

Reveal reports

Going for gold

If your purse is empty but your jewellery box is full, getting yourself to a gold party could help you make some quick cash

It might only be a Wednesday evening, but the ladies of Guildford are out in force, sipping Chardonnay, nibbling on canapés and dripping with bling.

Despite the glitz and gossip, this is no ordinary girl's night out – these ladies are planning on leaving their bling behind tonight, and going home cheque-in-hand instead.

Bring-and-sell gold parties could be the next big thing in recession-hit Britain. The exact opposite of a Tupperware party, instead of parting with your hard-earned pennies, you part with your unwanted gold jewellery instead, and actually leave with more cash than you came.

The concept was born in the US, but if the amount of money changing hands at tonight's gathering

at Guildford Golf Club is anything to go by, it's gathering serious steam over here.

Ounces to Pounds, the company behind the bash, says it is now being booked for 12 parties a week, which can be held everywhere from bars and beauty salons to people's front rooms.

It's a slick operation. They provide professional valuers with intricate gold-testing equipment, who make sure your trinkets are real and then offer you 70 per cent of their value, based on their weight, carat, and that day's fixed London gold price.

'Whoever hosts the party gets to keep 10 per cent of the profit, too, plus £35 towards her wine and nibbles if we take more than £700 in total,' explains founder

Krista Waddell.

'Because we're buying in bulk and selling it on to be melted down, our prices are still 20-30 per cent higher than you'd get from a

pawn shop. Everyone's a winner.'

Rachel Munnerly, 19, a student at Leeds University, is meant to be working behind the bar tonight, but couldn't resist seeing how much some old bits of jewellery from her ex-boyfriend are worth.

To be honest, her collection doesn't look like it will add up to much – a bracelet, belly button ring and a couple of chains – so when the valuer, Ingrid, offers her £103 for the lot, she's over the moon.

'It's all from Argos, so I'd probably just have ended up giving it away,' she says. 'But this will help pay for some cocktails on the holiday I've just booked to Kavos!'

All around, there are whoops of wine-fuelled delight as other party-goers get their valuations. 'We've seen it all,' says Krista. 'I even sold my own wedding

ring from my first marriage, but nothing beats a woman at party in a retirement village in Las Vegas, who produced her dead husband's five gold teeth in an envelope.'

Georgina Place, 48, a Surrey housewife, is delighted with the £321 she gets for a bag of broken bracelets, unfashionable chains and single earrings she'd never have worn again. 'I was sure half of it was just fool's gold,' she says. 'I nearly gave it to the local jumble sale last week.'

But the big winner is Susan Seaman, a 62-year-old PA from Farnham, who walks away with a cheque for a staggering £1,325 in exchange for a watch and some random charms and chains that have sat, unworn, for more than 20 years. 'That was an unexpected treat!' she laughs, in the understatement of the year.

Girls, it might be time to get digging through your drawers! **R**

Words Rachel Cocker

Photos Lynn Hillson

This little lot bagged the lucky owner a whopping £1,279!



The valuer Ingrid gets busy with the weighing scales



Nineteen-year-old Rachel made £103 from just a few items



Susan was the star moneymaker of the night – bagging an amazing £1,325!

We pay up to £750 for your story. Call the Reveal hotline on 020 7339 4494 or email: features.reveal@natmags.co.uk