

Cultured Pearls:

For the Wedding Day and Beyond

The pearl has woven its magical spell for centuries. Throughout the ages, it has been a symbol of love, beauty and fidelity: So much so that the ancients believed that the pearl would bring romance and ward off harm. It is no wonder then that, to this day, the pearl has been the gem of brides.

Passing a pearl necklace from one generation to the next, to be worn by the bride on her wedding day, is both an ancient custom and a modern practice.

This tradition is viewed by many as a rite of passage; the wedding day symbolizes a turning point in a young woman's life, which warrants a special gift, often a prized possession from a mother, grandmother or close friend, that has sentimental value and meaning. Or, a new tradition, which will endure for years, can be started.

A cultured pearl necklace bought for a bride on her wedding day can in turn be passed down to her daughter to wear on her wedding day and cherish forever.

Eternally versatile, the cultured pearl necklace is equally appropriate on the wedding day and ever after.

When choosing a cultured pearl necklace to be worn on your wedding day, keep in mind the length of the strand that will complement your wedding dress.

Feminine, off-the-shoulder bridal gowns are very much in evidence this season, and are truly complemented by a single strand pearl choker or several strands falling softly from the neckline.

A multiple strand "dog collar" is the most flattering accessory for a traditional high-collared gown, while the long, opera length strand might add a '20s cachet to one of the tea length, dropped waist dresses that are also popular for less formal affairs.

Cultured pearl earrings can add an elegant air to any bridal look. With hair swept up, and earrings visible, the cultured pearl casts a shimmering glow on the bride's face.

Proper care of your cultured pearls is important in terms of both their appearance and their upkeep.

Keeping your cultured pearls properly strung will increase their life span and keep them strong. Many experts believe that you should have your cultured pearls restrung every six months to keep them looking their best.

Other tips for keeping your pearls looking beautiful include:

Wipe them with a damp cloth after each use to remove traces of perspiration or makeup.

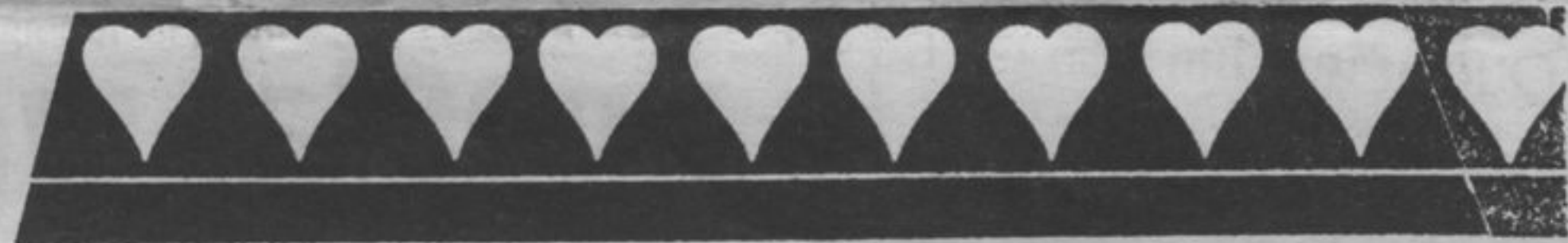
Avoid getting perfume or makeup on your cultured pearls. The acid contained in these products can eat into cultured pearls, destroying their natural luster.

The tradition of wearing pearls on the wedding day, and the increased popularity that the cultured pearl has enjoyed in the last few years, only strengthens its position as the classic gem for today's woman.

And on the happiest of days, this gem of love and happiness is the only jewelry needed.



HERE COMES THE CULTURED PEARL BRIDE - On that special day, every bride should be wearing lustrous cultured pearls. Above, a three strand choker with mobe and diamond earrings make her more radiant on her wedding day.



Father of the Bride

As they stroll proudly down the aisle his mind races to earlier years. When she used to skin her knees and he wiped away the tears.

Where did those tender days go, is she ready for a new stage of life?

And what about that cavalier young man, is he ready for a wife?

This time he'll give her up for good, not just a Saturday night.

He hopes that all her needs are met and that his bond of love is right.

Like patience and forgiveness and he hopes she'll have enough.

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Young brides are more traditional

Younger and older brides have dramatically different views when it comes to marriage, a reader survey in *Bride's* magazine revealed.

The nationwide study showed that brides under 25 years old are surprisingly conservative and traditional in their attitudes toward sex and marriage. Feelings are what matter most to these romantic young women; they're less interested in establishing their own independence than they

are in sharing everything with the man they love.

For many, marriage (whether the wedding day is a month away or a year down the road) is foremost on their minds. Some eye-opening findings:

* Only six percent plan to keep their own last names

after marriage; just 33 percent intend to open their own chequing and charge accounts.

* Ninety percent want an equal say in major financial purchases, but only 60 percent will insist on splitting bill-paying and investment decisions.

* Younger brides are less likely than older ones to discuss AIDS - and sex in general - with their husbands-to-be.



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