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# The Beauty of SOUTH SEA PEARLS

Atlas Pearls and Perfumes is an Australian ASX-listed company, with pearl farms situated in beautiful and isolated locations across the Indonesian archipelago. This farmer has been operating in Indonesia for over 20 years and primarily focuses on producing quality white and silver South Sea pearls.

Atlas serves markets worldwide through the main trading centres in Hong Kong and Japan, where it has developed privileged relationships with key wholesalers and retailers, who recognise and appreciate the premium quality of Atlas pearls.



Australia, of course, is also an important market for the company and Atlas is keen to promote the Indonesian provenance of its pearls. Pierre Fallourd, managing director of Atlas and formerly a director with another prominent South Sea farmer in the Philippines,

is unequivocal in his desire to see Australian customers become better educated about Indonesian South Sea pearls.

"It is always frustrating to hear any negative comments made about Indonesian South Sea pearls when compared directly with Australian pearls. It's important that the customer understands that the South Sea pearl is derived from exactly the same species of Pinctada maxima oyster and that the same culturing process is employed, irrespective of geographical context. It's often said that the ocean knows no boundaries... We believe that making broad statements about the quality of pearls based on their country of origin is detrimental to the industry as a whole and certainly does not reflect the views of the major players."

The native area of Pinctada maxima stretches north to south, from southern Japan to northern Australia and east to west, from Papua to Thailand. This area is referred to as the "South Seas," which, of course, is also the trade name from the pearls born out of Pinctada maxima. It's fair to say that

there is a higher proportion of cream to gold coloured goods the further north one travels from Australia to the Philippines and this is directly related to the increasing prevalence of gold-lipped compared silver-lipped oysters.



However, with a world-class hatchery and careful selective breeding, Atlas prides itself on consistently producing harvests with over 95% white and silver colour.

Not many people realise that the Pinctada maxima species actually originated in Indonesian waters and migrated slowly south to the north west coast of Australia thousands of years ago.

The first Indonesian pearl farm was established in Buton Island in south east Sulawesi in 1918. The first Australian pearl farm was established in Kuri Bay in 1954 and 1962 in the Philippines. Today Myanmar is also becoming a very valid contender thanks to liberalisation of the country.



The rarity paradigm, where rarity is directly aligned to price, was and is the prime value driver for natural pearls. The value of cultured pearls should be primarily driven by its quality or combination of virtues: shape, size, shade, surface and shine. Traders and pearl specialists focus on the pearls intrinsic value rather than its country of origin.

Of course the environment where the Pinctada maxima is grown will have an impact on the rate and regularity of nacre deposition and tightness, which in turn will deliver good quality light refraction or lustre and orient. However, more importantly, it is the farmer's knowledge and care that will drive the pearl quality up. Over time, it is the ability of a pearling company to consistently deliver superior goods that will determine its revenue and profitability. Pearling is, and will remain, a difficult and risky venture where only persistence and dedication drive rewards.

Atlas is proud to produce and sell beautiful Indonesian pearls for what they are: valuable, lustrous and free of any treatment, specifically lustre or colour. The pearls are offered to the market for what they are, the fruit of the work of the dedicated and inspired people of Indonesia.



All images courtesy Atlas Pearls and Perfumes