

## A Primer to PAMP

While some people may collect a theme of silver art bars (such a holiday), collecting everything from a particular mint is truly ambitious, especially if it is a mint as large as PAMP. PAMP collectors usually have some type of self-restraint to narrow the scope of their collecting (such as sticking to just one design or series). My self-imposed restraint was to stick to all of the non-coins and generally stay away from jewelry. While finding rare PAMP can take many hours of regular searching, because of the vast scope of what was minted, there will always be something new to be “found” at a reasonable price. Patience also pays off, as on more than one occasion I have observed a very rare item become available in the hundreds still in mint seal.

What distinguishes PAMP from other mints is their high quality and worldwide recognition. Furthermore, PAMP has taken the same design and put it on multiple fractional sizes, types of metals, and even shape of bar. And don't forget the pendant bars, which are plentiful as well, with all those sizes and shapes on the pendant format too. Over time, the reverse of these bars has changed more noticeably than the design on the front. For a true PAMP collector, seeking out all the variations can be exciting. Even just sticking to the Fortuna design can be ambitious when one considers the number of sizes it was made in silver and gold over the last 40+ years. One collector shared with me he had over 50 types of PAMP Fortunas – and I am sure his collection isn't complete!

Without a doubt, one factor that has helped PAMP remain popular is worldwide distribution. Some designs and bars are local and exclusive to a country, so having friends internationally helps in obtaining these. The worldwide distribution has also helped keep some designs relatively hard to find as they will not make your local coin shop any time soon.

Hands down, the most recognizable PAMP are the Fortuna and Rosa designs, but the Four Seasons and Honeycomb with Bees

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are the prized and sought out designs many collectors wish would return. More recently, PAMP has been producing Chinese zodiac bars and religious bars, but the glorious sets of bars from the past worth mentioning include the Italian cities, zodiac (astrology), world currency bars, as well as several sets produced for the Polish market, with most of them being widely available outside of Poland.



Made for the anniversary of a club in Switzerland, this relatively unusual weight bar can be found outside of Switzerland, but very few examples have made it to other countries.



Despite the high serial number, this is the only example of this bar I have seen. Fortunately, the bar does indicate the market it was made for.

**Editors note:** Richard Brzostek has been collecting silver art bars since the early 2000s, but only began to get more serious about it for the last decade. While he does enjoy modern mints such as CMG, PAMP is clearly one of his major interests. More recently, he has been working with Ron Jr. to bring hand engraved limited-edition bars and rounds to the silver art world.

Courtesy,

Richard Brzostek