

Kate Middleton's Wedding Ring



By Adrienne Warber
Jewelry Designer

The world watched as Prince William looked into his longtime love's eyes, slipped a gold wedding band on her finger and made her his wife. The simple band is an understated complement to the royal bride's lavish engagement ring, almost hidden beside the large sapphire, like a private token of love and

commitment meant for the couple alone.

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The royal couple's ring style choice brought plain gold wedding bands back into the spotlight. Discover the story behind Kate Middleton's wedding ring.

Romance of Plain Gold Bands

For centuries, European royal brides wore elaborate betrothal rings as symbols of both an engagement and a marriage. Generally the bride wore only one ring and the groom did not wear any type of commitment ring. However, it was not until the early 20th century that royal couples began incorporating a second ring to serve as a wedding band in marriage ceremonies.

Simple unadorned rings in gold or silver were common in some cultures, such as Jewish wedding jewelry and Russian wedding rings, for people of all walks of life since medieval times. The ring's continuous circular shape represented the eternal vow of marriage that connected two lives as one. The use of gold or silver as valuable metals paid tribute to the symbolism. Queen Elizabeth II's mother, Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon (aka the Queen Mother) was one of the first British royal brides to wear a plain gold wedding band when she married the future King George VI in 1923. The choice of a plain unadorned gold ring may have been a way of showing solidarity with all British people experiencing economic hardship during the Great Depression. However, the power of the symbolism of eternal love forged in precious metal requires no adornment to enhance its message. It was a perfect ring choice for the Queen Mother and King George VI, a known love match.

Rare Welsh Gold for Royal Brides

British royal wedding rings follow a special tradition started by the Queen Mother in 1923. To mark the special ties between British royalty and Wales, King George VI had the Queen Mother's wedding ring designed in rare Welsh gold. The royal family obtained a large nugget of gold from the Clogau St. David's Gold Mine in Bontddu, North Wales, to make the Queen Mother's wedding ring. Royal jewelers used the same gold nugget to craft wedding rings for Queen Elizabeth II, Princess Margaret, Princess Anne and Princess Diana. After so many rings, little of the original nugget remained. However, the British Royal Legion gifted Queen Elizabeth with a second nugget of Welsh gold in the 1980s. From this second gold nugget, jewelers made wedding rings for the Duchess of York (Sarah Ferguson), the Earl and Countess of Wessex (Prince Edward and wife, Sophie) as well as for Prince Charles and Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall. In 2010, Queen Elizabeth presented Prince William and Kate Middleton with gold from this nugget for the creation of Kate's wedding ring.



Making of a Ring Fit for a Princess

On her wedding day, Kate Middleton became a princess and gained an official title - Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cambridge. The future Princess of Wales now wears a Welsh gold wedding band that follows the British royal tradition.

The Royal Jeweler

Prince William selected Wartski to design Kate's wedding ring. Wartski is a Welsh family-owned company that specializes in jewelry, art and antiques that was founded in 1865, and has close ties to the British royal family. The company is known for fine jewelry pieces that are works of art. European royalty, international celebrities and notable Americans, such as former First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, have worn Wartski jewelry creations.



Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cambridge wears Welsh gold.

Ring Design

Kate's wedding ring is a slender, plain yellow gold band without any accessory stones or decorative elements. The simplicity of the band shows off the beauty of the Welsh gold, which is valued for its quality and rarity. The slender band also blends well with her 18 carat blue sapphire and diamond engagement ring and helps it stand out better. When an engagement ring features a large stone and an elaborate setting, it is best to pair it with a plain wedding band.

Kate's Wedding Jewelry Is a Family Gift

Prince William gave his love two rings that have special meaning - his mom's engagement ring and a ring made with a gift of gold from his grandma. The engagement ring and wedding ring are true gifts of love that symbolize William welcoming Kate into his family.

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Shari D · 2 years ago

Doubtful that the Queen Mum was attempting to show any particular financial solidarity with the people of Great Britain in 1923, since the Great Depression was still 6-7 years off in the future. Great Britain enjoyed the same financial growth during their Roaring Twenties as did the US, so not that many folks were too concerned with the extravagance, or lack of same, of the material, style or construction of Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon's wedding band at the time. She could have just as easily decided on platinum, or something set with diamonds or a combination of gemstones, and nobody would have batted an eyelash. It was certainly a minor consideration at the time, given the kind of royal gems and pieces of jewelry already in the coffers of the nation's collections, both public and private. A single wedding band would not have been a significant addition to either, unless it contained a large number or type of rare, irreplaceable gemstones, which this one surely did not. Perhaps that was her choice because she simply preferred plain yellow gold bands to more elaborate options, which were certainly available and quite popular then. Perhaps she was so personally touched by the generous gift of the nugget of Welsh gold that she decided to pay homage to it by having something so equally precious and personally significant as her own wedding band being made from it, as well as those of future royal brides. Since the depleted original nugget was replaced by another nugget in time to continue the production of royal wedding bands, for both brides and grooms, it would seem the tradition and precedent had long since been set by her decision.

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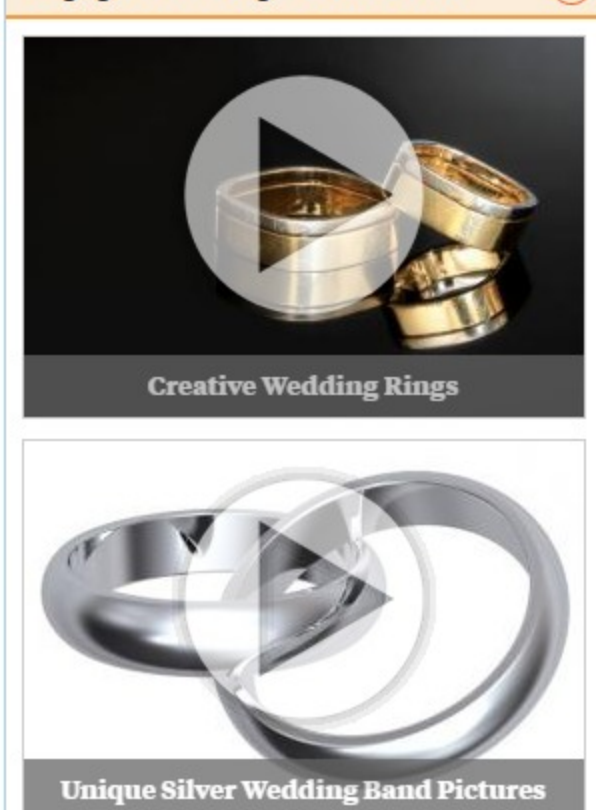
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