

From ancient times on, forever amber



Story: SHIRLEE EDEN
Photos: MINDY SAUNDERS

In ancient times, alchemists went to extraordinary efforts to create substitutes for gold. None succeeded.

Now that the daily price of gold nudges the \$700 mark, contemporary consumers, while not turning to alchemy are beginning to look for substitutes for precious metals.

Isadora of Paris, known for her perfumes and Lalique crystal bottles in which to merchandise them, has designed a group of amber necklaces, brooches and earrings.

Jewelry aficionados who think of amber only in terms of grandmother's favorite beads are in for a surprise.

The amber used by Isadora is in rich, vibrant colors such as blue, aubergine, white and gold.

Necklaces of irregular shapes and some in the shapes of fish and fowl are part of the group.

"She copies them from old art deco pieces that are quite valuable," said Marion Gordon, proprietor of Goldfinger, a jewelry shop in the Applegate Square Shopping Center in Southfield.

Mrs. Gordon made her first purchase of the exotic ambers in Paris and since putting them into her store has had to re-order them.

WEARING ONE piece out to dinner recently, she met a friend who insisted on buying it right from off her neck for his wife.

"They are different," she said.

Amber is a fossil resin usually in yellow to brown tones which is exuded by coniferous trees which are now extinct.

Because of its capability of being highly polished, it has long been used for ornaments and jewelry. The Greeks and Romans used amber extensively.

In another dimension, amber is connected with many superstitions and is believed to be a preventative against disease and bad luck.

Mrs. Gordon said the selection she is showing should not be considered costume jewelry.

"It could conceivably increase in value because these are art pieces," she said.

A seven-year veteran of the jewelry business, her shop has been in Applegate for the past three years.

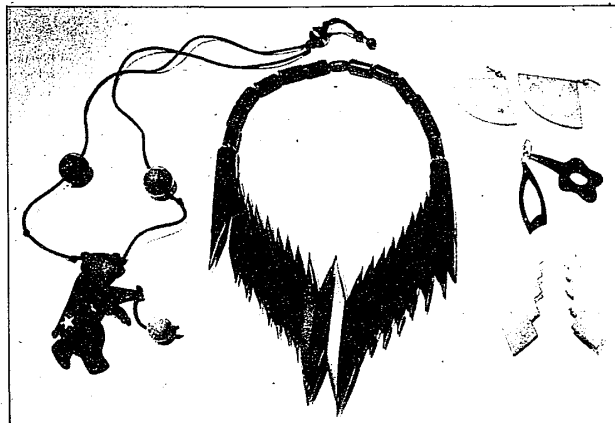
MOST PEOPLE have to work hard to get their business going at first. Mrs. Gordon had to work at getting both herself and her jewelry business off the ground, so to speak.

"I started when I was flat on my back at home with the ruptured disc," she explained. "I had to stay there for 17 months, so I started selling jewelry right from my bed."

Both she and her business eventually got on their feet. Today she sells a complete line of jewelry including the amber pieces that could prove to be an affordable hedge against inflation.



An open vial shows the perfume hidden in this amber necklace. Copied from art deco pieces of another era, the selection includes birds and animals such as the pelican above sitting tight on a tree branch.



A whimsical bear with a ball on a string, a necklace of geometric shapes and earrings that don't match are all part of the amber pieces that are priced from \$120 to \$250.



Joannie Barker of West Bloomfield, an employee at Goldfinger, models a necklace of leaves, blossoms and berries in tones of rose and green. Also hanging from the Isadora of Paris creation is a vial of the designer's perfume.



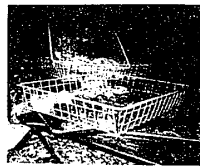
Where It's At

By JUDY SOLOMON

Of Things Pasta

In Italy, fresh, homemade pasta is a way of life. Recently it became the rage in New York and stores such as Pasta and Cheese have proliferated. Now, Yvonne Gill has gotten on the bandwagon and you can buy fresh, homemade pasta at the take-out counter of her restaurant, Tweeny's Cafe. Egg pasta costs \$4 per pound. Colorful vegetable pasta of beet, carrot, spinach or tomato cost \$5. Ms. Gill also sells homemade Pesto, Alfredo and Melazine sauces (\$5 per 1½ ounce container) to serve on the pastas.

Tweeny's Cafe, 280 N. Woodward, Birmingham, 644-0050.



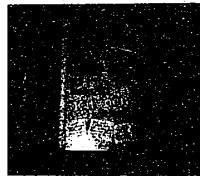
Back to Back

A friend claims that there are two kinds of people: those who have back problems and those who will. No matter which category you fall in, you should know about a six week series of classes being given at the Birmingham YMCA starting next week. Called "The Y's Way to a Healthy Back," the program was developed by Dr. Hans Kraus to help prevent and relieve back discomfort. Instructor Lee Hilene will teach you how to do 18 simple exercises that will increase your flexibility and basic muscle strength. Classes meet both Monday and Thursday from 11:45 a.m. to noon or from 6:15 p.m. until 7 p.m. Birmingham YMCA, 400 E. Lincoln, Birmingham, 644-9036.



Help Full

If you're like me, you often rip out helpful hints from the newspaper and then leave them lying all over the place without ever organizing them. That's undoubtedly one of the reasons that the book, "Mary Ellen's Best of Helpful Hints" has been on the national bestseller list for over a year. The author has just published a sequel entitled "Mary Ellen's Best of Helpful Kitchen Hints" (\$4.50). Jam-packed with more than 1,000 new hints, the book is a good item to keep at your fingertips. After all, where else might you find out that "to light candles in tall, deep containers, use a lit, uncooked piece of spaghetti."



Petting

Just ask the man who owns one! Proper medical care for a pet can be very costly. For this reason, three veterinary clinics in the Oakland County area have come with a terrific idea called the Pre-paid Pet Health Program. A premium of \$139 per year plus a \$5 office change per visit covers your pet for any routine or emergency medical or surgical care. The price includes vaccinations, laboratory work, medication, dentistry and hospitalization.

Downtown Birmingham Veterinary Clinic, Birmingham, 642-6144; Oakland Orchard Veterinary Clinic, Farmington Hills, 553-2340; Elizabeth Lake Road Veterinary Hospital, Pontiac, 681-8181.



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