

*collecting*  
**LOUIS VUITTON**  
TELLING FAKE FROM THE GENUINE



PAUL PLUTA

# **Collecting Louis Vuitton – Telling Fake from the Genuine**

**Paul Pluta**

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**[www.collectinglouisvuitton.com](http://www.collectinglouisvuitton.com)**

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## Introduction

Thank you for reading my book about Collecting Louis Vuitton. I am very passionate about collecting Louis Vuitton and this book is the result of years of collecting. I have been a Louis Vuitton fan since I was 15 years old. My interest in Louis Vuitton started when I was reading the English classic car magazine – *Classic and Sports Cars*. Louis Vuitton at the time was sponsoring some classic car events and subsequently had an advertising campaign in some up market classic car magazines. I have always had a soft spot for high quality print advertisements.

I can recall how beautiful the Louis Vuitton advertisements were at the time. Louis Vuitton has always had very attractive print media advertisements. These advertisements are probably what planted the seeds for what was to become my love for all things Louis Vuitton.

A short time later a Louis Vuitton store opened up in my home town. My first trip to that store was an experience that I can remember to this day. The store was like no other store I had been in before. It seemed to me to be a combination of an art gallery, up-market shop and museum all rolled into one. Everything was so beautifully presented. The products were like pieces of art. It was almost like going to a beautiful European private museum. Everything was perfect – from the beautifully dressed staff who resembled international airline hostesses to the placement of the merchandise.

I can remember from that visit that the store had the most beautiful old Louis Vuitton trunks and suitcases on display. These were not for sale as such but gave the store the most wonderful ambiance. These beautiful antiques really started my thirst for all things Louis Vuitton.

Over the years I slowly learned about Louis Vuitton. Unfortunately many pieces from that first visit were very expensive. Louis Vuitton is a French-made luxury goods maker that has come to represent the best of the best. As can be expected, the items are not for those short of funds.

Although the prices are quite high, this needs to be put into perspective. The workmanship of most things Louis Vuitton is absolutely amazing.

The thing about buying a Louis Vuitton piece is that it will last you a lifetime provided you take good care of the item. You can easily buy far cheaper pieces of a lesser quality that do not last anywhere near as long. Are you really saving by buying an inferior item? Or are you paying the same once you have replaced it a few times?

Many Louis Vuitton pieces are therefore like future heirlooms to hand down to your family line. What could possibly be nicer than inheriting a lovely Louis Vuitton suitcase that is packed full of memories and experiences?

I was originally attracted to the Louis Vuitton hard case line – especially the hard-sided briefcases and the beautifully made hard-sided luggage.

Fast track a couple of years and I got a work bonus. I bought my first new Louis Vuitton piece A Louis Vuitton Keepall. I then added a few more purchases from the classifieds in the newspaper.

In 2002 I took a job working in Asia (Thailand, Singapore and Hong Kong) for a luxury watch dealer. I was amazed to find stores selling genuine used Louis Vuitton – there were also large numbers of shops selling fakes as well!

Slowly, as the eBay crazy took hold, I bought and sold hundreds of genuine pieces. Asia has a huge appetite for Louis Vuitton with over 30% of sales happening in Japan alone (Wikinvest); therefore it is only natural that the Asian market would cast off used pieces as readily.

The Asian market has a very different viewpoint on Louis Vuitton to Westerners. Many Asians see European brands as a status symbol to be replaced when the next season's range is released. Personally I feel this is missing the point as I believe quality products are timeless and are therefore design icons which have no use-by date.

If you take a look at the back of a printed Louis Vuitton catalogue you can see how strong the Asian presence is. Japan has the most Louis Vuitton stores per capita than anywhere in the entire world.

I have always had a soft spot for briefcases and travel goods. These items are a touch harder to find on the secondary market as Louis Vuitton has such a large female following.

As Louis Vuitton is so popular it is possible to buy and sell Louis Vuitton pieces. A few rules need to be understood. Mainly there is only one source for genuine Louis Vuitton. That is the Louis Vuitton store. Louis Vuitton jealously protects its distribution network. There is no such thing as wholesale Louis Vuitton or pieces direct from the manufacturer. All genuine pieces come only from the genuine Louis Vuitton store – period. Many false claims have been made on the internet about wholesale Louis Vuitton and these are from the peddlers of fakes.

You can buy genuine used Louis Vuitton on the internet; however, all these pieces would have originally come from a genuine Louis Vuitton store.

My interest in selling used genuine Louis Vuitton has ceased as I decided to remain a collector and not a dealer. A collector keeps pieces that he/she enjoys most. A dealer sells pieces that bring the best return. Some of my best buys on the used market are pieces I do not ever want to sell.

Today, the only time I sell a piece is to occasionally help finance another purchase. I prefer to remain a Louis Vuitton collector instead of a dealer doing things solely for the profit motive.

Although I am no longer dealing in used Louis Vuitton, it did give me a lot of experience in telling the genuine item from the fake. It also gave me a great insight into the brand and showed me the true craftsmanship that goes into Louis Vuitton pieces.

The thing about Louis Vuitton is that you don't need to use it continually to enjoy it. You can come home after a hard day and just open a Louis Vuitton item up and feel the lovely material. Just to absorb the smell and



feel the texture of a genuine Louis Vuitton item. That is the love of collecting Louis Vuitton.

If you love Louis Vuitton and other luxury goods please come to my free reference library website <http://www.collectinglouisvuitton.com>

Heaps of free information, product reviews, video clips and articles. Best of all it is all free.

Please feel free to email the author at:-

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Please also visit my sister website <http://www.luxurytolast.com> for heaps of free information about luxury goods including watches, diamonds, jewellery and much more.

I also have heaps of free videos on <http://www.youtube.com> under the screen name – ARCHIELUXURY

*Some of my collection*





*Louis Vuitton as art & Monogram set*

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