

Give The Gift Of Diamonds

Who doesn't want diamonds for Christmas? Almost anyone I know would love to open up a little black velvet box to find a dazzling piece of jewelry inside, but how do you shop to get the best deal?

One thing you can do is educate yourself about diamonds. The last expensive diamond for the size might not be the best deal you can get and you have to go in armed with a little bit of knowledge in order to make that kind of judgement.

If you are in the market for a diamond, don't let all the industry jargon scare you off. Here's a little translation on what these terms mean so next time you go into the jewelry store you can speak the same language as the sales clerk!

1. CUT. Not the shape of the stone, but the quality of its facets.
2. CLARITY. Clarity levels start at Flawless and descend from Very Very Slight (VVS) to Very Slight (VS) and Slightly Included (SI). Clarity measures the number of flaws or inclusions in a diamond.
3. CARAT. The weight of a diamond. One carat equals about 200 milligrams.
4. COLOR. Transparent diamonds (those created from 100 percent carbon) are rated on a scale from D (clear) through Z (light yellow). Grade D is the most prestigious, but, because they are so rare, natural diamonds with tints of pink, blue or purple have a cachet all their own.

Not all diamonds come with a certification but you'll probably want to set your sites on one that does. Make sure yours is certified by a well known laboratory such as the Gemological Institute of America. Going with a well known and respected lab will insure that you are getting exactly what you thought you were getting. It might be cheaper to buy an uncertified diamond or one certified by a "no name" lab but you may not get what you think you are getting!

It is best if you can get some sort of guarantee for your diamond. This indicates that the merchant stands behind their products. This is important especially when shopping on the web since there is no face to face contact.

You probably already know that the diamond is the hardest rock there is. Hardness is measured by something called the Mohs scale where diamonds have the highest spot at number 10. If you've ever wondered what this scale is, here's the lowdown of each step.

1. Easily scratched by a fingernail.
2. Just scratched by a fingernail.
3. Scratches and is scratched by a copper coin.
4. Not scratched by a copper coin and doesn't scratch.
5. Just scratches glass and is easily scratched by a knife.
6. Easily scratches glass and is just scratched by a file.
7. Not scratched by a file.
8. Scratched only by corundum and diamond.
9. Will scratch anything but a diamond.
10. Scratched only by another diamond.

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About the Author

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