

# color me different

by CAROL BESLER

Natural colored diamonds have emerged as a favorite among jewelry lovers who like to assert their individuality. Natural colored diamonds are rare and therefore unique. All diamonds have an emotional value — they represent love, eternity, rarity — but color adds to the intensity of that emotion. “Colored diamonds have a certain mystique, with its own psychological properties. People are drawn to color. That’s why it’s such a big part of fashion,” says Robert May, executive director of the Natural Colored Diamond Association. “A natural diamond has all the intrinsic values associated with a relationship — it’s real, it’s natural, it’s forever,” he says. “It represents the momentous occasions in one’s life —

natural diamonds will always have that equity.” Colored diamonds are also prized for their high light return. Diamonds are the hardest of all gemstones and therefore, reflect light with a brilliance that outshines all others.

There are dozens of shades of yellow diamonds, and the look is always dramatic. Hues include amber, straw, wine, banana, or golden. The most vivid and intense colors are called canary.



Natural brown diamonds are prized for their golden glow, which some describe as having the sheen of honey or caramel, lit from behind. Natural brown diamonds are divided into two groups: Pastels include shades of cinnamon (pinkish-orangish brown), champagne (yellowish brown), and chocolate (pure brown); and Dark and Deep, including shades of cognac (greenish-orangish-yellowish brown), honey (yellowish-orangish brown) and clove (olive brown). They are an increasing favorite on the red carpet. Recently on the red carpet, actress

Cameron Diaz wore a 20-carat cognac-colored diamond with a Prada dress, while Jennifer Love-Hewitt flaunted a 7-carat natural brown diamond ring.

Blue diamonds are even harder to find, and therefore more in demand. They range in tone from the pale blue of a winter's day to the dramatic deep hue of a peacock's tail. The world's most famous diamonds are the Hope a 45.52 carat blue diamond, and the 15-carat La Coeur de la Mer — the Heart of the Ocean — the deep blue diamond featured in the film *Titanic*.

## How to buy a natural colored diamond

Three of the most important factors impacting the price of a natural color diamond are strength of color, rarity of color, and size.

**1** **Strength of color:** The color intensity of a natural colored diamond can be graded as Fancy Light, Fancy, Fancy Intense, or Fancy Vivid — with Fancy Vivid constituting the highest grade. The stronger the intensity of a colored Diamond, the higher the value will be.

**2** **Rarity of color:** The rarity of a colored diamond will affect its price. The more common colors, such as gray, brown, and yellow, will generally have a lower cost than rarer colors, such as pink, blue, green, purple, and orange, which occur less frequently in nature. The rarest known and most expensive color of all is red.

**3** **Size:** Large colored diamonds are extremely rare. This makes them exponentially more expensive.

The designs featured in this article are available exclusively at Kay's Fine Jewelry boutiques across the Caribbean.

