

Don't stop wearing old jewelry, just redesign it



Dear Jewelry Lady,
What are the chances of losing one of my diamond stud earrings at the beach? My husband wants me to remove them before we head for the sand, but I think they look great with a bathing suit. What do you think?
Bathing Beauty

Dear Beauty,
Congratulations! You are married to a bona fide worry wart. Let your husband know that, if your earrings are properly adjusted and you check them before heading out to the sand and sun, it's unlikely you'll lose them.

However, as a precaution, consider checking your homeowner's insurance to make certain you're covered in case of loss. (Otherwise, that worry wart will never forgive you for losing those diamond studs!)

Another alternative: consider having your diamonds reset in Eurowires, which clip more securely behind the ears. Even if you bury your head in the sand, there's no way you'll lose one of those babies!

Dear Jewelry Lady,
I am very annoyed with my jeweler. I recently took my engagement ring in for a cleaning, and he told me I should have my prongs re-tipped. My jeweler also said I would eventually need a new set of prongs for the ring. I thought diamonds were forever. I feel taken.

Feeling Cheated

Dear Cheated,
Diamonds are forever, but they are susceptible to cracks and chips. After all, diamonds don't come out of the ground fully formed; they have to be cut and polished to bring out their beauty.

Furthermore, your jeweler isn't talking about your diamond, but the prongs of your ring, which are probably made of gold. Since gold wears over time, your jeweler is doing you a favor by suggesting you keep the mount in good condition. Otherwise, you might lose the diamond.

If you wish to avoid such maintenance, I suggest replacing the gold head (the set of prongs) for another one made of platinum. Platinum is tougher than gold and much less vulnerable to wear.

Dear Jewelry Lady,
I am maybe what you'd call a "jewelry-aholic." I regularly buy new rings and necklaces and then stop wearing older pieces in my jewelry box. It seems like a terrible waste. What should I do with my old jewelry?
Loaded with Baubles

Dear Baubles,
You have a wonderful problem, and The Jewelry Lady knows numerous jewelers who would be more than happy to make your acquaintance.

But seriously, have you considered redesigning some of your older jewelry? Many independent jewelers also work as jewelry designers and would jump at the chance to sketch some designs that utilize the precious gems and metals you already have.

The beauty of gold, platinum and precious gemstones is that they can be reworked again and again into new and cutting-edge pieces.

Another option: leave your outdated pieces on consignment with a jeweler who sells estate pieces, and take the money and run. Just imagine the number of new pieces you'll be able to buy in coming years!

Also consider having your outdated jewelry professionally cleaned and polished, and then give them as gifts to special people in your life. What you see as old and outdated, might tickle another person's fancy. (After all, beauty is in the eyes of the beholder.)

Finally, you can let your older pieces collect not only dust but also value in a safety deposit box until you pass them on to family, friends or a favorite charity.

Send your questions to The Jewelry Lady by e-mail, roddgers@bmc.com, fax, (248) 682-9223 or mail, The Jewelry Lady, c/o Observer & Eccentric, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009.

Bonding mother and child

Retailers address motherhood today

BY NICOLE STAFFORD
Special Editor
nstafford@ec.econ.com.net

Twenty, even 10 years ago, Johnson & Johnson baby oil and talcum powder were enough to soothe and pamper soft bottoms and baby-soft skin. Likewise, little boys and girls were delighted by the addition of tear-free baby shampoo at bath time.

Today, products for mothers, babies and children seek to do more than show tenderness and pacify; they strive to help the parent-child bonding process.

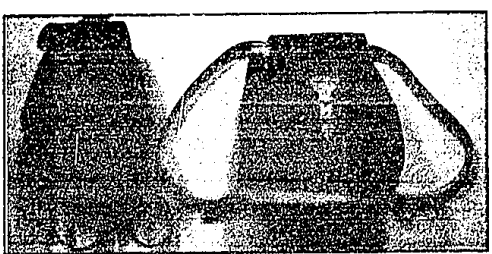
Recently introduced personal products aimed at mother and child include Bulgari's colorfully packaged Petits et Mamans line, Bobbi Brown's extra gentle, dye-free, baby essentials and a baby care line from Origins, a subsidiary of Estee Lauder.

The Petits et Mamans line includes an alcohol-free fragrance touted as a bonding agent when worn by mother and daughter. Origins' top selling baby care product is "Bear Hug," a massage cream said to promote bonding between parents and babies.

Of course, massage and other forms of sensory stimulation are always beneficial to newborns and help with bonding, but many of today's mothers, who hold down full-time jobs, have less time and energy to devote to such activities.



Like mother, like daughter: Matching cotton floral dresses by Cornelio are priced at \$78 for mom and \$40 for daughter at April Cornell, the Somerset Collection in Troy.



Motherhood at a price: Matching leather backpacks for busy mothers and children, \$595 and \$535 at Louis Vuitton.

Arguably, baby massage cream not only acts as a vehicle for sensory stimulation but also as a reminder to take time out for bonding. When mother and daughter dot on fragrance from the same bottle before rushing out the door to work and school, they've had a shared — albeit brief — experience.

