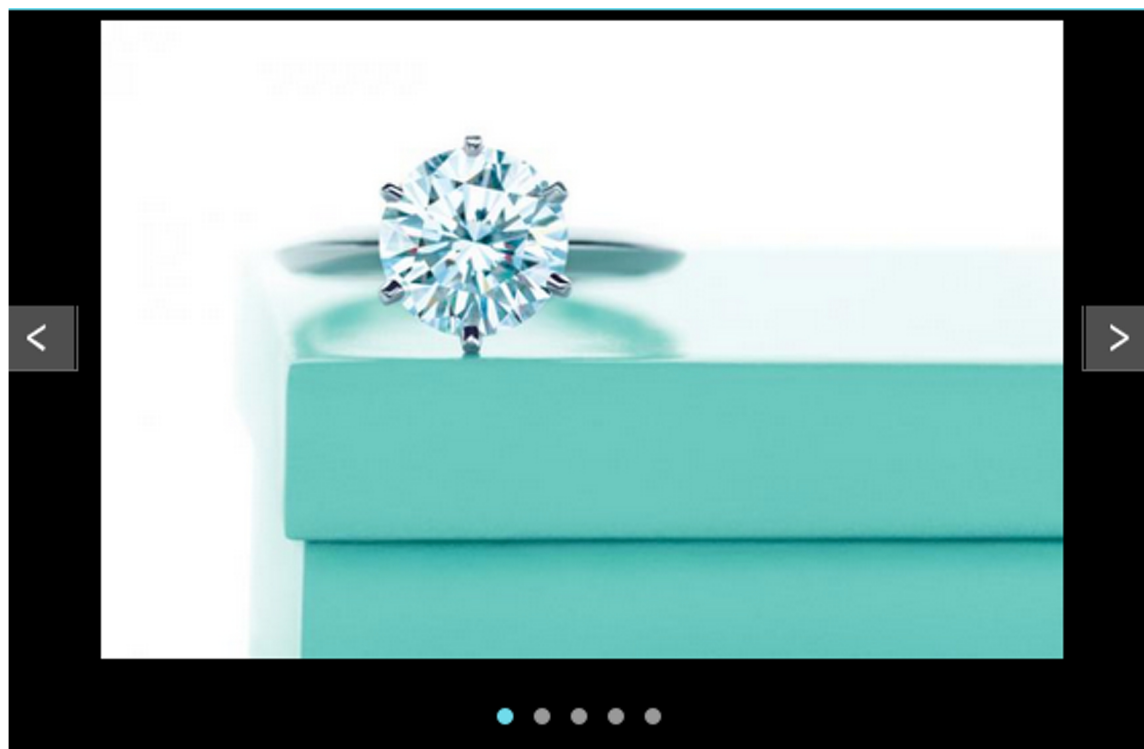


Tiffany's Guide to Buying an Engagement Ring

Catherine Dunwoody | 3/03/2015

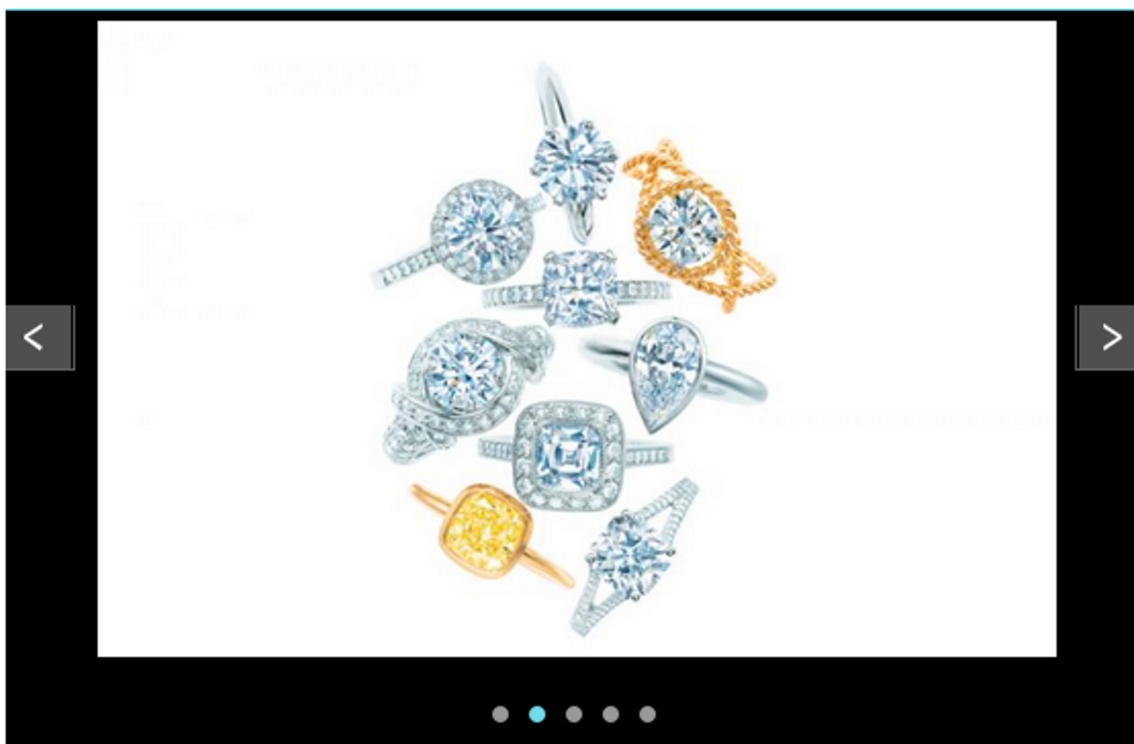


1/5 *Flawless advice from Tiffany's diamond expert*

I had the rare opportunity to sit down with [Tiffany & Co.](#)'s chief gemologist, Melvyn Kirtley, when he was visiting Vancouver's Alberni Street boutique recently.

