



# Gem of an Idea

## Red Gems Are Hot For Valentine's Day

(NAPSA)—Think red for Valentine's Day—as in red gemstones. They're hot, sexy, confident, passionate...and never boring. Each red gem has its own personality—and it radiates from every facet.

If you are shopping for a red gemstone for Valentine's Day, there are several intriguing choices available—and one is bound to be right for you. Colored stone experts at the Gemological Institute of America (GIA), the world's foremost authority in gemology, provide the following insightful glimpses into four of the most popular red gemstone choices:

### **Ruby: King of Red Gemstones**

Mined in exotic locales around the world—including Myanmar, Madagascar, East Africa, and Sri Lanka—the ruby is the undisputed king of red gems. Ruby offers a distinctive range of red hues that vary from light (pinkish) to dark, velvety reds, and hits a brighter red in between. And, ruby is very hard—second only to diamond in hardness (resistance to scratching).

What's the best ruby shade? It's the one that speaks to you, as the potential wearer of this appealing gem. View the spectrum of red hues, and see which one best fits you. Keep in mind that vivid rubies are considered the highest quality, but they are rare and will thus be more expensive.



Photographer: Tino Hammid. © GIA & Tino Hammid

**This ring features a 2.86-ct ruby flanked by two triangular cut diamonds.**

### **Spinel: The Great Pretender**

GIA's colored-stone experts point out that quite a few famous "rubies" in royal jewels throughout the world are actually spinels—some even reside in the British Crown Jewels. Spinel has been mistaken for ruby for centuries.

Now that it has come into its own, spinel fans love its brilliance and hardness. They are also captivated by its rich reds, although the gem appears in a spectrum of other colors. Spinel is a durable gem that is affordable but also uncommon. It's mined in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Tajikistan (part of the former Soviet Union) and Vietnam.

### **Garnet: The Popular Gem**

Although garnets appear in many colors, red is the most admired. It's also plentiful and

affordable. Garnet is very durable, so it's ideal for daily wear.

Three of the most common red garnets are almandine, rhodolite, and pyrope. Almandine garnet is a medium-red color. Rhodolite is found in red with purple or raspberry overtones. Pyrope, from the Greek word *pyropus* meaning "fiery-eyed," is the darkest red garnet. The finest specimens have a glowing red color. Garnets are mined in East Africa, India and Sri Lanka.

### **Tourmaline:**

#### **A Colorful Character**

This colorful gemstone occurs in more colors and color combinations than any other gemstone variety, according to GIA. In the tourmaline family, a red gemstone is referred to as a rubellite. Widely available, rubellites also come in larger sizes, making them a favorite choice for contemporary jewelry. Important sources of rubellite are Brazil and Nigeria.

When shopping for gemstones, it's advisable to go to a jeweler who has credentials from GIA, such as a Graduate Gemologist (G.G.) or Accredited Jewelry Professional (A.J.P.). GIA also offers identification reports on gemstones, including those discussed here, to verify their authenticity. For more information, visit [www.gia.edu](http://www.gia.edu), or call 800-421-7250.