

Do You Know A Good Pearl Necklace When You See One?



WHICH ARE THE PRECIOUS PEARLS?... pearl necklace, \$2,000 earrings, \$3,500 bracelet. The necklace at left costs \$250, earrings left, \$1,600 rings. All are "real" cultured pearls, but difference is in quality. \$17.50, bracelet \$25. At right are a \$10,000

Most women, says a leading importer of Japanese cultured pearls, don't know how to choose a high quality pearl necklace from a poor one.

Men, he quickly adds, are even worse.

But it's a simple matter, says Sidney A. Weiss, president of the Imperial Pearl Syndicate, largest importers of pearls into this country, and furthermore the purchase need not be an expensive one.

Weiss says excellent quality pearls can be purchased for as little as \$20, although he believes shopping in the \$50 to \$100 bracket will give the most satisfaction. He strongly suggests, however, that the best place to start is a reputable jeweler or department store.

"The purchaser should remember," he says, "that a good quality pearl necklace—and it need not necessarily be an expensive one—can be worn and will be fashionable for many, many years. Substandard merchandise, even if the jewels are large, will not, last, will not have the proper luster, color and quality and certainly will not make the wearer happy."

Weiss recently returned

from Japan, where he spoke with Japanese businessmen and government officials to seek ways to keep inferior pearls from reaching the American market. He says:

"Because of an acute shortage of fine quality and large Japanese cultured pearls, it seems inevitable that their selling price will rise as much 50 to 75 per cent in America."

This will be caused, he adds, by the fact that "many Japanese growers have been harvesting their beds as quickly as possible, instead of letting the pearls develop. This has resulted in a bumper crop of cheap, inferior merchandise that doesn't even deserve the name of cultured pearl."

When buying pearls, Weiss says, the first and by far most important thing a buyer should look for is luster. Without this quality, no pearl is worth a penny, no matter how large or round it may be. Years after its purchase, he says, a pearl necklace should still retain its glow and "capture the beauty of the owner's skin."

After luster, Weiss says that roundness is most important. Then the buyer should check

for matching—a perfect evenness from the larger stones to the smallest. The fourth point is imperfection and the fifth is color.

On the matter of color, he says, a rose or pink color is the most desirable, followed by a white and pink combination, a cream pink, and a cream.

Most assuredly avoid the dirty greys, he advises. They're worthless.

The rule of thumb should be, he concludes, that if a pearl has a good luster, it's probably of first-rate quality.

Foil Those Spuds

Wrapping potatoes in foil before baking has come into fashion because cooks have discovered that the foil keeps the potatoes hot and moist should there be a short wait before the meal is served.

Frosty Effect

A frosty effect is perfect for holiday drinks! Dip tumbler rims in unbeaten egg white and then in sugar. Allow the frosty rims to dry before adding the drink.