Based at Tiffany's New York headquarters, the charming Mr. Kirtley is the ultimate expert on the blue-box brands' diamond legacy, and has been with the company for some 29 years.

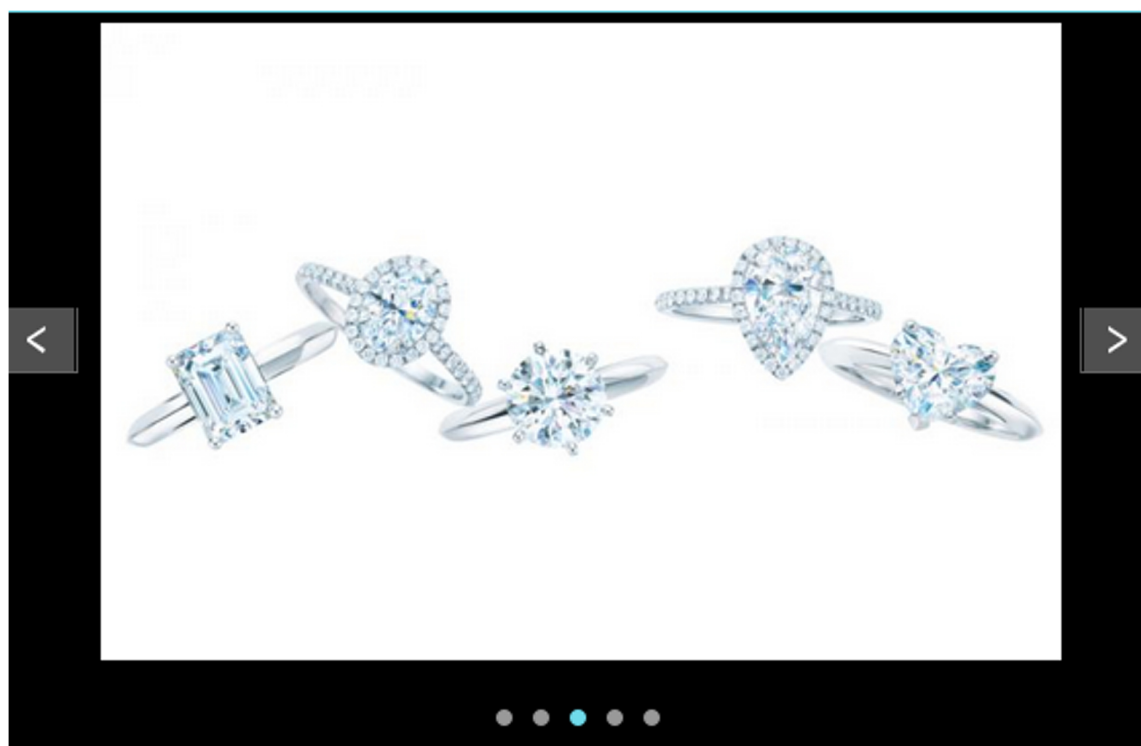
Are you on the hunt for the perfect diamond engagement ring? Here is Kirtley's insider advice to help narrow down your search and find that ultimate ice



