



PLATINUM TIMES

and palladium



Image courtesy of Asiana Magazine Jewellery by Shefaly



My big Asian platinum wedding

Jewellery and Asian weddings have - a bit like love and marriage - always been inexorably linked. But more and more today's Asian brides and grooms are developing a growing taste for platinum.

"Our experience is that we are now selling 50% yellow gold, 30% white gold and 20% platinum, which is a very different picture to ten years ago when over 90% of all our sales were yellow gold," says Rashid Mahmood, whose family's retail outlet, Eastern Gold, is situated on Manchester's famous 'Curry Mile'.

Rashid says that until fairly recently people from the Asian sub-continent saw wedding jewellery, which is traditionally purchased for the couple by their families, as the ultimate insurance for a rainy day. "People are more sophisticated now, they have more faith in the banking system and their tastes are changing towards platinum," he says.

There is certainly a sea change in buying patterns in London with leading Asian jewellers in Southall, Wembley and Green Street - all key shopping areas for Asian weddings - reporting a healthy growth in platinum jewellery sales and especially for wedding bands and engagement rings.

Raj Vyasabhattu, store manager of RPS (Ram Parkash Sunderdass & Sons Jewellers) of Southall, one of the country's leading Asian jewellery retailers, confirms that platinum now accounts for around 15% to 20% of all stock sold. "For young Asian professionals the

choice of the engagement ring and the wedding ring is now down to the couples themselves and they follow modern trends which means white. For some, 22ct gold is still important when it comes to choosing jewellery for the wedding itself, but for the rings it is nearly always platinum for both the man and the woman," says Raj. This is reflected in RPS's conscious decision to be the first to invest heavily in advertising platinum bridal and engagement rings on Asian TV channels, instead of gold.

At Pure Jewels in Green Street at least 40% of all bridal sales are platinum. The company's brand manager, Jayant Raniga told me that the metal has real appeal to the Asian mentality. "Asians are purists. So 22ct gold is good, but the extra purity of platinum is a sales pitch that really works for them," he says. Pure Jewels, which has recently opened an impressive flagship store, has deliberately broadened its offer. It advertises widely on the Internet and distributes no fewer than one million copies of its 24 page bridal jewellery catalogue, many pages of which are devoted to platinum. It is not unusual for customers to spend ten to fifteen £10,000 to £15,000 there on a single purchase.

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My big Asian platinum wedding

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"Asian professional couples are spending differently. They want more diamond set jewellery as opposed to 22ct metal intensive pieces. They are also going for design and fashion-led pieces in platinum rather than the more traditional, chunky, products in gold," says Jayant. A classic example of this is the demand for 'Mangalsutras' – the heavy gold and black bead necklace traditionally worn by the Hindu community. "Brides would rather spend that money on a more petite, but equally expensive piece – possibly in platinum and diamond – that they can wear more often," Jayant told me.

This is a trend also borne out by the experience of Ramesh Lakha, a director of Lakha in Wembley. Founded in 1972, this is one of the largest and most recognised Asian jewellery shops in the UK and is a favourite destination for Asian brides from throughout the country and abroad.

Ramesh confirms that richer families are now spending well over £5,000 on their engagement and wedding bands and that the trend is to platinum and diamonds. "The metal is strong and long-lasting and the colour is natural, so it is attractive to the Asian mentality," he says.

Whilst the word on the ground would definitely seem to be in favour of platinum I was still looking for independent verification. This wasn't hard to find. Anisha Vasani, is editor of 'Asiana' one of the UK's leading Asian wedding magazines with a circulation of 40,000 worldwide. The minimum spend amongst her readers on their weddings is now at least £30,000 and of that Anisha believes that at least £5,000 will be spent on jewellery. The magazine enjoys excellent patronage from a number of jewellery producers and regularly carries advertising from Bombay Boutique, Kyle Collections and Shifaly House of Jewels - amongst others - for platinum bridal jewellery. Anisha was happy to confirm that

she too has witnessed a shift to platinum. "The trend has gone from heavy adorned gold to a more elegant look in platinum. People are looking for more refined designs that will look expensive, feel luxurious and are more practical to wear on and after their big day," she says.

