

POKER CHIP STYLES

CREATIVE GAMBLE

When jewelry designer Donna Chambers of White Plains, N.Y., visited Tucson in January, it turned out to be her lucky trip: A stone dealer sold her some ancient Chinese gambling chips made of hand-etched mother-of-pearl. Since the fashion-forward designer typically creates women's jewelry in 14k gold and pearls, the chips were a good find—they fit in well with the type of jewelry she makes. Chambers uses



Chambers' chip

the counters as centerpieces in her latest 15-piece line of bracelets, earrings, and pins/pendants, with retail prices ranging from \$350 to \$900. The chips, which date back to the Ching Dynasty, are like miniature snapshots of history: Many bear family crests or initials on one side and a drawing of some aspect of Chinese life on the other. Records show that the chips were made for the East India Trading Co. and other European merchants who had settled in China with their families. Very fashionable at the time, the chips were often custom-made at the request of British royalty and nobility.