

Buy genuine pearls and real gold, girls

fashion notes
Hafsa Lodi

When I was a young girl, like many others I'm sure, my weekly pocket money would be spent at Claire's. You've definitely seen it – that store with a purple lower-case sign, filled with racks and shelves of colourful earrings, hair accessories, cutesy jewellery and kiddish trinkets. Stepping into the store felt like an overwhelming entry into shopping heaven – and that's no exaggeration. As the years passed, I found other outlets to indulge my accessories obsession, and today, I'll pass by the shop without a second glance.

But I still haven't grown up in some ways – my enthusiasm for cute costume jewellery persists, and I find much more joy in picking out a basketful of rings on the high street than I do browsing the window displays of fine-jewellery shops. The result: a drawer full of blingy pieces I wear once in a while and that hold hardly any long-term value. Is my collection of faux pearl necklaces something I would save for my own daughter one day? Probably not.

Aren't our eyes supposed to go green with envy when we see impressively sized emeralds and beautifully set sapphires? I'm usually more drawn to punky Marni jewel embellishments or statement Shourouk neck pieces, where glitz and glamour are achieved without genuine gemstones. Either I'm lacking in taste or just in fine-jewellery finesse – I hope it's the latter.

Don't get me wrong, I'm over the moon when I'm given a piece of real jewellery, but more for the sentimental value than for the monetary worth. My first gold piece was a delicate ladybug pendant from a relative – but today, it sits in a tray right next to a Dh25 cat pendant. Think of how some of our mothers and grandmothers stored their jewellery – in beautiful carved wooden boxes, lined in ruby-red velvet – and how we would watch them handle each piece with painstaking care. They would wrap them individually in tissue, to avoid any tangles or scratches.

If you've seen the movie Titanic, you'll remember immense focus and fascination over the Heart of the Ocean necklace – that's something I've never really felt towards a piece of jewellery. Perhaps this is a problem with my generation – or is it just an inevitable fact of commercialisation and the ever-expanding fashion industry?

Traditionally, the whole point of creating jewellery was to make a person's jewels, gold and silver wearable. It was about displaying your wealth and handing it down through generations of your family. But now, it's starting to feel like it's more about the name, less about the stones and craftsmanship. High-end designer brands such as Lanvin and Dior don't help, when they saturate the accessories market with high-priced Swarovski and cubic zirconia pieces – goading us to buy them for their brand names, rather than for the stones. A Dolce & Gabbana necklace, for instance – which most would consider quite gaudy – featuring red patent leather roses and Swarovski crystals, costs almost Dh10,000. For that price, you could go to any jeweller and buy multiple designs with real gold and diamonds.

I know a couple of women who wouldn't be caught dead in artificial jewellery – but that's another extreme. Just make sure to accumulate a healthy mix of both, and save your splurges for the real stuff. Make sure to give your fine jewellery the care it deserves – for starters, try to refrain from storing genuine gold chains in the same container as your cheap finds from Aldo.

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Real pearls: catwalk models from, left to right, Stella McCartney, Miu Miu and Chanel show off fine jewellery, complementing outfits with genuine precious metals and pearls. Catwalking / Getty Images

trend



Styled by Hafsa Lodi / The National; photo by Juliet Dunne for The National

Gipsy jewels

Accessorise with mystical arrowheads, amethysts and marble accents

1. Marble necklace, Dh69, H&M, Yas Mall, 02 492 6534; Dubai Mall, 04 419 0346 and elsewhere. 2. Hoop earrings, Dh370, Marcia Moran at Boom & Mellow, Jumeirah Town Centre, 04 344 4512. 3. Bracelets, Dh340 each, Marla B at The Luxury Arcade, World Trade Center Mall, 02 631 4667. 4. Tooth necklace, Dh990, OnlyNoa at Comptoir 102, Jumeirah Beach Road, 04 385 4555. 5. Spike necklace, Dh69, H&M. 6. Ring, Dh870, Leivankash at Boom & Mellow. 7. Clutch, Dh3,900, The Hgub & Co at Symphony, Dubai Mall, 04 330 8050. 8. Shell bracelet, Dh1,800, Pascale Monvoisin at Comptoir 102. 9. Marble earrings, Dh49, H&M. 10. Feather cuff, Dh1,205, Leivankash at Boom & Mellow. 11. Purple stone necklace, Dh295, Whitley V at Boom & Mellow. 12. Arrow cuff, Dh550, Heather Hawkins at Boom & Mellow.

trend-ometer this week's highs and lows

Ring the changes

Jazz up any outfit with these glorious earrings from H&M.

Tied in a knot

As much as we love H&M's gladiators, who has time to tie this many laces?

DAS list gut

DAS's new collection at Saks Fifth Avenue is perfect daytime chic.

Puffy problems

Moschino quilting perhaps isn't for this region.

Carrying the load

We love this men's tote by Coach. It doubles up as the perfect carry-all for us ladies.