



Unlimited fun

Sets of low serial-numbered Federal Reserve notes offer discerning collectors limited-edition collectibles to enjoy

By Daniel Wisnatsky

As some collectors are aware, since 1999 the Bureau of Engraving and Printing has offered a steady stream of limited-edition collectibles. In some case the number issued has been quite small (500) while others have been relatively large (88,888).

Often when the notes or sets are first issued, the response is similar to a land-rush and within hours they are sold out. At times demand has been so great that the BEP's online order entry system has shut down.

So, with all this interest and excitement, why has the larger collector community tended to overlook this most interesting and intriguing area of collectibles?

Why does the average collector say, "Huh?" when the subject of BEP collectibles comes up?

Might it be because they are too expensive?

Nope. The rarest of these products often sells for surprisingly modest prices and many can be purchased for less than \$100.

Maybe it's because they are unattractive and don't have that eye-candy appeal we all enjoy?

Nope. A look at the accompanying images will likely dispel any notion of that.

Let's we forget, these special issues are frequently issued in very low numbers, often focus on historically significant events or the changing nature of currency production, and are designed to highlight the simple beauty of an art form that is the lifeblood of our economic system.

So what's the rub?

Well, collectors like to collect, not hoard, and thus require a framework in which to build a collection. Our passion is to find the elusive or undiscovered or underappreciated, with an eye toward crafting a complete collection that is distinguished by our personal vision. Without a guide or resource that includes categories, a description of each item and what distinguishes it, population numbers, serial number ranges and current prices, we are unable to truly collect so we are left to gathering.

This article intends to provide collectors with a complete explanation and guide designed to assist you in creating a BEP special products collection that is pleasurable, challenging and rewarding.

A wonderful place to start this journey is with the BEP's Premium sets. These sets incorporate many of the great features of BEP collecting, including very low issue numbers, exclusive matching serial numbers and finely crafted presentation packages.

As the accompanying table indicates, the BEP has issued seven different Premium Federal Reserve sets, comprising a grand total of approximately 12,500 sets. Until the BEP decided to issue these sets, it would have been impossible to create or own a matched set of 12 Federal Reserve notes, one for each of the 12 Federal Reserve Banks.

These sets share the following characteristics:

They are the only sets ever issued by the BEP that include matching serial numbers from each of the 12 Federal Reserve Banks.

The matching serial numbers from these sets are either very low numbers (in some cases starting with A00000001★) or very high numbers (BA99999999Y).

The sets are all housed in specially designed books and include certificates of authenticity.

They were issued over a period of approximately six and a half years from June 1999 to January 2006.



Some examples of the notes in the \$2 Premium Millennium Federal Reserve set. Only 2,000 sets were offered to the public by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

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