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Monthly MARKET REPORT *March 2024*



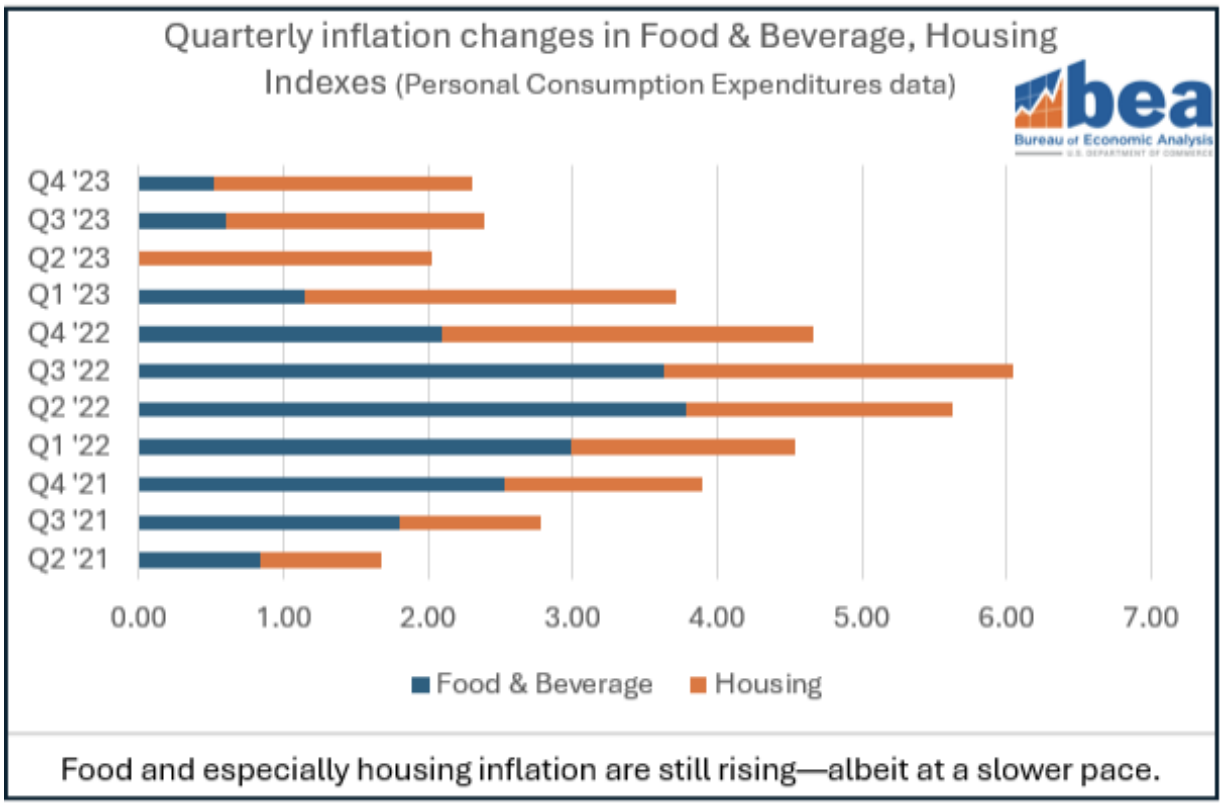
March 2024: Interest Rate Cuts are on Hold – for Now.

In March, gold prices touched new record highs ($2,256.90) and silver prices rallied strongly (trading as high as **$25.975**) on the back of ongoing economic and geopolitical concerns.

March 2024 Precious Metals Settlements and Returns			
Gold	$2,238.40	+163.80	+ 7.90%
Silver	$24.915	+ $2.03	+ 8.87%
Platinum	$921.10, $28.30	+ $28.30	+ 3.17%
Palladium	$1,021.50	+ 74.50	+ 7.87%

March 2024 Precious Metals Settlements and Returns.

