

2013 AGTA Pearl Report

Lois H. Berger, G.G., NAJA

On the very first day of the AGTA Show we could sense an air of optimism. Many people scurried about as the booths did a lively business. The economy is improving and this is reflected in heightened trade.



Chinese Freshwater Cultured Pearl
Baroque
Multi-metallic pastels, Bead in fireball
24.71 x 22.48 mm
Courtesy of Sea Hunt Pearls

The price of Chinese Freshwater Cultured Pearls (CFWCPs) has risen substantially due to the increased demand. Chinese farmers have raised their prices and many buyers have returned from China with little inventory. Buyers have not yet recovered from the past years economic challenges and are not able to purchase as much as they would like.

As in previous years, CFWCPs were the main attraction of the Show. Their interesting shapes and metallic colors continue to attract buyers and customers alike. Unfortunately, soufflé pearls unveiled in 2010 are no longer available. These were non-bead, extremely large, baroque, metallic multicolor and beautiful. Pricing appears to be the same from last year but we did see new inventory.



Chinese Freshwater Cultured Pearls
Multi-metallic pastels
14x17mm
Courtesy of Sea Hunt Pearls



Chinese Freshwater Cultured Pearls
Multi-metallic
Coin
15x17.5 mm
Courtesy of Sea Hunt Pearls



Chinese Freshwater Cultured Pearls
Mixed metallic
Keshi
12x15 mm
Courtesy of Sea Hunt Pearls

Chinese Freshwater Cultured Pearls							
MM	Shape	Color	Luster	Blemish	Matching	Price	Comment
2.5x3	Round	White	Very High	None	Excellent	\$ 60	
5x5	Round	White	Very High	None	Excellent	\$ 60	
6x6.5	Round	White	Very High	None	Excellent	\$ 120	
6-6.5	Round	White	High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 170	
7.5x8	Round	White	High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 200	To \$300
7.5x8	Round	White	High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 84	Triple A
7.5x8	Round	White	High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 70	
7.75x8	Round	Light Golden	High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 50	Light to golden
8x8.5	Near Round	White	High	Clean	Good	\$ 220	Good. Slight variation in matching
8.5x9	Round	White	Moderate	None	Excellent	\$ 300	
8x15	Baroque	Metallic gold, violet pink	vv High	Blem	None	\$ 340	Kasumigaura Look Alike
10x11	Round	White	High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 950	Many pink
10.5-12	Round	Cream brulee		None	Excellent	\$ 2,000	Very light yellow
10x5x11.5	Oval	White	Moderate	None	Good	\$ 1,000	Moderate luster
10.5x13.5	Round	Off White	VVV High	Blem	Fair	\$ 1,200	Chalky
11x12	Semi-Baroque	White	Very High	Clean	Matching semi-baroque	\$ 600	SI blemish
11x13	Semi-Baroque	White	Very High	Very slight blemish	Ex semi-baroque	\$ 400	
11x13.7	Semi-Baroque	Multi-color	High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 330	Many metallic pastel colors
12.5-13	Near Round	Gold	v very high	None	Yes	\$ 150	Nucleated
12-14	Round	Purple white	Very High	None	Excellent	\$ 5,000	Edison 17", 35 pearls
12x15	Baroque	Multi-color	High	Moderate	Excellent	\$ 800	Fireball metallic luster
12.5-15	Drop	Light Golden	Very High	Very slight blemish	Yes	\$ 400	Edison
12-24	Coin	Golden	v very high	Blem	None	\$ 68	Fire cracker majority, triangle shape
12x14.5	Keshi	White	vv High	None	Good	\$ 120	White overtones
12x15	Keshi	Mixed	VVV High	None	Fair	\$ 120	Pink brown peach purple

MM	Shape	Color	Luster	Blemish	Matching	Price	Comment
14.75	Near Round	Green gold	v very high	None	Yes	\$ 225	Double nucleated, metallic green
14x18	Baroque	White	VVV High	Clean	Good to Excellent	\$ 800	Soufflé bluish white, high end
14x19	Drop	Metallic bronze	Very High	None	Yes	\$ 500	Metallic bronze rose, drops
14x17	Baroque	Pastels	VVV High	Blem	Excellent	\$ 500	18"
15x17.5	Coin	Pastels	VVV High	V V slight blemish	Excellent	\$ 300	pastel beautiful
17.20	Round	Mixed pastels	v very high	None	Excellent	\$ 3,360	Bead in, 17"
18x20	Coin	White	vv High	None	Fair	\$ 250	rectangular
19x23	Baroque	Pastels	VVV High	Blem	Excellent	\$ 1,500	beautiful



Chinese Freshwater Cultured Pearls –
Ikecho Baroque
Multi-pastel
Bead-In fireball
12x15 mm
Courtesy of Eliko Pearl Co, Inc.