"Brides don't want to look like something out of Cleopatra," says the prize-winning Asian jewellery designer, Jig Pattni, three time winner of the platinum Design Innovation Award. Jig comes from a long line of jewellers and his experience confirms that young Asians are going for smaller more wearable pieces.

"90%, if not more, of my own designs are in platinum. For my customers the high price simply isn't an issue," he says. "People who want platinum are prepared to pay for its qualities as it adds to the metal's exclusiveness." High prices are not an issue at Joule in West Hampstead either. This thriving business, which is recognised as a leader in the Asian market place, specialises in the bridal market. Joule advertises widely on the Internet, with particular emphasis on platinum, and its web presence draws customers from around the world.

"Ninety-five percent of our sales are in platinum and whilst we don't aim specifically at the Asian market we do see a lot of young, British-born, Asian professionals with jobs in the City and Canary Wharf who have real spending power," says director, Sanjay Pattni. The



Platinum jewellery featured in this article is courtesy of RPS jewellers in Southall

average spend by a couple on platinum wedding rings and the woman's engagement ring at Joule is around £10,000 but sales of forty and even fifty thousand are not unusual.

"At one time the whole Asian family would come in to buy. Now it is just couples. They do their research and they won't let their families interfere. Young Asian men are now much more fashion conscious and they will spend up to £3,000 on rings for themselves," says Sanjay, adding: "The information and education about platinum and diamonds which is freely available and on the web have made it so much easier for young men to go into a jewellers', know exactly what they want and come out with a purchase."

The final word goes to Anisha, who is the model of a modern, British-born, professional Asian woman. "I'm not married yet, but when I am I shall definitely choose a platinum ring that I can wear all the time." What about the cost? "Cost doesn't really come into it. Jewellery is part of our culture; it just needs to be done," she laughs.

This article was researched and written by Jyoti Trivedi and Mary Brittain.



Here comes the bride

New statistics released recently by Platinum Guild International tell us what she's wearing and spending!

The average UK wedding in 2007, according to a poll amongst readers of Brides magazine, now costs £21,901 an increase of 3% on 2006. Of that spend £2,600 is on the wedding jewellery, with £1,970 going on the engagement ring and £630 on the wedding bands. These figures are, an encouraging 3% and 4.7% respectively up on figures for 2006. When it comes to choosing their rings, most brides are quite literally 'hands on' with 59% of

them having input into the choice of ring design, if not actually shopping for the ring with the groom. In fact, only 36% of couples choose the ring together and a romantic 66% are presented at the proposal. Despite equality, 90% of grooms still pay for the engagement ring.

As to the style, 95% of all engagement rings contain white diamonds. Diamond-set wedding bands are growing in popularity, with 46% of

brides and 13% of grooms choosing to add a sparkle to their ring.

40% pick platinum

Forty per cent of brides pick platinum, 38% white gold and just 19% yellow gold. The figures for men, in terms of metals chosen, show an almost identical split. Top considerations when choosing a ring are style (85%), the metal (67%), the price (62%) and getting rings that match (42%).

Cufflinks by
Giles Reeve



Ring by
Max Shepherd



Necklace by
Tom Rucker



PURE INSPIRATION as DIA Awards announced

2008 was a bumper year for this prestigious platinum design competition

As the names of the pieces in the Lonmin Design Innovation Award emphasise, today's prize winning platinum designs have extremely different starting points. In the Established Designers category Alexa Blampied reflects on the organic in her 'Sea Spiral' necklace, while Tom Rucker gets philosophical with his 'Geo.Infinity' pendant. Janet Weller recalls the fall of man in 'After Eden' and John Bradley gets positively playful with his 'Slinky' ring.



Necklaces by Maria Kondakova, Alexa Blampied and David Roux

Ring by
John Bradley



Amongst the four winners in the Emerging Designer category, sponsored by International Jewellery London, for those with less than four years in the business, we have a philosophical Max Shepherd with 'How long is a piece of string?' a macabre 'Dead Man's Hand' from David Roux and historical allusions from Maria Kondakova in her 'My Lady' pendants while Giles Reeve lets his simple and stylish 'Mies' cufflinks speak for themselves.

The competition, which was judged by a pan-industry panel of designers, retailers and journalists is organised by Blue Inc, publisher of the Platinum Collection, and is supported by Johnson Matthey.