2/5 *Of the four C's – Colour, Cut, Clarity, and Carat – which is the most important?*

"Cut is the most important. If a diamond is not perfectly cut, perfectly proportioned, beautifully faceted, beautifully polished, it's not going to be brilliant. So this is going to make all the difference. You could get a diamond that is the very top colour or clarity, but if it's poorly cut, it's going to be dead. Cutting is absolutely critical."

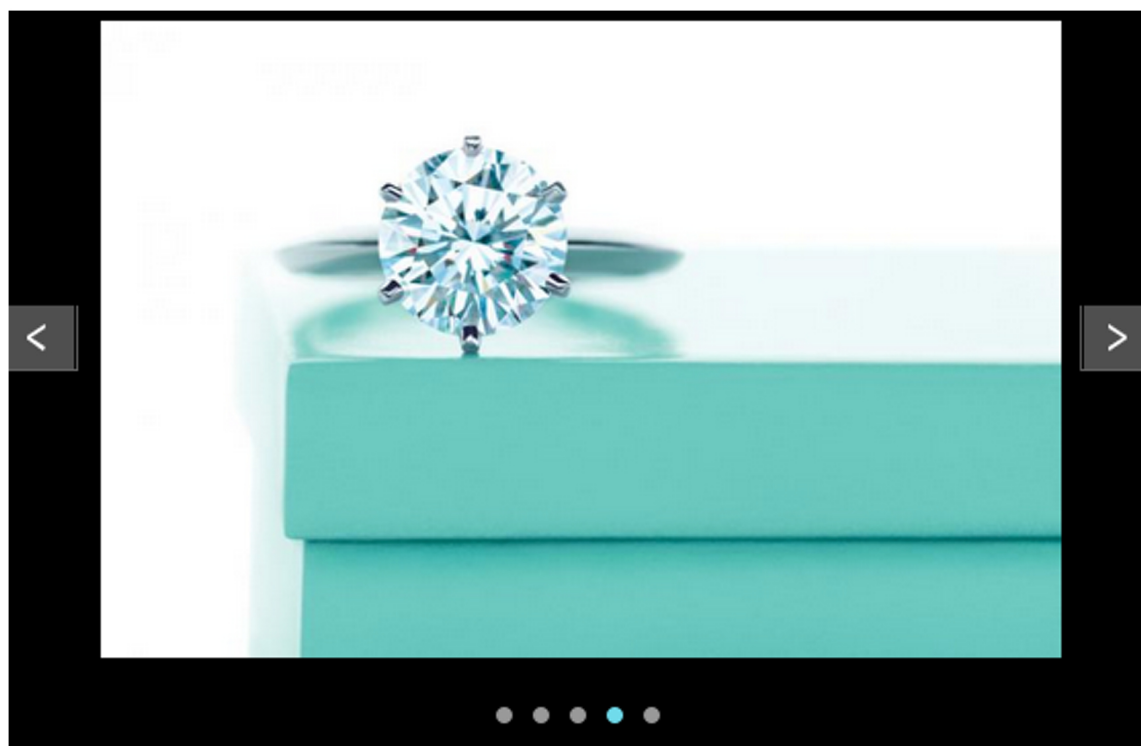
Tiffany engagement rings in platinum and 18 karat yellow gold (clockwise from top): Tiffany® Setting, Jean Schlumberger Rope ring, Tiffany Novo, Tiffany Bezet, Tiffany Legacy®, Lucida®, Cushion-cut yellow diamond ring, Jean Schlumberger engagement ring, Tiffany Embrace



3/5 *What's the first thing to look for in a diamond ring?*

"Shape. Understanding what shapes you gravitate to: round brilliant or a fancy shape, emerald cut or pear shape. Narrow that down. Size is immensely important. Wearability is very important too as you are going to wear this every day. How is the diamond sitting on your finger? What does it say about you? The style – the essence, how simple or how complex – is important to consider."

