



Q: WHY IS THE AKOYA PEARL SPECIAL?

A: The Akoya Pearl, *a tradition and icon...*

The Akoya pearl is a beauty beyond compare. Some refer to this gem as the “icon” of cultured pearls. Having graced the necks, ears, fingers and wrists of women for decades the **classic akoya necklace is a bride’s choice of jewelry on her wedding day.**

The Japanese Akoya Cultured Pearl is the result of the successful commercial cultivation process developed by Koichi Mikimoto in the early 1900’s.

This cultivation process enabled a complete pearl industry to emerge and flourish, positively impacting the world to this day.

Akoya pearls come from the saltwaters of Japan and China, grown in an oyster scientifically known as the Pinctada Fucata. This oyster produces round white and cream colored pearls known for their high luster, attributed to the cool ocean temperatures, range in size from 4 to 9.5 millimeters; a most popular size being 6–7 millimeters. While the main body color is white/cream some pearls possess overtones of silver, green and pink. The Akoya pearl is nucleated with a bead made from a mussel shell and mantle tissue from a mollusk, the growth period or harvesting takes between 8 months and 2 years.

Please send your questions to www.cpaa.org.

WWW.CPAA.ORG

GREAT PEARL INFORMATION IS JUST A CLICK AWAY!

The new and improved www.cpaa.org website is launched with up-to-the-minute news about the pearl industry, current and archived newsletter issues, event photos, full streaming pearl videos, member links, marketing support, and more. Bookmark this page and visit often!



seen & HEARD

THREE CPAA MEMBERS PLACE AMONG TOP 10

Three of the top 10 winners of the 5th Edition 2007-2008 Tahitian Pearl Trophy, North American division, are either members of the CPAA, or sponsored by a CPAA member. Charged with creating a pearl jewelry design around the theme, “The Song of the Stars”, they each interpreted their vision through the use of Tahitian cultured pearls:

Avi Raz of the Los Angeles-based A & Z Pearls, a **CPAA member**, created a stunning ring that is a true statement piece, centering a lustrous 11mm Tahitian cultured pearl amid a “Galaxy of Lights” created with 5.30 carats of sparkling blue color diamonds set in an 18k white gold organic form that evokes movement and grace.

Reena Ahluwalia, Canadian designer sponsored by Baggins U.S.A & Chodhari created a necklace, Ethereal Rhapsody, which drapes 27 round Tahitian pearls ranging in size from 7.5mm to 11.5mm, with 5 carats of black and white diamonds in sterling silver around the front and back of the wearer. Resting like a collar around the neck, the design swirls across the collarbone and down the shoulder blade of its wearer providing interest from all angles.

Nina Basharova, for the New York City-based Albert Asher Pearls, a **CPAA member**, imagined a “Nightingale’s Nest” as a brooch carefully cradling three baroque yellow, gray and black South Sea cultured pearls, ranging in size from 10mm to 16mm, in soft Ostrich feathers set atop 18k yellow gold.

These are just three examples of the award-winning creativity exhibited by the members of the CPAA. Whether it’s unusual haute couture inspirations or everyday wearable art, members of the CPAA look to offer cultured pearl merchandise sure to get your customers talking about and wearing pearls!

WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE OUR INDUSTRY SPONSORS:

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SPRING | 2008



CULTURED PEARL
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PROFIT FROM PEARLS

Happy New Year! Welcome to the latest edition, and first for 2008, of “Celebrating and Selling Pearls,” the newsletter of the Cultured Pearl Association of America. As the dust settles from what was for many an economically challenged holiday, we get ready to begin anew with the jewelry trade show season kicking off in Tucson, Arizona.

Retailers are proceeding with caution, continuing with bread and butter items, concentrating on the basics, afraid to deviate too far from the norm for fear of getting caught holding a bag full of merchandise they cannot sell.

Yet, it is exactly during such a time that jewelers must invest in their inventory and the marketing of it to move ahead of the competition in what has become a highly aggressive retail environment. I recently read a report quoting jewelry analyst Ken Gassman as saying: “Competition is fierce for the basics in products like diamond stud earrings and solitaire pendants. If you’re going to have a diamond on the end of a gold chain, you’re just like everyone else. Only jewelers who differentiate their products will pull ahead in this difficult selling climate.”

