



The Birmingham News

From cleaning to hiding: Tips for jewelry care

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Susan Eisen - a retail jeweler for 27 years and CEO of Susan Eisen Fine Jewelry and Watches in El Paso, Texas - has put all her knowledge about baubles into a new book, "Crazy About Jewelry! The Expert Guide to Buying, Selling and Caring for Your Jewelry." (Full Circle International Publishing, \$16.95.)

In a recent interview, Eisen offered a few tips on wearing jewelry and caring for jewelry at the holidays:

Clean jewelry the night before a party. If it's diamonds or precious metals like gold, silver or platinum, soak it in one capful of dishwashing liquid and a half cup of cold water at night. In the morning, lightly brush the wet ring with a toothbrush. Remember that not all stones can be cleaned like this and this method should not be used with costume jewelry. Emeralds, pearls, opals and other gemstones need special cleaning care.

If your outfit is full of designs, keep your jewelry a solid color. Pearls or diamonds look good.

A simple or solid fabric provides a good background for jewelry with a lot of accents or pretty colors.

Don't mix in costume jewelry with fine jewelry unless it's such a good combo you can't tell the difference.

Layer multiple necklaces at different lengths.

Remember that greens, browns, and earth tones are in for clothing this season. So consider pairing such colors with gemstones in lime green, smoky quartz, onyx or diamonds.

Head for today's new chic pearls, which come in a variety of colors and irregular shapes.

Don't wait for your husband or boyfriend to buy you a piece of fine jewelry. You had no problem buying that beautiful dress for the evening, so don't fret over buying a piece of beautiful jewelry to go with it.

When traveling, don't wear or take anything that can't be replaced. If you must take it, it's better to wear the piece than pack it in a suitcase or purse.

If you must pack your jewelry, put it in a carry-on bag, wrap it in a cloth and put it in a resealable plastic bag. Don't ever wrap it in a tissue and put it in your purse because the wad looks too much like trash and could easily be thrown away by mistake.

Have more than one watch, including one for dressy, casual, and sporty occasions.

Take photos of all your fine jewelry and get it insured.

If it's been more than two years since your jewelry has been appraised, check with your insurance company and see if you need to have your gold, platinum and silver reappraised. These metals have more than doubled in value in the last few years. Some home insurance companies require that fine jewelry worth over \$10,000 be reappraised every two years any way.

Don't leave any jewelry in your purse when you go to a party. You could put down your clutch and your precious pieces could get stolen.

Store jewelry in a place other than your dresser or under the bed - the first place burglars look. Make a note of your hiding places, and don't keep all fine jewelry in one place.

Send questions about your jewelry to www.crazyaboutjewelry.net or www.blingblinghognet.blogspot.com.

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