"Petits et Mamans has great relevance to the lives of today's mothers, who may not have as much time as they wish to bond with their children," says Connie Ruscio, vice president of sales for Bulgari's distributor. And when mothers do have extra time to spend with their daughters, luxury bath and beauty products enhance those "precious moments," says Ruscio.

Bath products aren't the only goods on store shelves aimed at uniting mother and child and mitigating working mothers' guilt over limited family time.

Sleepwear designer Karen Neuburger launched a line of nightgowns, pajamas and robes for mothers and daughters in March. Available at Jacobson's, Neuburger's women's pieces run \$35-60 and children's pieces retail at \$24-42. Numerous stores at the Somerset Collection in Troy also carry goods for mother and child. William Sonoma sells appropriately sized cooking aprons for joint ventures in the kitchen.

Louis Vuitton offers matching leather backpacks priced at \$595 for mother and \$535 for child. And several retailers carry matching clothing for mothers and daughters, including Laura Ashley, April Cornell and Oilly, all at the Somerset Collection.

Another factor at work behind the trend is society's changing attitude towards motherhood and pregnancy. The prevalence of expectant mothers in the workplace, coupled with working women's increased discretionary income and a slow of stylish pregnant stars in the media, has encouraged high style among soon-to-be mothers.

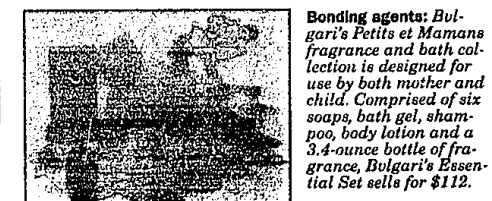
"It's in style to be stylish when you're pregnant," says Karen Karzmar, assistant manager at A Pea in the Pod maternity store in downtown Birmingham where body-hugging, "french fit" maternity clothes have replaced oversized garments that conceal curves and bulges.

Diana Mahueck, store manager at Mimi Maternity at Laurel Park Place in Livonia, agrees, saying "women have really embraced the closer fit clothing. ... They're saying 'I'm proud I'm pregnant.'"

As mothers, these women demand the same quality, luxury and style in the products they buy for their babies and children.

"Parents who purchase designer items for themselves are likely to do so for their children," says Ruscio at Bulgari. "Therefore, the idea of a shared both line for mothers and children is especially appealing. Another contributing factor is that motherhood has become very trendy and glamorous, thanks to star moms such as Madonna."

Williams-Sonoma carries cotton twill cooking aprons for mothers, \$19, and daughters, \$16, for bonding in the kitchen, the Somerset Collection.



Bonding agents: Bulgari's Petits et Mamans fragrance and bath collection is designed for use by both mother and child. Comprised of six soaps, bath gel, shampoo, body lotion and a 3.4-ounce bottle of fragrance, Bulgari's Essential Set sells for \$112.

Retail, style and special store events are listed in this calendar. Please send information to: Malls & Mainstreets, c/o Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 East Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Fax: (248) 644-1314. Information must be received by 5 p.m. Monday for publication the following Sunday.

THURSDAY, JULY 6

YO-YO CLASS FOR KIDS
Borders Books & Music in Farmington Hills hosts local yo-yo instructor Dennis Grzesink for a yo-yo seminar for children of all ages, 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 7

GEORFFREY BEENE FOR FALL
View the Fall 1999 special order collection of designer Geoffrey Beene through July 8 at Saks Fifth Avenue, the Somerset Collection in Troy, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Designer Salon, second floor.

BIENVENUE SALE
The Boardwalk shopping center on Orchard Lake Road in West Bloomfield holds its 16th Annual Sidewalk Sale through July 10.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

THURSDAY, JULY 8

SUZAN TRUNK SHOW
Rox & Sherm in Bloomfield Hills hosts a trunk show of Suzan for Fall 1999 through July 10 during regular store hours.

FRIDAY, JULY 9

ART IN THE PINK
Visit your favorite downtown Plymouth businesses and peruse the work of more than 400 artisans during Art in the Park, 7 p.m. downtown Plymouth.

SATURDAY, JULY 10

DINE & DANCE
Wonderland Mall in Livonia hosts the Steel Gratitude Band as part of the center's Dine & Dance series for families, 5-9 p.m., Food Court.

CLASSIC CHRYSLER SHOW

Meadowbrook Village Mall in Rochester Hills overflows with antique and classic Chrysler, Plymouth and Dodge cars during the Classic Chrysler Show through July 11 during regular mall hours. Donations benefit the Rochester Lions Club. For more information, call (248) 376-9461.

SUNDAY, JULY 11

BEANIE BABY SHOW
Plymouth hosts an All-Beanie Baby Show, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Plymouth Cultural Center at 625 Farmer Street. For more information and admission fees, call (734) 465-2110.

TUESDAY, JULY 13

CAROLINA HERRERA FALL SHOW
Saks Fifth Avenue presents the Fall 1999 collection of Carolina Herrera at a black tie benefit for the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA). Tickets, at \$400 each, include a cocktail reception and strolling supper at 6:30 p.m., a formal fashion show at 7 p.m. and attendance at the "Under the Stars Gala XX" on Nov. 13. For additional information and tickets, call the DIA at (313) 633-7869.