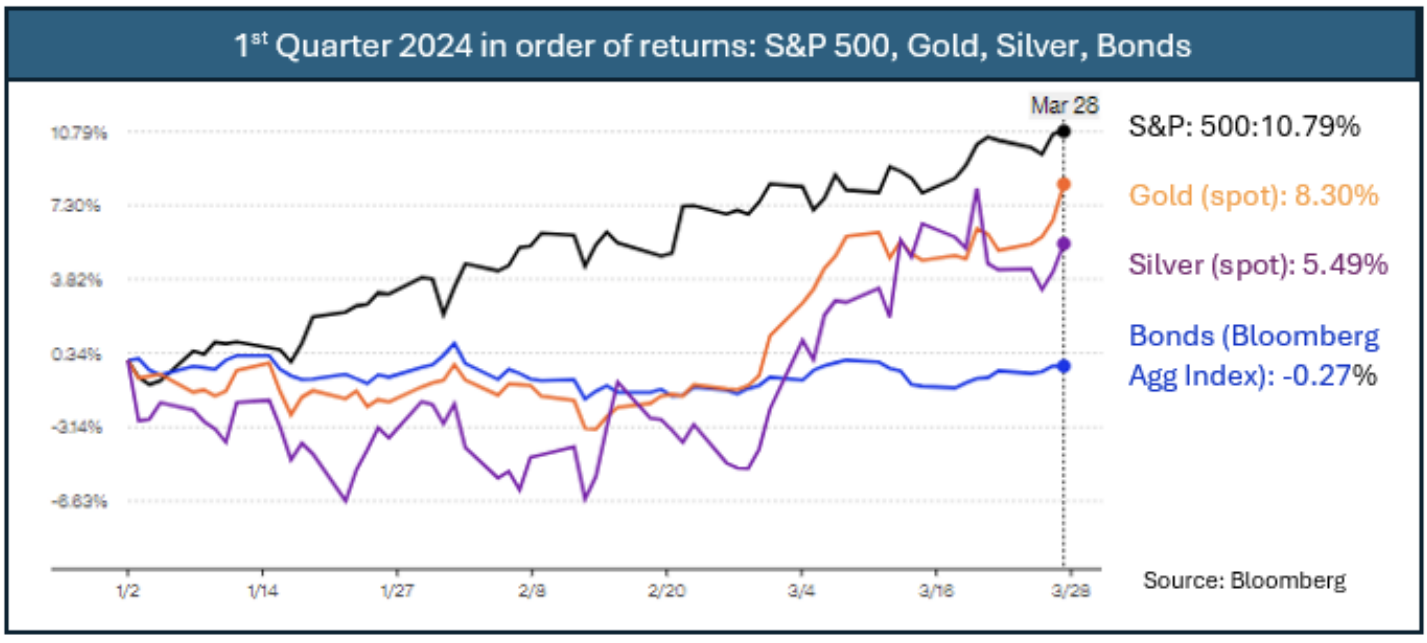
Meanwhile, equity indices soared to new highs multiple times. A strong economy spurred investor buying in stocks. However, concerns about the pace of increases in food and housing costs remain.



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S Department of Commerce

Markets cheered when the Federal Reserve said it continues to expect to cut interest rates three times in 2024 if there is good news on inflation.

Excitement before and after the Fed's March 19-20 meeting likely served to support investor interest in gold and silver – their Q1 price gains largely occurred in March.



1st Quarter 2024 in order of returns: S&P 500, Gold, Silver, Bonds. Source: Bloomberg

In addition to lower rates on the horizon, investors likely were drawn to the metals for their safe-haven qualities.

The Ukrainian war rages on, China-Taiwan relations are tense, and US-Chinese links are weakening as we unravel supply chains (which could lead to higher inflation). At home, commercial real estate woes remain an issue and a potentially divisive presidential election campaign is in full swing. Congress passed a spending bill to keep the government open until September.

On the international market, emerging market central banks have been significant acquirers of gold in recent years and months.

Looking ahead

- **The Fed meets next on April 30-May 1.** The Fed will have the latest Personal Consumption Expenditures Index (PCE) in-hand. The PCE, next released on April 26, is a key data point for the Fed. Current market sentiment favors the central bank easing in June. Will it match investors' expected timeline? What happens to precious metals prices if 'higher for longer' drags on longer than expected?
- **The summer driving season is nearly upon us.** This year, oil is up $11, or 15%, to $83.17 (CME May WTI futures). Russia says it plans to reduce oil output in Q2. OPEC's next meeting is April 3. Let us see how this meeting impacts prices, and inflation, going forward.
- **At the beginning of March, China canceled the annual press conference held by its premier until at least 2027.** Presumably, they had no good economic news. However, recent Fed statements likely contributed to a pop in Chinese equity prices (as lower rates here make their currency more attractive).



Will the Chinese government's efforts to spur growth and fix the housing economy work? Or will Chinese individuals choose to buy gold instead of stocks?

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1. All prices are CME most active contract, unless otherwise indicated.

Jennifer Ropiak is a precious metals market specialist with over 30 years' experience, including 20 years of trading (15 at Morgan Stanley). In 2014, Jennifer launched Trusted Partner Metals, an independent consultancy whose clients span the metals industry. Services include expert witness opinions in precious metals cases. The information contained in this article is for educational and informational purposes only.

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