

newsworthy trends

More Women Buying Jewelry As Gifts—For Themselves

(NAPSA)—Never underestimate the buying power of a woman—especially when it comes to jewelry. Women who once thought of jewelry only as a gift are now also buying it for themselves in greater numbers.

In fact, a 2002 study by the Jewelry Consumer Opinion Council found the majority of females who planned to make a jewelry purchase before the end of the year were likely to make the purchase for themselves. Favorite jewelry categories for self-purchase were: rings, earrings or necklaces with colored stones, such as rubies, emeralds or sapphires; and diamond earrings.

Why do women purchase jewelry for themselves? The answer is as varied as the woman. Some may shop for an important life event, such as a special birthday, a career success, or to commemorate a special occasion. Still others may see a particular item of jewelry that simply appeals to their tastes or complements their wardrobe.

Jewelry can be a strong statement for women who are self-purchasers. Its inherent permanence (fine jewelry is made from natural



Women are increasingly purchasing jewelry for themselves.

gems and minerals and set in durable metals such as gold, platinum and silver) lends itself as a purchase that can be worn daily and later passed on to the next generation.

The Gemological Institute of America (GIA), an independent nonprofit organization based in Carlsbad, Calif., encourages consumers to have a basic understanding of gems and jewelry

before making a purchase. GIA's Web site (www.gia.edu) includes a number of helpful items to empower consumers, such as its online tutorial, How to Buy a Diamond. This informative, interactive tutorial instructs visitors about the 4Cs (cut, color, clarity and carat weight) and how they can be used to determine the value of a diamond. The site also features articles on such topics as choosing a jeweler, buying estate jewelry, understanding colored gemstones and keeping a diamond clean. The Institute's ultimate goal is to protect the interests of the buying public.

GIA also recommends that consumers only buy from a jeweler or salesperson with the proper credentials—such as a Graduate Gemologist (G.G.) or a Graduate Jeweler (G.J.) diploma. These credentials signify the jeweler has been trained to identify and grade diamonds and many other gemstones and gem materials. GIA has been teaching gemology and related subjects since 1931.

For more information about GIA, or its educational programs, call 800-421-7250.