

Valentine's Day

This year give the gift of platinum jewelry

As the new century approaches, the mood of fashion is changing, and elegance is back. Stylish women today like the look of platinum for its cool beauty and flattering colour. They also prize the metal's durability and strength — particularly for their engagement rings

and diamond jewelry. However, platinum's high cost and limited supply have put the beautiful metal out of their reach.

Until now, all platinum jewelry on the market was composed of 90 parts to 95 parts pure platinum, making it very expensive.

In contrast, select retailers are introducing 14-Karat Platinum (585 Platinum) with 58.5 parts pure platinum — allowing a considerable savings of 33 per cent for the consumer.

This marks the first time since the advent of karat gold that there has been a breakthrough in a new metal for use in fine jewelry.

Although the beauty and durability of gold and silver have been recognized since ancient times, platinum was one of the last precious metals to be discovered.

First seen by western eyes during the conquistadores' invasions of South America, the beautiful metal was called plata, meaning silver. However, it was thrown back into the rivers when the explorers realized it wasn't silver, but another, stronger metal.

In Europe during the 17th century, jewelers already were experimenting with platinum, but didn't use it with frequency until advances in technology during the 20th century allowed them to melt it.

Platinum more than made up for its late popularity, however. During the Art Deco '20s and the reign of the platinum blonde in the '30s, it was the metal of choice for precious jewelry — until World War II put an end to its use by civilians. Half a century passed before the beauty of platinum was rediscovered in the 1990s.

Years of painstaking research have yielded a breakthrough in technology that for the first time allows manufacturers to offer this most precious of precious metals in a choice of prices and Total Platinum Content.

Thanks to these discoveries, everyone can enjoy all the benefits of this rare metal at one-third of the cost. Although only select retailers are carrying this new metal, people are sure to find 14-Karat Platinum wherever the 585 stamp is displayed.

Platinum offers today's women a stylish alternative to yellow gold — with a look that hasn't been seen in decades. Remember that beautiful diamond ring in a lacy white setting that your grandmother used to wear? Or the magnificent diamond and platinum jewelry of the 1920s and '30s movie queens that now sells for thousands of dollars? These pieces weren't flashy, but had a refinement and elegance that made them unforgettable.

The new styles have the same elegance — and are destined to become the heirlooms of tomorrow.

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