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Feature Article

How real is your diamond?

Are diamonds really forever? Words seem less to describe the love consumers have for diamonds. One simply cannot get enough of diamond stones to adorn themselves at any occasion- be it a festival, engagement, wedding or birthday bash.

But how sure can you be that what you are wearing is a real diamond?

While there is diamond grading charts available at jewellery shops which judge a diamond on its 4 Cs - colour, cut, clarity and carat but if a consumer fails to understand the grading chart properly, they can be fooled into buying a fake piece of diamond.

A good cut will allow the diamond to sparkle when it catches the light. Clarity refers to how clear the stone actually is. For colour, jewellers commonly use the letters D (colourless) to Z (more yellow or brown tint). Colour Z has less value. Carats refer to the size of the diamond.

Needless to say that the Consumer Council of Fiji receives consumer complaints regarding fake jewellery sold at high prices time and again.

Consumers can be easily fooled into buying fake diamond due to the following reasons:

- **Look alike gemstones-** the current market has many gemstones which can easily be mistaken for a diamond. “Cubic Zirconia” is one stone that imitates the look of diamond so well that an average consumer may fail to distinguish the difference.
- **Gemstones with similar properties-** Moissanite which is a *lab created* stone has the same chemical composition as that of a diamond. However, it is not a diamond created by nature. Scientists are able to carefully replicate the chemical properties of a diamond to create a man-made diamond. There still is a vast price difference between “natural diamond” and “man-made diamond”.
- **Improper understanding of the grading chart-** if a consumer understands the grading chart, they can ask the trader for the 4 C’s. In doing so, those who may try to cheat consumers by selling them Cubic Zirconia in place of diamonds, may get caught. But if a

consumer does not understand the grading chart, trader may get away with his witty sale tactics.

What consumers need to do?

- **Ask for the diamond certification** - consumers buying a Diamond over 0.30 Carat Solitaire stone should ask for a proper certificate and preferably a GIA grading certificate. (This is for loose diamonds that are not set in jewellery)
- **Seek consultations prior to purchase** - Jewels Fiji provides free of charge consultations on buying diamond. Consumers should seek expert advice before venturing out to buy diamonds.
- **Get your diamond tested** – to be sure that you have a genuine diamond and not a fake look alike stone. Jewels Fiji offers diamond testing for the price of \$25.00. They also carry out tests for Moissanite as well.
- **Check for quality** - Understandably, lower quality diamonds will attract a lower price compared to top quality diamonds which will attract a higher price. be sure to make your decision based on 4C's.
- **Check amount of diamond in your jewellery piece** - the larger the single stone or solitaire the more price it will fetch. For example, when you walk into a diamond store, you may be shown two types of rings – one with a single stone called a solitaire which will be much more costly than the ring made up of small pieces of diamonds fitted together. While both may have the same weight, amounting to 1.00 carat, but the one with single diamond will cost more than diamond chips.