

Your Weekly Wardrobe Jazz

HONORING AN HEIRLOOM

All jewelry is personal, intimate even. But nothing is more personal and sometimes problematic than an heirloom. Be it your mom's charm bracelet, her wedding pearls (real or not), a delicate pendant necklace, or even a stick pin from grandpop. Much of the time these pieces just sit in the jewelry box. They don't match with the current fashions or they aren't a piece that fits our personal style.

What to do to honor these pieces? Here are some suggestions based on my career as an interior designer and as a personal image consultant.

DISPLAY IT

* If you don't want to wear a piece but want to enjoy it daily, create an art piece for your home by taking a single piece, or several pieces, mounting them in a shadow box to set on a table or hang on the wall. One option is to include miniature furnishings and make a pendant necklace into a mini chandelier or earrings into "wall sconces." A ring could hold a petite bouquet of dried or silk flowers. For many more ideas check out the [Thorne Rooms Collection](#) at the Art Institute of Chicago.

WEAR IT

Sometimes you can make a piece a part of your trademark by looking at it in a new way.

- *A delicate pendant can be put on a long slender chain. This style is very current and is perfect for the pendants you already own.
- *Perhaps Mom's wedding pearls are beautiful as they are but you can expand the possibilities by wrapping them around your wrist as a bracelet. Or wearing them in a necklace stack with other gold or silver multi-strand necklaces to make a whole new look.
- *Pins are not so "In" right now and can date a look. Solution? Use the pin as a pendant on a short or long chain, silk ribbon, or cord. If the pin is fine jewelry, consider having it converted into a knock-your-eyes-out cocktail ring.
- *A stickpin or hat pin makes a great shawl pin or closure for a cardigan.
- *An antique watch may not suit your look for daytime wear but will make an elegant or funky statement for the evening.
- *Dad's oversize watch with a new leather or vinyl strap will definitely be au courant.
- *Delicate rings can look dated in the daytime but stack several together on one finger or put them on several fingers for an over-the-top nighttime look.
- *Ear-bobs, that's what Mom called clip-on earrings, can be converted to shoe clips.

SHARE IT

*If it's just not you, consider sharing it now, or later. Another relative might cherish one of your pieces or you could put away some special pieces for a granddaughter to have a piece of your family's history. Here's a way to make sure your gift will be cherished: Write the history of the piece on pretty paper or in a card, describing how it came to you, add photos of Mom, Auntie, or Grandmother wearing the piece and present it all in a keepsake box.

Do you need a jewelry re-do? If you need some assistance with this, let's set up an appointment. I love repurposing forgotten items and I promise you there are hidden gems in your jewelry box.

Great style has no size, age, or price tag!