

## *Maintaining the Patina of Your Silver*

Did you know that the value of your silver is determined by its patina, not by the mold in which it was cast or the size of the piece? Many believe that patina, the beautiful hue of fine silver, is simply the result of years of usage. Contrary to this widely held belief, patina is actually something acquired by the careful scratching of silver by the efforts of a silversmith. These scratches distinguish this metal from all others.

Silversmiths apply earth compounds ground in to fine powders to the surface of silver to create fine scratches. The four essential compounds used in the process of developing patina are Diatomaceous Earth, the fossilized remains of microscopic sized marine and freshwater shelled creatures called diatoms, Iron Oxide, the mineral form of hematite or rouge, Clay, a variety of phyllosilicate minerals rich in silicon, aluminum oxides, and hydroxides, and finally Pumice, the frothy volcanic rock formed by the expansion of gas in erupting lava. Each compound produces a different depth and width in the scratches it creates. These variances allow light to reflect off the silver in a unique way, producing the beautiful deep blue cast of highly polished, fine silver. The process is finally completed by a series of buffing methods that include leathers and cotton wheels.

The laborious process of developing patina is what makes fine silver so valuable. It is therefore important to maintain the value of your silver by caring for its patina. Most silver polishes use chalk to produce a mirror-like finish similar to the refined hue of highly polished silver. Over time, these polishes can dull the effects of the original brilliance of your silver. Unlike other polishes, Hagerty Silver Polish maintains and protects the patina of your silver by polishing with the same four compounds used by silversmith's to develop its original hue, Diatomaceous Earth, Iron Oxide, Clay, and Pumice. Hagerty Silver Polish restores the deep blue cast of your silver's patina that can be lost by the build up of dirt, tarnish, or unfit polishes. When you polish with Hagerty Silver Polish you continue the process of refining your silver's patina, adding value over the years. Protect the value of your investments with Hagerty, the world's most trusted name in silver care for more than 110 years.

