



7 wonders of the luxury world

Most of us will never be billionaires, but we can dream – right?

If you have been lucky enough to receive jewellery, a fine watch or vintage wine as a gift, it's a good idea to look after it carefully.

Some of the world's most valuable items are heirlooms that people have held onto for years.

Here's a look at some record-breaking, ultra-luxury treasures.

The world's most expensive diamond

The South African Pink Star diamond became the world's most expensive gem last year when it sold for \$US83 million (\$A93 million) in Geneva, Switzerland. The 59.60 carat pink jewel took two years to polish and cut. It was bought by New York diamond dealer Isaac Wolf who has renamed it the 'Pink Dream'.

The world's most expensive art sold at auction

The world record for art auctions was smashed last year by a 1969 Francis Bacon triptych entitled Three Studies of Lucian Freud - it sold for \$US157 million (\$A176 million) to an unknown buyer. The highest ever price for a painting was actually through a private sale when the

State of Qatar bought Paul Cezanne's The Card Players for \$US287 million (\$A322 million).

The world's most valuable watch

The world record for a watch sold at auction is for Patek Philippe's Supercomplication watch, which sold for over \$US11 million (\$A11.8 million) in New York in 1999 to an anonymous bidder.

The timepiece was originally built for Henry Graves, an American millionaire who made his fortune in banking and railroads in the 1930s. Graves, a passionate art collector, was in competition with James Ward Packard, the famous car manufacturer, for ownership of the most complicated watch in the world.

The one-off creation includes 24 functions such as a perpetual calendar with phases of the moon, indications of sunrise and sunset and a celestial chart depicting stars in the night time sky over New York.

The world's highest priced car

A 1954 Mercedes-Benz W196R Silver Arrow was sold for over \$US30 million (\$A33.6 million) at auction in July 2013 to an anonymous telephone bidder.

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The car's original owner was Juan Manuel Fangio, an Argentinian race car driver who dominated the early years of Formula One racing in the 1940s. Only fourteen of the Silver Arrows were ever made - and just ten remain in existence today.

The world's most expensive boat

Russian businessman Roman Abramovich is the owner of the world's most expensive yacht, the \$US1.5 billion Eclipse. The 164 metre, German built vessel has two helicopter pads, 24 guest cabins, two swimming pools, several hot tubs, a disco, three launch boats, a mini-submarine and, for security, a missile defence system. The yacht costs around \$US75 million (\$A84 million) a year just to maintain.

The world's most costly wine

In 2012, three bottles of Chateau Lafite-Rothschild 1869 were sold to an anonymous buyer at Sotheby's auction in Hong Kong for \$US257,773 a bottle (\$A289,000). That's over \$US32,000 (\$A35,861) a glass.

The Lafite-Rothschild wine estate in France has been owned by members of the Rothschild banking dynasty since the 19th century. Cases of Chateau Lafite Rothschild are extremely popular with collectors.

The world's biggest gold nugget

Australia holds the record for the world's biggest gold nuggets, with massive lumps of precious metal still being found in goldfields. The biggest nugget ever found was the 78kg Welcome Stranger, discovered at Moliagul, Victoria, by John Deason and Richard Oates in 1869.

The Welcome Stranger returned over 71kg of gold - worth around \$3 million in today's prices.

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