

Title:

Wholesale sterling silver jewelry guide: determine prices by quality

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Summary:

It takes many years of experience in trading sterling silver jewelry to tell whether a piece of jewelry is of high quality or not. Especially when you are buying wholesale silver jewelry, a minor difference in the quality might affect your business reputation in the long run. This article summarizes the basic metrics for anyone who is beginning to trade silver jewelry to gauge the quality of silver jewelry.

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Article Body:

It takes many years of experience in trading sterling silver jewelry to tell whether a piece of jewelry is of high quality or not. Especially when you are buying wholesale silver jewelry, a minor difference in the quality might affect your business reputation in the long run. This article summarizes the basic metrics for anyone who is beginning to trade silver jewelry to gauge the quality of silver jewelry.

Finishing

Most of the sterling silver jewelry has some sort of plating because silver itself turns yellow over time. There are several ways of finishing a piece of silver jewelry and they will affect the cost of the jewelry substantially.

1. High polished sterling silver jewelry has no plating on the jewelry at all and is particularly popular with engravable items or for people who are allergic to certain metals such as nickel. The jewelry is polished by machine without additional raw material cost.
2. Some silver jewelry has a black antique look to cater to certain consumers. These items are processed by putting the jewelry into chemical solution to oxide the silver before polishing and the pricing is similar to that of high polished ones.
3. Another common way of finishing sterling silver jewelry is nickel plating.

Although nickel plating is illegal in some countries, most of the Italian silver jewelry sold in the market today is plated with nickel. However, since nickel is not considered as precious metal, the price is usually not affected by the cost of plating.

4. The most expensive way of finishing sterling silver jewelry is using Rhodium. Rhodium is a precious metal that is even more expensive than silver. Therefore, silver jewelry with Rhodium plating is usually at least five cent more expensive per gram. Since Rhodium has the property of being highly tarnish resistant and very expensive at the same time, some manufacturers would coat the sterling silver jewelry with a thin layer of copper before plating the Rhodium to reduce the cost. It might be a good idea to ask the vendors if the Rhodium is plated directly or not because some people have skin type that would turn the copper underneath green.

Stone cutting

Sterling silver jewelry usually has natural or synthetic stones set on it. The cutting of the stones, even with the same size, might affect the cost. For instance, the synthetic diamond cubic zirconia stones would cost more if they are in princess cut as suppose to round brilliant cut. Furthermore, emerald cut and baguette cut stones are even more expensive than princess cut ones.

Stone setting

1. The way that stones are set on a piece of jewelry also affects the cost. Many pendant and bracelet styles employ an economical setting method called wax setting. The stones are not really set one by one on the jewelry. Rather, they are fixed on the mold before the jewelry is cast out from the melted silver and come out of the mold together with the silver. This lowers the cost of the silver jewelry significantly. However, the quality of the setting is not consistent and the heat of the silver in liquid form might affect the quality of the stones.

2. Besides wax setting, there are several hand-setting methods that are widely adopted. The most common one is prong setting, where the stones are held in place by three to eight prongs, depending on the style. More advanced settings include channel setting, bezel setting, pave setting and invisible setting. Understanding the labor costs involved in different kinds of settings is one of the keys to getting merchandize with the best prices.

Stamping and Casting

Another categorization for sterling silver jewelry is the way they manufacture the metal part. To save cost, some jewelry is made by stamping and cutting the

needed shapes out from a large sheet of silver and than bend it into the desired shapes. On the other hand, a more traditional way of producing sterling silver jewelry is to cast the metal out of a mold, which is more labor intensive and hence more costly due to the polishing and filing required afterwards. The way the jewelry is made affects the durability a great deal and hence the success of your business.