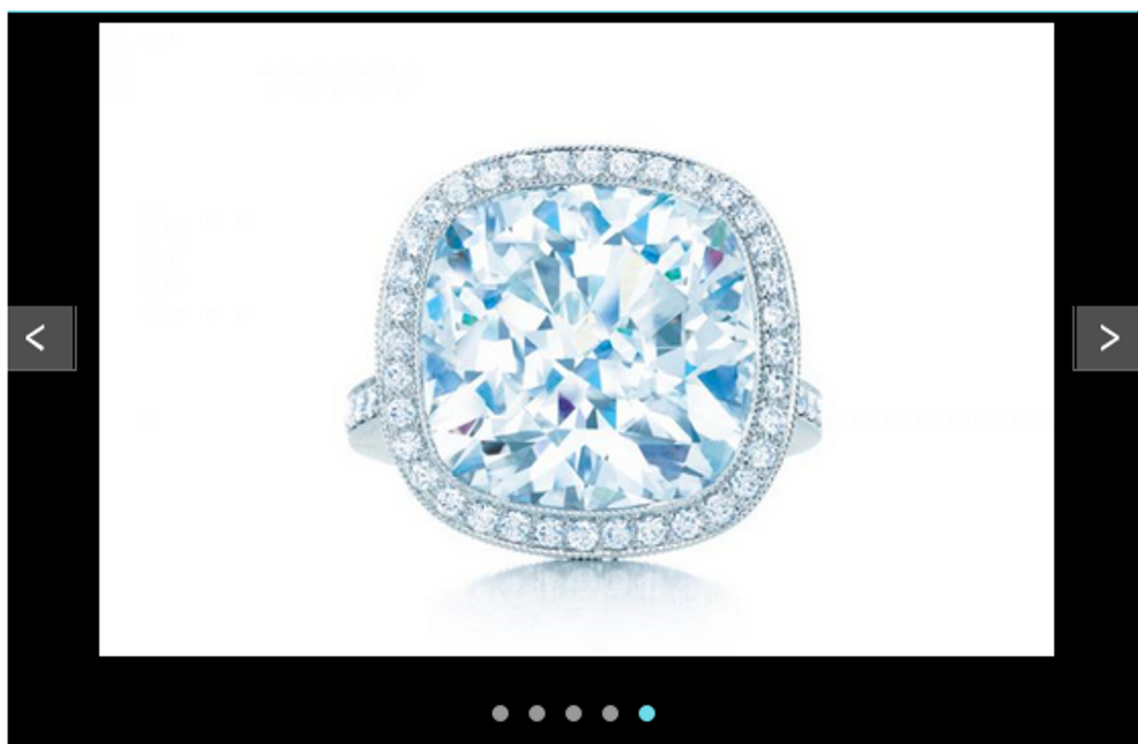
Tiffany diamond rings with platinum settings (from left): emerald-cut, Tiffany Soleste oval-shaped diamond ring with a diamond border, the Tiffany® Setting, Tiffany Soleste pear-shaped diamond ring with a diamond border, heart-shaped solitaire diamond ring



4/5 *How about that old rule that an engagement ring should cost three-months salary? Does that still apply?*

"I think that was invented by an advertising agency long ago, but it's a narrow viewpoint and doesn't really work. Everyone needs a budget. To begin with, you kind of have to immerse into the breadth of buying a diamond – the style, the size – there are tons of dynamics all working at once. Start with looking at what we've got at Tiffany, narrowing down and down, by process of elimination. The customer will navigate to one particular diamond that connects, speaks, attracts and catches them. It will be *that one*."

The Tiffany® Setting and the famous Blue Box create a magical moment that will linger in memory for a lifetime



5/5 *What's the hottest trend in diamond engagement rings now?*

The Tiffany cut. It is a round brilliant, 57 facets; six prong setting, introduced in the late 1800s at Tiffany. It has been refined over the years, but it shows off the diamond, doesn't hinder it, and designed for maximum sparkle, scintillation and fire."

What is the average weight of diamond most people buy?

"Three-quarter karat."

Any other interesting diamond cuts you'd like to share?

"Tiffany Novo (*pictured*). It's square; a rounded cushion cut, and set in the band with some diamonds in it. Square, emerald and pear-shaped are also popular, but are very specific styles that a person connects with it due to its shape, very subtly."