

G i f t I d e a s

A Holiday Gift Of Legendary Proportions: The Tahitian Pearl

(NAPSA)—Tahitian legend has it that the pearl oyster, *Te Ufi*, was offered to the beautiful princess of Bora Bora by Oro the god of peace and fertility. The black pearl was given to the princess as a sign of Oro's undying love—and today, the legendary lustrous beauty of Tahitian pearls remains a lustrous symbol of love.

Described as the “pearl of queens” and the “queen of pearls,” luminous Tahitian cultured pearls are expected to be one of this holiday season's most appreciated ways to express love.

Tahitian pearls are best known for their diversity of size, shape, quality and many shades of natural colors ranging from pale grey to anthracite black. The widely varying palette of iridescent colors and wealth of unusual shapes means these pearls are found in a vast array of jewelry styles, from classic to modern to Bohemian.

Holiday gifts made with Tahitian pearls are also available in a wide range of prices, some of which may be surprisingly affordable. Although a necklace of the rarest Tahitian pearls could run into the thousands—which may be just the right gift for a 25th anniversary/holiday gift—you can buy your 16-year-old daughter a pearl pendant stocking stuffer for under \$100.

Or you can buy that special someone a one-of-a-kind necklace for under \$1,000.

The gem's fairly large size provides a visibility and presence that most other precious stones or other types of pearls cannot provide within the same price range.



With its varied hues, shapes and sizes, the Tahitian pearl is found in a vast array of jewelry styles—from classic to modern to Bohemian.

Generally, the larger rounder pearls, which exhibit a high luster with few flaws command premium prices. Special colors such as peacock, auburgine or pistachio also carry a premium price.

While pearl prices are graded by luster and color, some of the less than perfect pearls have fascinating flaws and textures that contribute a distinct charm to many of today's jewelry looks.

The trade designation “Tahitian cultured pearl” is reserved for cultured pearls obtained from the *Pinctada margaritifera* (black-lipped) pearl oyster found in French Polynesia. Out of every 100 cultivated oysters, only 50 will produce pearls and of these 50, only five will be perfect gems.

For more information about gifts made from Tahitian pearls, visit www.perlesdetahiti.net.