The winning pieces will be on show on the Johnson Matthey stand (E100) at IJL in September and are also featured in the Platinum Collection 2009 magazine which is also available from the stand.

Necklace by
Janet Weller



For further information and for details on how to enter next year's competition, visit www.designinnovationawards.co.uk, telephone 020 8995 5006 or email julie@blueincentives.co.uk



Platinum at CLJW



Georgio Gerakio, Emma Pearson

The bag, the dress and all the best parties!

Platinum in many forms took centre stage at Coutts London Jewellery Week (CLJW)

Of all the many successes at CLJW this summer, as the acres of press cuttings prove, platinum was the real show stopper. Thanks to some truly innovative ideas from the Platinum Guild International's marketing department the metal was rarely out of the headlines.

First there was the quarter of a million pound platinum and silk wedding dress designed by Domo Adami which was showcased by The Wedding Ring Shop in Hatton Garden.

Then there was that handbag, designed by Japanese jeweller Ginza Tanaka, made in platinum and diamonds and worth a cool £1million. This was displayed at Nicholas James's shop in Hatton Garden and at Marmalade in Chiswick. Gerakio got in on the act with a party attended by his muse, Hotel Babylon's Emma Pearson, while veteran platinum designers Sarah Jordan and Paul Spurgeon both created new pieces for Wave Contemporary Jewellery

which also played host to some platinum masterpieces – huge necklaces created by the Far Eastern designers Iraja and Jiang. The Asian jewellers of Green Street weren't to be left out either with platinum featuring in their exhibition in Stratford.



PALLADIUM what you need to know

Sales of palladium are increasing and two publications from Johnson Matthey will help you get to grips with this coming metal.

'Palladium – what you need to know' is an invaluable and easy-to-follow guide as to what palladium is, where it is positioned in the market, how to detect it and how to work with it. Clearly illustrated at every stage, the booklet tackles everyday tasks such as ring sizing, removing surface marks, burnishing and polishing. It also advises on securing gemstones and gives tips on laser welding.

'The Palladium Technical Manual' does exactly the same as 'Palladium what you need to know' but offers much, much more. This hefty tome, neatly packaged is the definitive guide to working with this metal and gives step by step detailed instructions as to how to ensure you really get to grips with its individual quirks.

A free copy of 'Palladium what you need to know' will be available from the Johnson Matthey stand at IJL. You can also pre-order copies of 'The Palladium Technical Manual' by emailing your details to palladium@matthey.com or telephoning 01763 256314.



Creating a 'Bearing' or 'Seat'

Although palladium forms and shapes nicely around gemstones, use of thicker claws, bezels and channel walls than for platinum are preferable to secure the gems and support the overall structure of the article of jewellery during normal wear. Palladium has little or no memory, which means it does not spring back after being bent and formed over a gemstone. Pre-polishing palladium settings prior to setting provides a better finish and saves time.

This information is taken from 'Palladium – what you need to know' published by Johnson Matthey

Palladium – cast your net

Mike Hughes MD of the Birmingham casting company Jewelcast thinks there is a very good chance that demand is set to grow.

"I am sure we have all heard the rumblings from the Far East and America that palladium jewellery sales are growing. This has in part been due to the spiraling prices of white gold and platinum but also I feel sure to the constant search by jewellery designers and manufacturers for innovative new ideas to help differentiate their products in what is a crowded and confusing marketplace," says Hughes.

So convinced is Hughes of the potential offered to the UK market by palladium that his company JewelCast has been at the forefront of the metal's renaissance. Jewelcast has been successfully casting Palladium for the past two years and has assisted many of

the country's major manufacturers in undertaking trials and latterly full stage production in the metal.

"It's true that palladium is not yet a mainstream product, but it is growing in popularity as producers experiment with new ideas in an effort to steal a march on their competitors," he says.

Hughes believes that palladium will become a significant jewellery metal and take its place alongside platinum, gold and silver, but that it will require a concentrated and consistent marketing message, as well as the backing of the promised UK hallmark, which is yet to be ratified.

It's also not an easy metal to work with but Jewelcast has the technology in place and Hughes is ready to meet the demand when – as he believes it surely will – it comes.

