



Tourmaline

Birthstone Month: **October**

Anniversary: **8th**

Season/Zodiac: **Scorpio**

Interesting Facts/History

Tourmaline has become a favorite gemstone among jewelry designers, and gem collectors the world over. Since it is available in a wide variety of colour shades, it is ideally suited to almost anyone's taste. Tourmaline has also been used in science, as it possesses unique properties of Piezoelectricity (can develop an electrical vibration) and Pyroelectric (will develop an electrical charge when heated) The Dutch called Tourmaline "ashentrekers" for they used the gem crystals to draw ashes from their pipes.

Name Derivation

Comes from the Singhalese word "Turmali" meaning mixed precious stones of many colours.

Varieties, Value and Colour Symbolism

Tourmaline comes in the widest array of colours of any coloured gemstone. The most valuable shades include the vibrant "Paraiba" in greenish Blue hues, to deep rich greens reminiscent of Emerald, to Pink, Purple, Orange, and Yellow, with many shades in between. Tourmaline is also known for displaying several colours in the same gem such as "bi-colour" or "tri-colour" gems, and even what is called "watermelon" with green and pink hues in combination, cut into thin slices.

Where the Gem is Mined

Tourmaline is found in many localities namely Brazil, Afghanistan, East Africa and the USA.

Durability

Hardness (*resistance to scratching*) = 7 - 7 1/2 on the Moh's Scale.

Toughness (*resistance to breaking, chipping, cracking*) = Fair.

Stability (*to heat, light, chemicals*) = Avoid intense heat which may affect the colour, and sudden temperature change may cause fractures. Generally stable to light and chemicals.

Care and Cleaning

Ultrasonic = Risky, so best to avoid.

Steam Cleaning = Risky, best to avoid.

Repair Recommendations = Avoid temperature changes, generally the gem must be removed from settings where direct heat is involved. Multi-coloured gems are more fragile at colour boundaries.

Enhancements

Amethyst is routinely subjected to heat as a normal part of the processing phase to improve the colour. Amethyst is sensitive to heat and sudden temperature changes should be avoided.

Fashion Significance

Lovely Amethyst in its rich purple colours symbolizes royalty and aristocracy. Since it is plentiful in nature, it represents an incredible value for the person who appreciates its elegant colour, availability in a wide range of shapes and sizes, and its prevalent use by many designers the world over.