



Talking Cartier

Cartier, the jewellery brand synonymous with elegance, style and luxury, is arguably the most respected in the world. As can be expected, Cartier's history is as rich and illustrious as its jewellery

Q ueen Elizabeth II, Grace Kelly, Elizabeth Taylor and The Duchess of Cambridge – from royalty to celebrities, many have enjoyed and continue to enjoy Cartier's designs. But where did their story begin?

In 1847, Louis Francois Cartier took over the workshop he had been employed at and founded the Cartier business. It was a very turbulent time in French history amidst a wave of Bourgeois revolutions. Despite this, the business gradually grew and the first small Cartier boutique was opened in

1859. His son, Alfred, then took over the business and brought Cartier to Paris to the prestigious Rue de la Paix in the Jewellery Quarter.

Alfred's sons Louis, Pierre and Jacques went on to establish Cartier as a world famous brand. Jacques took the company to London and in 1904 received the Royal Warrant. He began to supply King Edward VII and British high society with the finest of jewels, becoming known as 'The Jeweller of Kings and King of Jewellers'.

Pierre took the brand to New York and in 1917, he apparently acquired the store

in Fifth Avenue in exchange for 2 strands of very fine pearls.

Louis stayed in Paris and introduced revolutionary ideas such as using platinum in jewellery, a much harder metal that was difficult to work with, yet permitted such fine delicate designs to be created which gave the appearance of diamond set lace.

A stunning example of this is the Halo Tiara worn by The Duchess of Cambridge on her wedding day in 2011. It was commissioned by King George VI for The Queen Mother in 1936. It comprises of 888 brilliant and baguette cut diamonds.

However, it was not just these visionary and entrepreneurial men that contributed to the rise of Cartier. In 1933, the formidable designer Jeanne Toussaint became Director of the luxury jewellery department, quite a pioneering feat for a woman at that time. Her fierce creativity and contemporary vision gave birth to the iconic 3D Cartier Panther design. The Panther print was originally featured on a ladies watch in 1914.

However, Jeanne took the Panther design to another level when she created the first Panther Jewel for Wallace Simpson, Duchess of Windsor in 1948, which was a sleek brooch of gold and enamel.

From that, a Panther inspired jewellery range was born using diamonds and gems – this was incredibly popular with the British and American elite. This alluring design represents empowerment, courage and elegant femininity and it has been an enduring symbol for Cartier for over 100 years and it continues to be a popular part of their range today.

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The House of Cartier are without doubt masters of their craft. It is worth noting that Cartier pieces are so sought after that they not only hold their value but they sometimes even appreciate.

Another design that has stood the test of time is The Trinity range designed in 1924 by Jean Cocteau. The three interlocking rings symbolise friendship, fidelity and love. A simple design that has become a classic. Another of the most popular collections is Cartier Love.

First introduced in the 1970's by Aldo Cipullo, the Love bracelet comes in 2 sections that are fixed in place by a Cartier screwdriver and should never be removed. It is marketed with the slogan: 'How far would you go for love'. Many of these bracelets were purchased 10 or more years ago and the valuations have not been updated. Or, they have been received as gifts and never added to valuation documentation.

Over the years, the price for these iconic bracelets has continued to rise. The Love Bracelet with 10 diamonds currently retails at £13,000 and the small Love Bracelet Diamond Paved is £22,300. Are these prices reflected in your current valuation, or would there be a shortfall in compensation should these precious pieces be lost, damaged or stolen?

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masters of their craft. It is worth noting that Cartier pieces are so sought after that they not only hold their value but they sometimes even appreciate. This is especially true of mid-20th century pieces. Yet another pressing reason to ensure your valuations are up to date.

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