T: 0121 212 1372
E: info@jewelcast.co.uk
W: www.jewelcast.co.uk



Niagara develops bespoke palladium alloy

Niagara Falls Castings (NFC), which has an enviable reputation for the quality and precision of its gold and platinum castings, has developed a bespoke 950 palladium alloy to meet the steady increase in the volume of orders for that metal. The alloy casts well, has a good hardness and can be polished to a brilliant white finish.

With the recent steep rises in the price of precious metals NFC has seen its well established quality-control procedures pay dividends with the ability to deliver a consistent level of quality that helps its customers to limit waste, reduce finishing times and avoid the frustration of small imperfections showing up just as the final polish is being applied.

NFC's continually growing list of customers features some of the largest manufacturing companies in the country as well as smaller (but very well known) bespoke jewellers who demand the very highest standards.

In response to customer demand, NFC has developed specialist skills in the casting of rapid prototyping models directly into platinum and palladium. The company also has a comprehensive range of CAD software and rapid prototyping equipment to meet every need.

Contact Philip Roberts for further information.

T: 01926 496258
E: www.nf-casings.co.uk
W: sales@nf-castings.co.uk



PHOTO © Flash Jordan Jewellery



Who you
going to
call?

If you have technical problems in working with platinum or palladium Umicore can help.

Umicore, the Birmingham-based, UK subsidiary of the German bullion giant Allgemeine offers far more than an extremely wide choice of platinum and palladium products. Its wealth of experience and technical support, built up over the 117 years that its head office has been in operation, provides real added value for customers.

"We have great technical backup," explains sales director, Stuart Wibberley. "At our head office we employ a team of working goldsmiths who really understand the practicalities of working with platinum and palladium and we are happy to share their expertise with our customers."

Despite only being in business in the UK for three years, Umicore has built a strong following for its

platinum cobalt alloy. Other platinum products, which are delivered daily from Germany, include casting alloy, sheet, wire and ring blanks.

Palladium

A recent addition to the Umicore product range is palladium. "We've seen an increasing demand and interest in this metal and our stock range reflects this. We offer a range of wires and sheeting, as well as a 95% palladium alloy specifically developed for the manufacture of semi-fabricated wrought products. Other lines include pure palladium and an extremely popular range of wedding ring blanks," says Wibberley.

T: 0121 554 3985
E: sales.birmingham@umicore.com
W: www.allgemeine.co.uk

Curteis conquers palladium chain

Chain making specialist, Curteis Limited has challenged its manufacturing team to produce chain in palladium. It has taken time, research and development to produce two heavy, plain curb, machine-made chains, that are also available with a diamond cut finish.

"Although palladium is not yet recognised as a precious metal by the UK Hallmarking Act, it does, unlike white gold, have a natural, soft silver-white colour. It is not as heavy as platinum but is still a good, solid precious metal that could soon be given the official stamp," says Curteis', MD, Ray Kenna.

The Curteis team is excited and proud to have been able to produce machine-made palladium chain and is confident that it will soon reach its goal of manufacturing a range in a variety of gauges.

T: 0800 1956771
E: info@curteis.com
W: www.curteis.com



Add a little 'Starlight'

As thousands of retailers already know, adding a little 'Starlight' to their diamond and platinum jewellery provides a touch of pure magic.

This tried and tested, patented setting from T A Durant creates an optical illusion which makes stones appear larger and brighter than they would otherwise seem. For example a 25pt stone when set with Starlight spreads to 50pt.

'Starlight' comes in a wide range of platinum ring, earring and pendant designs and in four different qualities of diamond. It is also available set in palladium.

T: 01789 772353
E: sales@tadurant.co.uk
JL: Emagold Pavilion E535



Simply Sienna

'Sienna' - Domino's latest ring collection offers all the elegance of its stylish namesakes.

Whether it's the ancient Tuscan town or the fabulously lovely Ms Miller, 'Sienna' is a name that conjures some magical images. Like the ancient hill-top city, Domino's new collection of ring mounts is underpinned by strong, classical design principles coupled with contemporary cutting-edge style. Like the actress it has undoubted star quality and is guaranteed to create a stir.

The range has a number of particularly strong selling points with shelf appeal to the discerning shopper.

Pre-set shoulders

As trend-spotters will have already noticed, many of today's most-wanted dress and engagement rings feature diamond-set shoulders. Previous Domino collections offering pre-set shoulder designs have been much in demand in recent months and in Sienna the company is delighted to present 32 newly created ring mounts in which the stone-set shoulders are a prominent element of the design. These rings look stunning set with your own choice of large central diamond but work equally well, if not better, with a statement coloured stone.

