

GEMSTONES

“Magical,” Mythical, Magnificent

(NAPSA)—Gemstones have long been believed to carry healing, protective and even magical properties. Today, gemstones are enjoyed for their beauty in jewelry and if, by chance, they carry some mysterious qualities that repel insects, heal illnesses, protect travelers or attract love...why not accept a bit of chance good fortune?

When shopping for a gemstone, consider going to a retailer who has been educated by the non-profit Gemological Institute of America (GIA), the world's foremost authority in gemology, as a Graduate Gemologist or an Accredited Jewelry Professional, in order to be assured of knowledgeable and reliable service.

Following is a sampling of gemstones and a description of their qualities and lore:

Diamond—Diamonds have the longest endurance of any substance known to man. Carbon dating has established that diamonds, on average, are 3.4 billion years of age—now that's timeless beauty!

The word “diamond” comes from the Greek word *adamas*, meaning “unconquerable and indestructible.” Diamonds were worn in ancient times to promote strength, invincibility and courage. Diamond is also the gemstone of love: when carried or worn, diamond is said to advance positive relations with the opposite sex, to conquer infertility and to ensure fidelity.

The earliest record of a man giving a diamond to a woman for her hand in marriage was in 1477,



Many gemstones, treasured for their beauty today, were once believed to have magical powers.

when the Archduke of Austria gave one to Mary of Burgundy. Now, more than 500 years later, diamonds are still the most popular gemstones in engagement rings.

Emerald—The word “emerald” comes from the Greek word *smaragdus*, meaning “green.” A member of the beryl mineral species, it contains chromium, which gives emerald its green color.

In ancient Egypt, this tranquil green gem was highly prized by the wealthy and by priests. It is said that Isis wore a green emerald in her headband and that those who looked upon it would be able to conceive. Emeralds in ancient Rome were highly prized and valued for their calming and soothing effects. Nero watched the Roman games in the Colosseum through a set of highly prized emerald glasses.

Emeralds, like almost all green

gemstones, are also thought to be advantageous for business/money ventures.

Ruby—Ruby is made of aluminum oxide (corundum). The red in rubies is caused by trace amounts of chromium—the redder the gem, the more chromium. Rubies are found primarily in Myanmar, Thailand and Sri Lanka.

The ruby represents the sun power in Hindu ancient writings, and is said to have been given as an offering to Buddha in China and Krishna in India. An ancient belief about rubies was that dreaming of them meant the coming of success in money matters and love.

Sapphire—Sapphire is also made of aluminum oxide and is considered the sister stone to the ruby. It comes in all colors except red, which has been designated as “ruby.” Blue sapphires have enjoyed increased popularity in recent years, which fashion maven credit to the necklace worn in the film *Titanic*.

The Buddhists believe that the sapphire favors devotion and spiritual enlightenment. The ancient Greeks linked sapphire with Apollo, and wore it as an aid to prophecy when consulting oracles.

To learn more about gemstones, contact the Gemological Institute of America (GIA) and find out about its world-renowned gem and jewelry educational programs and courses. Call 1-800-421-7250, ext. 4001 or visit the Web site at www.gia.edu.