

## An Experts' Guide to Diamonds

The Diamond Shop has been importing the finest quality diamonds from around the world for nearly 25 years. Diamonds are their specialty and their range includes diamond rings, diamond earrings, pendants, bracelets and more.

Company Director Win Charlebois gives us a fresh look at diamonds and their amazing diverse characteristics. "One of the first things that people learn about diamonds is that every diamond is unique. They come in many sizes, shapes, and colours, and with an assortment of internal and surface characteristics," says Win.

But why are diamonds so special? The way their crystals are formed in the earth under extreme temperatures and pressure makes them a rarity of the natural world. Diamonds are the only gem made of a single element, carbon, and they are the hardest natural material known to man. This is quite ironic when one considers their association with love and beauty!

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NOTHING SAYS 'I LOVE YOU' LIKE A GLITTERING DIAMOND RING. BUT WHY ARE DIAMONDS SO VALUABLE? WIN CHARLEBOIS FROM AUCKLAND'S THE DIAMOND SHOP TELLS US A LITTLE ABOUT THE HISTORY OF DIAMONDS AND WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN PURCHASING DIAMOND JEWELLERY.

("invincible"). They have been treasured as gemstones since their early use as religious icons in ancient India, and their usage in engraving tools also dates back to early human history. Their popularity has amplified since the 19th century because of increased supply, improved cutting and polishing techniques, growth in the world economy, and innovative and successful advertising campaigns.

Almost half of the world's diamonds originate from central and southern Africa; they have also been discovered in India, Russia, Brazil, Australia and Canada.

Canadian diamonds are unique among gems, they were formed deep under Canada's frozen arctic, where they remained hidden in this pristine environment for millions of years until their recent discovery. The Diamond Shop is New Zealand's exclusive distributor and agent of the brand CANADIA™ diamonds which have an international grading certificate, a laser inscription for identification, and come with a Canadian government certificate of origin. ▶





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## Win's Tips and Expert Advice For Diamond Buyers

- Educate yourself before you make your purchase. This can be achieved by reading appropriate material, talking to trusted and knowledgeable retailers, and using the internet.
- Insist on a third party diamond grading certificate. The Diamond Shop provides certificates from GIA (Gemological Institute of America) AGS (American Gemological Society) and we also use local grading laboratories.
- There are different grades of diamonds and each grade has a different value. The price you will pay for a diamond depends on the 4 Cs.
- Focusing on only one C is not the way to buy a diamond. You can buy a one carat diamond for a few hundred dollars if you ignore colour, clarity and cut. The best thing to do is find a balance.
- It is my experience that untrained buyers tend to focus on the diamonds clarity, as it is easily understood. We recommend clarity grades not higher than VS1 and not lower than SI2. The reason is that within this range you achieve best value for money as this clarity range will not affect the diamonds brilliance. Clarity grading of VVS and higher command substantial price increases without an increase in perceptible brilliance.
- The diamond's cut is much more important in producing a beautiful diamond than its clarity. An AGS certified Ideal Cut diamond or a GIA certified Excellent Cut diamond is worth the extra expense as it will assure the buyer of a beautifully brilliant gem stone.
- If you are a man buying a diamond for your partner as a surprise, I suggest you purchase an unset diamond. Why? Most women focus on how the diamond will be set, what grade and colour metal will be used and the rings shape. To share this part of the purchase with her will enhance the experience and make it more enjoyable and memorable for both parties.
- Diamonds are imported into New Zealand duty free. Once purchased and taken out of the country by the recipient, the GST component of the purchase can be reclaimed making the purchase of diamond jewellery tax free. This makes New Zealand an economical place to purchase diamond jewellery plus you have the backing of the company you purchased from.
- Diamonds have consistently increased in value over the past 20 years due to the tightly controlled world market. There are very few investments you can make that:
  1. Consistently appreciate in value
  2. Can be worn and enjoyed each and every day
  3. Has an international value
  4. Can be passed on to loved ones with wonderful memories of the giver
  5. Represent the highest expression of love, glamour, elegance, wealth, romance and refinement.

And that is why, my friends, "A diamond is indeed a girl's best friend." ◀