"Coloured stones are still very much a strong fashion story," says Domino's sales & marketing director, Andrew Sollitt, "and these mounts provide our customers with the ideal, no hassle vehicle in which to showcase such stones. The designs cater for a wide variety of shapes and size of stone and the various settings offer retailers real choice."

Mix and Match

Matching wedding and engagement rings have powerful appeal to many brides-to-be and with this in mind the Sienna collection includes a range of diamond-set wedding bands created to complement the dress ring designs: seven of these are bespoke patterns specially shaped to fit snugly alongside individual mounts.

The Domino promise

All 45 different products in the Sienna range are set with diamonds of a GVS colour and clarity and are available from stock in a selection of alloys, 24 of which are available in platinum. They come with the company's usual guarantees of excellent quality and prompt delivery. Indeed to give retailers added flexibility, Domino is offering the entire Sienna range to customers, whenever possible, on a next day delivery service on orders placed before 5.00p.m.

To receive your free copy of the Sienna catalogue please contact Domino.



3-8 Vyse Street
Birmingham B18 6LT

T: 0121 236 4772
E: sales@domino-wb.co.uk
W: www.domino-wb.co.uk

New platinum service



Quality Jewellery Solutions (QJS) Limited, having launched its trade casting service in March this year, may be the new kids on the block but when it comes to platinum they have already established a strong following. The team behind the business which, unusually for a casting company is based in the North-East of England, has plenty of hands-on production experience to share with its customers who are spread throughout the UK.

QJS offers not only an extremely competitive casting service in platinum and gold but also a repair service including invisible ring resizing. "Flexibility is the name of the game," says the company's Ian Ward. "We offer great casting but if the customer wants stone setting, polishing or hallmarking we can do that too and all at prices that we know are hard to beat."

T: 0800 0837746
E: info@qualityjewellersolutions.com
W: qualityjewellersolutions.com

Reach for the stars

Sharman D Neill, winner of Supplier of the Year category in the 2007 in the UK Jewellery Awards and highly commended in this year's Award, prides itself on its ability to produce unique jewellery with a leading edge.

'Saturn' is part of the Memoire Collection, one of the company's most popular and successful ranges to date. Here small diamonds are set in the shank and shoulders to complement a fine central stone and provide the signature to a truly sparkling collection.

Each prong is individually fashioned and 'raised' from the platinum mount to ensure the exact amount of metal needed to secure each stone safely with the maximum amount of light and scintillation.

Memoire rings are only available in platinum with a choice of round brilliant cut and fancy cut diamonds in a range of carat sizes.



T: 02890 240 339
E: sales@diamondbyappointment.com
W: diamondbyappointment.com

Soley is 'moving on up'

After many years in premises just off Bond Street, D A Soley has not only relocated itself but has also substantially revamped its offer in line with a changing market.

Brownlow Mews between Clerkenwell and Bloomsbury is a perfect location for a company which has been at the cutting-edge of fine jewellery design for well over a hundred years. Here in brand new, airy, purpose-built workshops Soley rubs shoulders with such august neighbours as David Bailey and the Habitat designer, Tom Dixon. It is a fitting venue for a design-led company that is proud of its long heritage and the fact that its team of nine craftsmen is still producing the vast substance of its range entirely by hand.

"The balance of our business has changed," explains Mark Soley. "Time was when we were simply servicing the bespoke needs of our Bond Street clients, but the advent of branding has changed the way they and we work and these premises give us the space we need to take our business forward."

Much of D A Soley's business is still in producing bespoke pieces and limited-run,

own-brand collections for its customers, but the company is now placing increasing emphasis on its own 'Soley' brand, which is currently carried by some twenty leading UK retailers and a prestigious Japanese department store. The brand, which is feted for its use of superb precious stones, is supported by attractive point-of-sale materials, packaging and advertising. Plans to join the prestigious 'Walpole Group' of luxury British companies in 2009 will raise its profile further.