Chinese Freshwater Cultured Pearls – Kasumi-like

CFWCPs that are Kasumi-like are beautifully colored with metallic shades. Japanese Kasamigaura pearls are produced in less quantity and are more expensive. However, it is impossible to tell their origin when they are side-by-side. They must be tested in a laboratory.



Chinese Freshwater Cultured Pearls – Kasumi-like
Metallic pastels
Bead-In
8x15 mm
Courtesy of Pacific Pearls

Japanese Akoya Cultured Pearls

This year we are seeing beautiful Japanese Akoya Cultured Pearls from 4mm to 9x9.5mm. Last year, Akoyas were very hard to find and it was perplexing. This year offers pearls that are of very high luster, very round, white, no blemish, matching excellent, with the largest size being 9-9.5mm. The large sizes are very rare.

Japanese Akoya Cultured Pearls
Light Bluish, slight rose, Bead-In
7-7.5 mm
Courtesy of King's Ransom



Japanese Akoya Saltwater Cultured Pearls							
MM	Shape	Color	Luster	Blemish	Matching	Price	Comment
4-5	Round	Multi-color	VVV High	None	Excellent	\$ 1,000	Platinum Akoya - light bluish, rose, light grey
4.5x5	Round	White	vv High	None	Excellent	\$ 900	
5x5.5	Round	White	VVV High	None	Excellent	\$ 990	
7-7.5	Round	Light Bluish	vv High	None	Excellent	\$ 1,500	Platinum Japanese Akoya, slight rose
8-5.9	Semi-Baroque	Med Bluish	vv High	Moderate to slight blemish	Moderate	\$ 1,500	Japanese cultured pearls
8x8.5	Round	Pink rose	vv High	None	Excellent	\$ 2,200	Japanese cultured pearls, price is net
9x9.5	Slight round	Light medium	Very High	vv slight blemish	Excellent	\$ 2,900	Platinum Japanese Akoya

Tahitian South Sea Cultured Pearls

Tahitian pearls are currently x-rayed by the authorities in order to ensure that the quality is high with thick nacre. It is now an important issue that has been taken on by the government of Tahiti. We do see more pearls than we have seen in past years and these pearls are very beautiful and rather small in size. The most important part of culturing Tahitian pearls is that the nacre is substantial and the pearls are not dyed.



Tahitian South Sea Cultured Pearls, Round Multicolor
Bead-In
10.2x11.2 mm
Courtesy of Eliko Pearl Co, Inc.



Tahitian South Sea Cultured Pearls, Baroque
Green, dark green
Circle, Bead-in
15x16+ mm
Courtesy of Mastoloni & Sons



Tahitian South Sea Cultured Pearls - Round
Green, Bead-In
10.1x12.8 mm
Courtesy of Tara & Sons



Tahitian South Sea Cultured Pearls - Baroque
Multicolor, Bead-In
13.3x12 mm
Courtesy of Eliko Pearl Co, Inc.

Tahitian South Sea Cultured Pearls							
MM	Shape	Color	Luster	Blemish	Matching	Price	Comment
7x8.3	Round	Multi-color	High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 1,600	Metallic bronze, pinkish, brown
8x10.9	Round	Mixed Tahitian Colors	High	None	Excellent	\$ 900	41 pieces
8-10.9	Near Round	Dark, dark green	v very high	None	Excellent	\$ 4,150	
8.7x11.6	Round	Mixed Tahitian Colors	High	None	Excellent	\$ 1,200	41 pieces
8.1x10.7	Round	Multi-color	v very high	Clean	Excellent	\$ 2,400	Metallic silver bronze, pinkish
9x10	Round	Green	High	Clean	Yes	\$ 2,300	Excellent, 16.5"
9.9-8	Round	Mint green, bluish	vv High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 3,780	
10x12.3	Round	Multi-color	v very high	Clean	Excellent	\$ 2,900	Tahitian, Silver, light gold, gold, light pistachio
10x11.7	Round	Multi-color	v very high	Clean	Excellent	\$ 2,500	Tahitian, pastel CFWCP, bronze, peach, white, silver, lavender
10x11	Round	Gray multi	Very High	None	Excellent	\$ 3,750	
10.2x11.2	Round	Multi-color	v very high	Clean	Excellent	\$ 2,800	Tahitian, South Sea - silver, rose, pistachio, light peach
10.1x12.8	Slight round	Mixed Tahitian Colors	High	None	Excellent	\$ 1,400	Beautiful mixed greens
10.17-8	Round	Greenish yellow	vv High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 3,780	
11.7x11	Round	Multi	vv High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 4,200	yellowish green, bronze, aubergine, dark green, pink
11.7x10	Round	Green	High	Clean	Yes	\$ 12,000	Excellent, 35.5"
11.9x10	Round	Dark grey, aubergine	vv High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 9,450	
11.95x10.4	Round	Deep aubergine, blue green	Very High	None	Excellent	\$ 21,000	37 pieces
12.1x13.4	Round	Multi-color	v very high	Clean	Excellent	\$ 7,500	Tahitian, chocolate, silver, peacock, grey
13.3x12	Semi-Baroque	Multi-color	High	Slight Blemish	Moderate/Mixed	\$ 2,700	Mixed Tahitian, silver light golden, peacock
13.15x10	Round	Green, pinkish, bluish	vv High	Clean	Fair-Good	\$ 8,663	

