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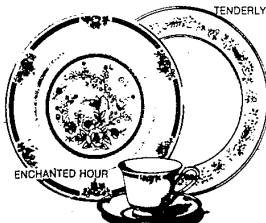
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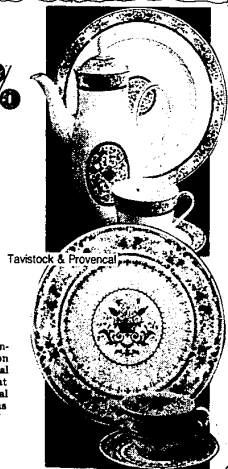
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The fashion plate

For any girl, some new 'best friends'

By RUSTLE SHAND

Diamonds are an important part of the new life-style. No longer kept sequestered in bank vaults or home safes, "diamonds are meant to be worn" say the two owners of Aurum III, newly located in Hattie's at 565 S. Woodward, Birmingham.

Over bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwiches for lunch in a dimly lit recess at Archibald's (next door), Aurum owners Iris Lewiston and Jacki Schlusser wore their diamonds. They recommend diamond stud earrings for jogging, saying "after all, a woman should not lose her identity."

The young women sat in the dimly lit restaurant with their diamonds gleaming softly in their ears, at the neckline, on wrists and fingers and were beautiful. Jacki even wore a pave diamond-touched gold safety pin over one eyebrow on her head scarf.

If all the gleaming diamonds sound a bit much over a BLT sandwich, they really aren't. Unlike rhinestones, diamonds are meant to be worn round the clock "with from blue jeans to evening silks," as Iris put it. Combined with gold as they are by the two designers, they are simple, elegant and understated. They become a carefully planned addition to a woman's individual style as well as an investment for the future.

"WOMEN WANT to be beautiful, but not seen from across the room, not overdone," explained Iris as we talked about their designs. "Because we are women, it makes a big difference," she added. "A man doesn't know how an earring will look and how it should sit on a woman's ear. Women are better qualified."

Many of their customers bring family gems in old-fashioned settings to be restyled. "We work exclusively in gold, using 14K which is 58 1/2 per cent

gold, or 18K, which is 75 per cent gold" explained Iris. "We buy manufactured pieces that we feel are reasonably priced and have the look we like with an eye to incorporating it with people's diamonds," she added.

The lost wax method is used in the design and then it is sent out for casting. The ring is then finished by the girls and set by a diamond setter.

They like skinny rings they can build with and particularly square rings, using a geometric principle of triangles, squares and the hard edge. They said they are not big on swirls and curves because they believe women don't tire of things if they are simple."

OTHER CUSTOMERS, just starting out as collectors, may select pieces from stock. The designers believe in building a total look.

"We usually start with a ring and then the customer comes back and she coordinates a fine jewelry wardrobe," said Iris. "A woman's look is not totally complete without special detail to her total appearance and jewelry is an important part of her total look."

"Fine jewelry is affordable today, it doesn't go out of style" explained Jacki. "The European, old mine-cut diamonds can look fantastic when properly mounted. A diamond mounted in yellow gold looks much larger than it actually is."

Pave is used to give the illusion of one large stone and is actually a small diamond bead set in white or yellow gold. When the diamond bead is set in white gold, it increases the apparent size of the diamond.

The newest status symbol is a diamond stick pin worn on the lapel, often accompanied by a diamond bar pin.

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YW tour set for Tut exhibition

In response to requests from members, Northwest Branch YWCA is sponsoring a weekend trip by motorcoach to Chicago to view the King Tut-ankhamen exhibit now on display at the Field Museum.

The trip will be held June 10-12, the bus leaving the YWCA parking lot, 2590 Grand River, Redford Township, at 8 a.m. Friday and returning from Chicago at approximately 9 p.m. on Sunday.

The weekend includes lodging at Holiday Inn City Center, which is conveniently located to shopping and entertainment facilities. A pre-trip meeting will be scheduled to review the types of art that will be on display at the museum.

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