

BIRTHSTONES – AMETHYST (*February*)



Amethyst - The Ancient Greeks believed that whomever wore this gemstone would be protected from the intoxicating effects of wine and the name is derived from the Greek word "amethystos" meaning, "not drunk". Amethyst, the birthstone for February, is a variety of quartz and occurs in transparent light to dark purple. It has long been treasured by kings, queens and religious figures, dating back to the Minoan period (c. 2500 B.C.), because of its rich, royal color. Amethyst was a favorite of the Art Nouveau craftsmen of the 1920's and is still a favorite of some of the most creative jewelry designers of today. The most notable reason for their popularity in jewelry design has been the wide availability and reasonable price. The two main sources of amethyst are Brazil and Zambia,

although other deposits have been found in Russia, Sri-Lanka, Mexico, and Arizona.

Enhancements - The scarcity of fine amethyst in recent years has prompted the production of a manmade synthetic making its way into the market. Darker hues of amethyst are rarely enhanced to perfect their color, although some varieties do respond well to heat treatment. Brownish varieties, when heated, magically turn into the bright yellow or orange colors known as citrine. This enhancement method is permanent and will last the lifetime of the gemstone.