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Features Article

Buy the best Diamond

Diamonds are forever – Yes, many diamond lovers buy their favourite piece of diamond jewellery, hoping that it will glow and last lifelong.

This precious stone has acquired unique status as the ultimate gift of love, in myth and reality. It is the hardest known substance yet has the simplest chemical composition, consisting of crystallized carbon, the chemical element that is fundamental to all life.

Unfortunately, not everyone has the know-how to choose the best diamond in town. Sadly, not all the diamond-stores have the expertise to guide the consumers on the quality or type of diamond they are selling.

It is therefore, crucial for buyers to have all the necessary information that is available to you before you start looking for a diamond - because the more you know, the better prepared you are to make decisions regarding your purchase.

Many diamond stores around the world have a **diamond grading charts** which acts as a guide to buying the best diamond.

Buying a diamond will be a memorable experience if consumers can get hold of a **diamond grading chart**, which provides the tools and information on how to evaluate diamond quality and value,

What is a diamond grading chart?

It is a simplified evaluation chart of diamond quality which summarizes the “4 Cs” (Carat Weight, Cut, Color, and Clarity). It also illustrates the differences between grades of diamonds.

A diamond should be judged on the four Cs which also helps determine the value of the diamond jewel.

The lack of proper knowledge of diamonds has previously led consumers to end up with fake or poor quality diamond at a lofty cost.

The Consumer Council of Fiji has come across cases where consumers spent thousands of dollars to obtain such a luxurious stone, only to be duped with defective or low grade item.

Apparently, not all jewellery stores in the country have the diamond grading chart.

For the benefit of the diamond lover, the Council recently carried out a survey around the Capital City to ascertain how many jewellery stores gave the consumers the benefit of using the diamond grading chart to choose the right diamond.

From the five popular jewellery shops surveyed, (Prouds, Jewels MHCC, Tappoos City, Lords Jewellers and Anita Jewellers) only two have the diamond grading chart in place (Jewels MHCC and Anita Jewellers). Out of these two shops only one, (Jewels MHCC) has the chart clearly displayed, for consumers' benefit while the other shop (Anita Jewellers) only produces it on consumer requests.

These five shops did provide consumers with diamond certification upon purchase (certificate outlining the quantity of diamond in the jewel, code of the diamond, manufacturer details and its guarantee). But providing the grading chart would give consumers an opportunity to choose the best as per their affordability.

Consumers are urged to ask for the grading chart to better judge what they want before they spend their money. The diamond grading chart will help consumers better understand **what the color of their diamond depicts**.

For instance, choosing **colour** of the diamond is on the following scale:

D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z

D, E, F - Colorless (most valued)

G, H, I, J - Nearly colorless

K, L, M - Faint yellow

N, O, P, Q, R - Very light yellow

S, T, U, V - Light yellow

Clarity:

F, IF, VVS1, VVS2, VS1, VS2, S1, S2, S3, I1, I2, I3

F (flawless) is best, followed by

Internally Flawless, followed by

Very, Very Small Inclusions (2 grades) followed by

Very Small Inclusions (2 grades) then

Small Inclusions (3 grades), then

Imperfect (3 grades)

Cut:

1. Round - Also called Brilliant, the most preferred cut
2. Princess - Square cut, second most preferred

Carats:

The carat is a unit of weight.

One metric carat consists of 100 "points".

One metric carat = 1/5 gram, or 200 milligrams

As the size of a diamond goes up, the price goes up exponentially.

The D-to-Z diamond color-grading system measures the degree of colorlessness by comparing a stone under controlled lighting and precise viewing conditions to master stones of established colour value.

While untrained consumers may feel there are subtle color distinctions amongst diamonds but these very distinctions make a difference in diamond quality and price. For instance a grade "D" diamond ring for women will attract a cost of around \$3,500 while a grade "Z" will attract a cost of around \$1,700.

What consumers need to do?

Every diamond is unique and there are a variety of factors which affect the price of a diamond, therefore, the consumers should focus on the four Cs and choose a diamond that satisfies their individual standards for beauty and value.

Consumers must ask the jeweler for the diamond grading chart!

Shop around to educate your eye, to learn what really appeals to you, and to familiarize yourself with current styles.

