

Bridge Jewelry the Affordable Alternative

Jewelry is more than an accessory; it can be a promise, a remembrance, a statement or a frivolous decoration. Fine jewelry, Bridge jewelry and Costume Jewelry all contribute to the choices you make as you create your look. The terms Bridge jewelry and Artisan jewelry are sometimes used as if they are synonymous. This is a misconception.

Fine jewelry is generally thought of as jewelry that uses at least 14 kt. Gold or other precious metals and precious gems like diamonds, sapphires, rubies or emeralds. Fine jewelry can be mass-produced or artisan-made one-of-a-kind pieces or limited-edition.

Costume jewelry can also be artisan-made or mass produced. Materials used in the designs are base metals, glass, plastic and other synthetics. They also may use shell, wood and other organic materials.

Bridge jewelry is called that because it is the bridge between Fine jewelry and Costume jewelry. It may use vermeil, gold filled or silver as the metal and uses semi precious stones such as amethyst, citrine, turquoise, jade, topaz, fresh water pearls, garnet and others. Much Bridge jewelry is artisan-made, but it can also be mass produced.

Of course other combinations such as using precious metals like 14k gold with amethyst are used and not so easily classified. Price points are another way to define the three types of jewelry with Fine jewelry as the most expensive and Costume jewelry as an inexpensive alternative. Bridge jewelry falls between these two on price.

Bridge jewelry is a unique addition to your jewelry collection. You may see some familiar names in galleries or fine department stores and begin to recognize them as producers of Bridge jewelry. When you attend an art show, take a special look at the jewelry and you will recognize that much of it is fine artisan-made Bridge jewelry. It can provide you a good value because of the combination of quality materials; creativity and workmanship provided by the designers of these unique one-of-a-kind or limited edition pieces.

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About the Author

Louise Coulson, a former elementary school teacher, has had a checkered career of work in the fiberarts, marketing and website development. She has moved with her engineer husband from one construction project to another, hence the checkered career. She is currently using her fiber background in her jewelry designs and fabrication. The wire is woven, twisted, coiled and braided to create one-of-a-kind or limited-edition pieces. She has recently published an eBook, Website ShowCase, for jewelry artisans who develop, maintain and market their own jewelry websites. She is webmaster for the wireweavers.com and the jewelryspectrum.com websites.