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Feature Article

Fiji's own Gold Testing Service

All that glitters is not always gold!

This is one time of the year when many consumers buy gold jewellery to mark the auspicious festival of lights, Diwali. There is also a rush to lay-buy fine gold jewellery to be gifted on special occasions such as child birth, birthdays, engagements or weddings.

Buying gold jewellery is a big investment so buyers must ensure they are purchasing authentic gold. Gold is one of the most frequently imitated valuable. It is easy to mistake with fake gold for the real one as they can look almost identical to the untrained eye.

The trend is clear – buyers often go for jewellery stores, which are either popular or cheaper. As they say in the jewellery world, a good name is as good as gold.

But how will a consumer know if a purchase is worth the money? Well, not everyone know how to spot a *real* gold from other pretty looking yellow metal!

Consumers are often a victim of fraud where they are sold 22K gold. When they later sell or opt to exchange the jewellery, they discover that the gold is of lower karat (18K or 14K or just gold plated) resulting in consumers losing their money

The good news is that consumers in Fiji can now access professional gold testing services at a minimum price of \$15 to know if their jewellery is authentic or not.

Gold Traders Fiji, a division of Jewels Fiji now owns a state-of-the-art technology, offering professional gold testing services at their Suva and Nadi branches.

What's on offer?

- Test can be conducted for Gold/ Platinum/ Silver / other metals
- All tests are carried out in front of the consumer thus eliminating ambiguity and misrepresentation of actual gold content
- Full test report is issued outlining the correct karat and all other metal content present in the jewellery
- Professionally trained test personnel will assist the consumers

Gold jewellery is measured in 24 parts, called karats (K), which shows the quantity of actual gold in the jewellery. Higher number means more gold. As the percentage of pure gold decreases, the strength of the metal increases affecting the price. So 14k gold will cost less than 18k gold. Let's try to understand some terms related to gold.

24 karat gold is 99.9 percent pure because all 24 parts are gold without traces of any other metals. 24K is referred to as 100% pure gold. Since 24K gold is soft, it is often combined with other metals to make it stronger and more suitable for making jewellery. 24K is usually used for gold plating.

22 karat gold is 91.7 percent pure. Generally large amount of delicate Indian and Chinese jewellery is made using 22k Gold.

18 karat is about 75 percent pure. It is used in more high-end gold jewelry pieces and has a deep and rich color.

14 karat gold is 14/24 or 58.3% pure. It provides good balance of durability and value.

12 karat gold is 50 percent pure. For example, 12K would tell you that your 'gold' jewellery has 12 parts of gold while the other 12 parts are other metals, making it 50% gold.

9 karat gold is 37.5 percent pure while 62.5 percent other metals.

There should be a stamp or symbol identifying the Karat or percentage of gold in the jewellery. Knowing the Karat will help you to establish the authenticity of the jewellery.

Gold plated items are fast becoming a fashion. With modern technology advances, the plating process and finish is so good that discolouration and gold turning colour in few days' time will not happen. Consumers may not be able to know the difference between a gold-plated jewellery or 1 gram jewellery from 24 k gold jewellery.

Looks can be deceiving so consumers must take advantage of the gold testing service to know more about their jewellery.