

Anatomy Of An Engagement Ring

The ritual of the wedding proposal and the presentation of the diamond engagement ring create the highlight event of any courtship. A tradition that dates back to the ancient Romans, the engagement ring itself has many layers of symbolism. Each piece of the ring is a strong symbol communicating key information about herself, her partner and their relationship.

The Band

The first symbol is no mystery – most people know the wedding band represents the eternal circle, and the same principle applies to the engagement ring. The symbol of the unending circle with no beginning and no end, illustrates eternal love.

But the band of the engagement ring has changed in the last century – at least, the metal used for the band has. The warmth of gold has been a standard for eons, but today, couples have several readily available options. In the last few years, platinum has been gaining in popularity and prominence, trumping the gold standard for engagement rings.

The rarity and expense of platinum makes it an attractive alternative to gold, even white gold. But the durability of platinum is possibly its most endearing quality – a metal that will stand up to dents and scratches over the lifetime of the engagement ring and the marriage, with the ability to maintain its original beauty.

The Shape of the Diamond

The shape of the diamond is the only element of the ring that is a direct reflection of the bride-to-be's personality. There are six to eight common shapes to choose from, and each sends a very different message.

The round diamond is very classic and traditional, and sends this very clear message about the bride. The princess cut, in contrast, communicates the message of a woman with a strong sense of style. The second-most popular ring shape, the princess cut, can have a more “bling” quality to it – the way the diamond is cut reflects light in a way that contributes to a more brilliant quality.

A pear-shaped diamond resembles a brilliant teardrop, and is an indication of a woman who has a unique quality. The heart-shape – yes there is one – indicates a woman with more of a sentimental flair.

The Stone

The diamond in an engagement ring is another symbol of purity, endurance and longevity. A rare and precious stone, diamonds come from the earth and literally take billions of years to form. A gem stone that can only be scratched by one of its own, the popularity of diamonds in engagement rings can be linked to the association between the strength and durability of a diamond and the same in a marriage.

While the “4 C's” have been the clear guidelines for choosing a quality diamond, today's brides, thirsty for originality, are choosing alternative gems for their engagement rings. Whether motivated by their birthstones, or personal preference for something other than a diamond, brides are choosing everything from rubies to opals for their engagement ring stone.

Solitaire vs. Three-Stone

The diamond solitaire engagement ring is another tradition that has stood the test of time in the design of diamond engagement rings. And while the single diamond in the pronged Tiffany-style setting remains popular, the three-stone ring is giving the solitaire some competition.

While the solitaire ring represents the idea of a solitary true love, the three-stone ring's symbolism – a couple's past, present and future – works as an engagement ring or an anniversary ring. Either way, the standard for a three-stone ring is a central diamond more prominently displayed by two slightly smaller diamonds. However, some brides prefer to have a different gem on either side of the diamond.

The beauty and importance of the engagement ring began centuries ago, but the engagement ring and ritual we know today is believed to have started in 1477 when Archduke Maximilian presented an engagement ring to Mary of Burgandy.

Through world wars, the rise and fall of empires, the evolution of cultures and emergence of technologies, the individual symbols and collective

representation of the engagement ring have not much deviated from tradition. The engagement ring is a strong symbol because the separate pieces of the whole are, themselves, incredibly powerful elements.

About the Author

Jill Renee is the president of Danforth Diamond, an online jewelry store offering diamonds and [engagement rings](#) in palladium and platinum. View Danforth Diamond's selection of engagement rings at: http://www.danforthdiamond.com/engagement_rings/index.html

Source: www.isnare.com

Source: <http://articles.exospy.com>