

BIRTHSTONES ~ AQUAMARINE (*March*)



Aquamarine - Latin for seawater, this beautiful gemstone inspires visions of the transparent azure blue waters of the Caribbean. Aquamarine is identifiable by its flawless crystallization and greenish-blue color, just like the Caribbean water that is so clear that you can see through the surface to the sand below. As the birthstone for March, aquamarine differs greatly from its most famous relative, emerald. Both are from the gemstone group known as beryl. However, while emeralds are almost always imperfect (having visible inclusions) aquamarines are almost always flawless (no visible inclusions under 10x power magnification). Aquamarine has been credited with providing courage, curing laziness and quickening the intellect. Among some cultures, it had the reputation for providing happiness and everlasting youth. Brazil is the most prolific supplier of aquamarine today, with the natural color from this area leaning towards bluish-green. Other sources of aquamarine include Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Russia, and the island of Sri Lanka.

Enhancements - Aquamarines that you see today are almost always enhanced by controlled heating. Natural occurring bluish-green gemstones are heated in this manner to remove the green, leaving a more pleasing blue hue. The treatment has become a very common and very acceptable enhancement technique for aquamarine gemstones, and is one that is permanent for the life of the gemstone.