone first, and verify that the inscription will not be visible through the table or the top of the diamond. Although most diamonds are inscribed before they are set, it is sometimes possible to have your stone inscribed after it has been set.

When purchasing your diamond, consider one with a laser inscription. It will help identify your diamond, while adding an extra personal touch with a sentimental message.

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Protecting and Cleaning Your Jewelry

You purchased a piece of fine jewelry and are now looking forward to years of pleasurable wear. Here are some tips for keeping your jewelry free from damage and beautiful for years of wear.

- Take your jewelry off prior to activities. When working with tools, gardening or playing sports, jewelry such as rings, necklaces, bracelets, or whatever it may be, can become subjected to sharp blows which can damage the gemstones and even the metals.
- Apply hairsprays, lotions or perfumes before you put on jewelry. Chemicals from any of these will dull your jewelry and may cause damage to gemstones, especially pearls.
- Watches – Water resistant watches should state to what depth. A water resistant watch without a depth designation is only designed to withstand accidental splashes of water. Those that have a locking crown, which is the button on the outside of the watch case that is used to set the time, are usually safe in the shower or pool; however, none are designed to take into a hot tub or sauna. If moisture or dust has penetrated the case of your watch, have it checked only by an authorized technician. Attempts to open a case by an untrained repair person can damage the watch and void any warranties.

Regular cleaning and “check-ups”, performed by a knowledgeable jeweler, can assure you that your gemstones are safe and secure in their settings and the clasps are tight and secure. Ask us about in-home jewelry cleaners or simply use a solution of soapy water. Chemicals in some products, even though they are considered mild, can damage certain gems, such as pearls. Use only soft brushes for hard-to-reach areas of your jewelry and avoid ultrasonic cleaners, heat, hot water, and steamers for pearls, emeralds, and many other colored gemstones. Polishing cloths are great for karat gold, sterling silver, or other jewelry metals.

Ultrasonic home cleaners are best for karat gold jewelry without gemstones, but can be used for the occasional cleaning of some diamond jewelry. Keep in mind, the vibrations can loosen the gems. This is why it's important to have your jewelry checked periodically by a professional.

These tips will help keep your fine jewelry pieces beautiful for many years.

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