MM	Shape	Color	Luster	Blemish	Match	Price	Comment
14.4x16.9	Round	Green	VVV High	Clean	Yes	\$ 37,000	Green-black
15x16+	Baroque	Green - dark Green	High	V sl blemish	Good - Very good	\$ 8,500	Green, circle
16.4x15	Round	Multi-color	High	Slight spotting	Yes	\$ 28,000	Beautiful, 18"



Tahitian South Sea Cultured Pearls –
Round
Multi-color, Bead-In
16.4x15 mm
Courtesy of Tara & Sons, Inc.

Mixed multicolor – Tahitian South Sea
Cultured Pearls, Chinese Freshwater
Cultured Pearls
Bead-In
10x11.7 mm
Courtesy of Eliko Pearl Co, Inc.



South Sea Cultured Pearls

South Sea cultured pearls are cultured in Australia, Indonesia, and the Philippines, which is known for the intensity of its golden pearls. Intense golden South Sea cultured pearl strands at the high end are very expensive. From what I have seen at the AGTA Show, there are a range of colors to accommodate buyer's diverse preferences.

One of the largest problems we are confronted with is distinguishing between dyed and natural colored golden pearls. It is very difficult to know if one is buying a natural South Sea golden cultured pearl necklace. Many dealers are well aware of this and stipulate on the bill of sale as to whether the pearls have been dyed.

White South Sea Cultured Pearls are exceedingly expensive in very large sizes. The most expensive and beautiful pearls can gauge up to 20mm and can be as small as 8-9mm. These small sizes are sometimes called "baby bells" and they have a beautiful white luster. There are also commercial qualities with a middle range of white, silver white, grey, yellow and greenish pearls.



White South Sea Cultured Pearls – Round
Bead-In
13.9x12 mm
Courtesy of Tara & Sons, Inc.

White South Sea Cultured Pearls							
MM	Shape	Color	Luster	Blemish	Match	Price	Comment
10.9x10	Round	White	Very Good	None	Yes	\$ 10,000	Orange blue, grey white, peach
10x19	Multi shape	Mixed	Very High	Blem	No	\$ 3,200	Mixed
10x8.8	Round	White grey	vv High	Minor blem	Yes	\$ 10,000	Golden, green, pale blue, white, 13k gold
11.48x10	Round	White	vv High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 4,200	
11x10	Round	White	vv High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 7,700	
12.2x16.1	Round	White	VVV High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 70,000	
12x14	Round	Light Bluish	VVV High	Clean	Yes	\$ 10,000	beautiful
13-12.1	Round	White	vv High	None	Yes	\$ 18,000	Slight rose
13.9x12	Round	Off White	High	Slight spotting	Yes	\$ 34,000	Excellent, 53"
14.9x13.1	Round	White	Very High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 14,000	
17.2x14.3	Baroque	White rose	vv High	None	Excellent	\$ 15,400	
17.4x16	Round	White	vv High	Clean	Yes	\$ 160,000	Wholesale
18.4x15.25	Baroque	Silver white	vv High	None	Excellent	\$ 12,600	



White South Sea Cultured Pearls – Round
Bead-In
17.4x16 mm
Courtesy of Tara & Sons, Inc.



South Sea Cultured Pearls, Round

White, Bead-in

12.2x16.1 mm

Courtesy of Mastoloni & Sons



Golden South Sea Cultured Pearls – Round

Bead-In

15.6-12.1 mm

Courtesy of Mastoloni & Sons

Golden South Sea Cultured Pearls							
MM	Shape	Color	Luster	Blemish	Matching	Price	Comment
8x10	Semi Baroque	Golden	v very high	None	Excellent	\$ 3,700	
10x13.9	Round	Med Golden	vv High	Clean	Yes	\$ 12,000	beautiful
11.9x9.3	Round	Golden	vv High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 9,800	
11-13	Baroque	Golden	v very high	None	Excellent	\$ 7,000	
12.1x15.6	Off round	Med Golden	VVV High	Clean	Yes	\$ 20,000	Like bell jars
12x10	Round	Golden	vv High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 9,100	
14.5x13.1	Round	Strong golden	vv High	Clean	Excellent	\$ 31,500	

The information contained in this report is intended to provide a cross section of what is available in the current pearl market at the wholesale level. The tables, listings, sizes, and prices are not intended for grading purposes. All pictures were taken by Lois H. Berger, G.G.

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