"We've invested heavily in new technologies and in great design to ensure that our collections are right on trend. For autumn 2008 we are mixing platinum with 18ct red gold and introducing more colour, including champagne diamonds and some fabulous unusual gemstones," says Soley, adding, "If anyone would like to visit our new workshops and catch up with the exciting developments we're instigating, they would be most welcome."

T: 0207 242 1333
E: info@soleyfinejewellery.com
W: soleyfinejewellery.com



I want to be elected

There can't be a woman in the land who wouldn't give her vote to these classic rings from the 'Elect' Collection by Charles Green.

For Autumn 2008 Charles Green has added over twenty new designs to this successful gemstone range. All diamonds are high-quality 'E' colour and carat weights range from 0.33 – 4.00ct. For those wanting something really special, Elect rings are now available with D colour stones to suit customers' needs.

RRPs range from
£695.00 - £12,500.00



T: 0121 236 1874
E: sales@charles-green.co.uk
W: charles-green.co.uk

Get them WHISPERING

Prize winning jewellery designer Fei Liu's latest design looks sure to set tongues wagging.

The 'Whispering' collection is inspired by the orchid flower and offers classic design with a strong contemporary twist. The unusual, intricately-designed 'lace' and hollowed fitting holds the precious stones securely in place whilst being as beautiful as the gemstones themselves.

Sophisticated and ultra-feminine, the ring is available in a number of different colour combinations and in various colours of gold as well as in platinum.

RRP: £1,500



T: 0121 233 1299
E: sales@phoenixjewellery.com
W: www.feiliu.co.uk

A fitting solution

'Contour Bespoke Jewellery Design' is a new service developed by Prism Design to provide retailers with the solution to tailored wedding rings.

As experienced designers Prism understands how difficult it can be to find a platinum wedding ring that complements the customer's engagement ring.

The bespoke service has been developed from the company's well-established 'Contour Collection' of shaped wedding rings and exists to offer a solution to even the most demanding of customers.

The Contour Bespoke Service is a quick and trustworthy package to help retailers find their customers exactly what they are looking for.

T 01225 864505
E: sales@p-d.co.uk





A truly platinum service

Top class platinum jewellery requires top class servicing and this is just what Platinum Solutions can provide.

Platinum Solutions is a well-established company with an enviable reputation for the broad range of platinum services it offers the retail and workshop trade. The company, which is sometimes dubbed, the 'PlatSmith of Europe' boasts not only ownership of the cutting-edge technologies needed to work in this demanding metal but also provides its customers with access to real craftsmanship.

T: 0161 480 2597
E: platinum@jewellersolutions.co.uk



The term 'platSmith' was coined by the MD of the company, Mark Dynes, a designer jeweller himself who also has a good eye for linguistic gaps! "We specialise in platinum just as your traditional goldsmith specialises in gold," he explains. "Our highly-skilled technicians are extremely proficient in the manipulation of the metal and give our customers the high standard of service they expect: they truly are masters of the platinum art."

Providing the only dedicated platinum service for workshops, buying groups and retailers throughout the UK and Europe, Platinum Solutions is as unique in the jewellery business as it is in the service it offers. The company's professional approach to repairs, alterations and re-sizing is unparalleled and has allowed it to retain over 200 regular clients spread throughout the continent.

Part of its approach has involved investing time and money into researching the latest techniques and technology specifically for platinum servicing. "By studying

methods from Platinum Guild International and Johnson Matthey we have developed an efficient, up-to-the-minute response to almost any servicing request," says Mark.

A particular speciality is Platinum Solutions' ability to provide solderless finishing with no rhodium plating being used. Rather than using a Puk Welder, which fuses only the surface of the metal, Platinum Solutions works with the Rofin Laser Welder, to fuse the entire join. Used in conjunction with their specialised finishing processes, this ensures that the true lustre of the platinum is revived and a flawless finish achieved.

Platinum Solutions' reputation can also be attributed to its exceptional customer service which is genuinely tailored to the specific needs of individual customers. A fast and reliable turnaround is guaranteed and most repairs are returned by post within days and fully insured for customer peace of mind but there is a fast-track (next day) return for emergencies and last minute purchases.

Setting a platinum standard for jewellery retailers

Recommended Retailers receive a welcome pack including a window badge and website listing



Platinum Guild International have established a new standard of excellence to guide consumers who wish to find a quality platinum jeweller. The Recommended Retailer programme aims to assist consumers to locate a platinum jeweller who will offer them a sales experience at a platinum level.