Despite the fact that consumers did pull in their purse strings this holiday season, they also dug deep into their pockets for products that were new and different. There were many retailers who saw 20% to 30% sales gains, and for the most part, they were jewelers who had a clearly defined niche, a unique selling proposition. The good news is the there is no better time than NOW for cultured pearls. “Profit from Pearls” is our message and our unique selling proposition for you, because we see firsthand that jewelers who commit to this product category succeed. Creating a clearly defined niche in cultured pearls will set you apart from your competition with a product that is on trend, while still embodying classic qualities that offer great value for the consumer.

So while you’re out scouting around for ideas on how to improve your bottom line, take the time to visit with our members at one of the upcoming trade shows to discuss the many ways pearls can help “recession-proof” your business.

Here’s to a happy and successful 2008!,

Sonny Sethi
President

seen **BEHARD**

STYLE WATCH

Christina Applegate of the TV show “Samantha Who?” was spotted on the red carpet at the 2008 Screen Actor’s Guild Award dazzled in her Elie Saab silver sequined gown and Lorraine Schwartz jewels including platinum and diamond caviar link bracelet mixed with a pearl bracelet.

Katherine Heigel of the new movie “27 Dresses” was spotted wearing Tahitian cultured pearls.

Shirley MacLaine will channel Chanel in her next project. MacLaine will play great couture designer Coco Chanel in a two-part Lifetime miniseries slated to run this fall. MacLaine will play the fashion icon in her later years, as she set out to re-establish her reputation as a trendsetter. Expect Coco’s love of layering long yards of pearls to resurface as a significant trend this year.



GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES IN PEARLS

Jewelers are dealing with some of the highest gold prices they’ve seen since the 1980s, forcing them to continually adjust their pricing to accommodate rising fluctuations. **A sure way to reduce the effect of mounting metal prices is to sell jewelry that incorporates high-value gems like cultured pearls.**



The addition of pearls to gold chain necklaces and bracelets, as drops in earrings, or the center of attention in rings not only adds greater value to the piece and price

flexibility resulting in better profits, it also offers a fashion forward look with timeless appeal.

Jewelers can profit from pearls that can be added as charms, pendants, and drops to existing gold looks. Ripped from the pages of current fashion magazines, these looks will not only elevate your status as a trendsetting jeweler, they will



increase your ability to maximize your profit level, while also building collectors in additional sales (i.e. new pendants, drops, and charms).



Don’t miss out on the golden opportunities pearls can provide in healthy profit margins and unique offerings that will stimulate your business.

SPRING & SUMMER...
COUNTLESS OCCASIONS
FOR PEARLS

- WEDDINGS...
NEW JOB...
BAPTISM...
- MOTHER’S DAY...
GRADUATION...
ANNIVERSARY...
BIRTH OF CHILD...
FIRST COMMUNION...
CONFIRMATION...

Over the next few months there are many occasions to give and receive cultured pearls. Consider all the potential sales to be made, WILL YOU BE READY? DO YOU HAVE A VARIETY OF CULTURED PEARLS AND PRICE POINTS IN STOCK? HOW ABOUT CHOCOLATE PEARLS? Whether you like them or not consumers are asking about them. DO YOU HAVE THE RIGHT MERCHANDISING MIX? There are so many interesting styles of pearl jewelry, be sure that you offer your customers newness.

VISIT WITH THE CULTURED PEARL ASSOCIATION MEMBERS TO DISCOVER THE WONDERFUL VARIETY OF PEARLS AVAILABLE.



PEARLS ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Rule 1 in dressing for the campaign trail: Don’t distract. If you’ve ever wondered why pearls are the favorite accessory of women on the campaign trail the answer lies in their innate ability to draw people in rather than avert their attention away from what the wearer is saying. While all eyes are glued to the television during these intense presidential primaries, take note of what Hillary Clinton is wearing, or the wives of Barack Obama, John McCain and Mitt Romney.

Today’s power pearls are typically Tahitian or South Sea cultured, usually a single strand of similar shade or multi-color—from black, green and gray to gold, cream and white, with lots of hues in between.



Soft, radiant and pure, pearls have a history as the gem of choice for women who wield their influence on the masses. Queen Elizabeth I was so fond of them that she was sometimes called the Pearl Queen. She especially liked wearing gowns embroidered with pearls and kept a fleet of embroiderers busy removing them from one dress so they could be used to decorate another.

That’s pearl power for you.

But what makes them so useful to a woman who needs to make a point is that they don’t divert your attention from what she has to say to trying to figure out what she has encircling her neck. A woman who wants to be a successful talking head can’t afford to distract her audience with fussy, hard-to-interpret details.

Immediately recognizable as the archetypal necklace, pearls are not only politically correct, they’re camera ready, crowd pleasing, and uplifting without the botox!