

# Amante

amante.com.au

## Marcasite Jewellery

### History of Marcasite

Marcasite is actually the white form of Iron Pyrite. Yellow Iron Pyrite is referred to as "Fools Gold".

Marcasite jewellery has a history that stretches back hundreds and hundreds of years. Archaeologists have discovered examples of Iron Pyrite jewellery in Incan burial places in Peru, and ancient Greeks were also known to use it to adorn themselves. Marcasite was popular during the 18th century and was frequently seen in locket, brooches and cameos.

This gem was also favoured during the Victorian era and was widely used in that time period. After the death of her husband, Britain's Queen Victoria chose to wear the black clothing and jewellery symbolic of widowhood and continued to do so until her death decades later. Her subjects followed her lead, and sombre clothing and accessories in dark and muted shades were the fashion for many years. Iron pyrite's darker hues made it ideal for this type of jewellery, and its low price tag made it a favourite.

The Swiss began using Marcasite in the late 1700's to replace diamonds that were forbidden by Sumptuary Laws. Both Marcasite and cut steel were used in the Georgian Period too. The English masses could not afford Diamond jewellery, so they used Marcasite as a Diamond substitute. Marcasite was much better because it took a higher shine and it did not rust like the cut steel

### Marcasite Jewellery

Marcasite gem stones are black with an iridescent quality when struck by light. Jewellers observe that quality marcasite stones have a brilliant silver colour or a bright metallic lustre; when cut with many small facets at the top; it will catch the light and glow like small diamonds.

Many jewellers use marcasite in combination with sterling silver and other stones in intricate designs that are reminiscent of earlier times – Art Deco inspired pieces with their intricate designs, nature-inspired pieces like leaves and vines, butterflies and bees, as well as mythical subjects like griffins, leprechauns, dragons and the like.

### How do I care for my Marcasite Jewellery?

- Always keep your Marcasite Jewellery away from harsh abrasives and chemicals
- Marcasite can be brittle, so be gentle and careful with your jewellery and store it carefully
- You can polish and clean your Marcasite Jewellery with an Amante Polishing Cloth
- Marcasite Jewellery has been oxidised therefore, do not use Jewellery dips, as this will take all the oxidization off your Jewellery and will ruin the look.