Recommended Retailers are determined through independent mystery shopping, which assesses platinum displays, merchandising, sales and relationship building techniques. An introductory pack for successful stores includes a window badge corresponding to a listing on the "Find a Retailer" section of PGI's consumer website. Consumers can then find retailer contact details at www.preciousplatinum.co.uk/retailers.

Programme benefits extend beyond the web. Specialist subsidised point of sale materials and invitations to PGI's exclusive events are regularly extended. Information on the platinum jewellery market and updates on PGI's latest activity are also regularly sent.

Retailers who feel their store's platinum experience should be recommended can register online to be mystery shopped at www.platinumguild.co.uk/registration.

For questions about the programme or mystery shopping process please contact Trade Manager Ben Grainger on 020 7841 1238 or via bgrainger@pgiglobal.com.



Jewellery by Gerakio as featured in the Platinum Collection

The Platinum Collection 2009



The eleventh edition of the Platinum Collection magazine will be launched on the Johnson Matthey Precious Metals Marketing Stand (E100) at International Jewellery London in September.

Since its inauguration in 1998, this trend-setting publication, which is sponsored by Johnson Matthey and produced by Blue Inc, has established itself as a major force in the UK jewellery industry.

This edition boasts a line up of cutting-edge jewellery from established designers such as Liz Tyler and Henrich & Denzel together with a host of new contributors, including Glitterati, Djadji (an Anglo Platinum sponsored 'fair made' collection from South Africa), Lawson Ward & Gammage.

The Platinum Collection is available free of charge to visitors attending International Jewellery London. It is also distributed at other leading jewellery events including Spring Fair, Collections and the Basel Fair and can be viewed online at www.theplatinumcollection.co.uk

Manufacturers interested in featuring in the next edition of the magazine or retailers requiring a copy should contact the Platinum Collection on 020 8995 5006 or email info@theplatinumcollection.co.uk

Don't panic

Prices have risen but there is still a platinum lining to this particular cloud. Neill Swan of Johnson Matthey explains why.

Despite the commodity-boom-driven platinum price increase last year, which took the metal from £18.50 to £24.66 per gram, UK consumers' desire for platinum jewellery, particularly bridal rings continued unabated.

In the early part of 2008 it looked as if the UK could expect a similar steady increase in prices to those of 2007. That was until late January when Eskom, the sole power supplier in South Africa, ran out of excess supplies and advised the mines that they could not guarantee 100% power. With safety issues at the forefront of everyone's minds, the platinum mines reduced the scale of their operations and, in an already tight market, prices exploded.

The situation was exacerbated by investors (speculators) piling into exchange traded funds, which tripled their holdings. By late February the price had reached £36.87 per gram – almost double what it was a year before – and while prices have cooled a little since, they have only come back to an average of around £33 per gram.

The oil driven commodity rally shows no signs of letting up and the power situation in South Africa is not one that will be resolved quickly. Market tightness and prices at the current levels are likely to be with us for some time. But we shouldn't despair. Platinum has a plethora of qualities that justify its higher price tag and it is important to explain these to your customers rather than just offering them a cheap alternative that could cause you headaches in future. And there is plenty of support to help you with your sales. Platinum is still the only jewellery material, whether metal or gems, that is being promoted in the UK. The Platinum Guild has increased its investment in communicating the true values of this the most precious metal to consumers. Johnson Matthey continues to support retailers with a range of merchandising materials aimed at converting an unshakable consumer preference for platinum into sales.

For further information and free platinum POS merchandising materials contact Johnson Matthey.

Turn your radio ON

Retailers are reminded that Johnson Matthey's well-proven platinum radio advertisement campaign featuring BAFTA award winning actress, Ashley Jensen, star of TV comedy drama 'Ugly Betty' are still available for their use.

The ads, which have been produced for Johnson Matthey by the UK's largest radio group, feature five different commercials focusing on the core platinum jewellery sector. Targetted at the 25 to 40 year old affluent consumer the ads are perfect for a pre-Christmas push. Personalisation is free and all retailers need to pay for is the airtime on the station of their choice. To find out more contact Emma Gregson at GCap Media on 0115 873 1544.



Johnson Matthey
PRECIOUS METALS MARKETING

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