



Akoya Pearl Jewelry

Cultured saltwater pearls from the Akoya oyster, cultivated mainly in Japan and Australia, are a classic choice. Kokichi Mikimoto created the world's first **cultured Akoya pearl** in 1893. Since then, these luminous gems have become a standard in fine jewelry. The oysters are hand-seeded with a round bead composed of mother-of-pearl, which results in perfectly round finished pearls. This uniformity makes them especially

well-suited for use in jewelry. Combined with their high luster and relative scarcity compared to freshwater pearls, the Akoya's perfect shape makes them a desirable luxury item.

Akoya pearls are petite when compared to Tahitian or **South Sea pearls**, ranging in size from 1 mm up to the very rare 10 - 11 mm. The average **round Akoya pearl** size is about 7 mm, just right for a pair of pearl stud earrings or a tasteful bracelet. You'll often find graduated **Akoya pearl necklaces**, as their uniformity and smaller sizes make them easy to string from small to large. These dainty pearls also set beautifully in rings and look great when paired with 14kt, 18kt or 24kt yellow or white gold. **Pearl rings** are a timeless yet uniquely personal choice for an engagement or wedding set.

Unless treated, **Akoya cultured pearls** have neutral colors. Most range from white to grey, with pink, silver or green overtones. Rarely, blue pearls with silver and pink overtones are found. **Black Akoya pearls** have been treated – they never appear in nature. The neutrality of the pearls lets jewelers combine them with a range of gemstones and metals to create fine jewelry. You'll often find the pearls paired with diamonds, enhancing their value.

Wear your Japanese Akoya pearls with anything. A simple, elegant **pearl strand necklace** or pearl pendant elevates any outfit. **White Akoya pearls** also make excellent gifts. Surprise a loved one with a set of pearl earrings or a wrap bracelet. Precious heirlooms, these are classic **gifts for children** at christenings, birthdays, mitvahs and quinceaneras.