

BIRTHSTONES~EMERALD (*May*)

Emerald - The name emerald is derived from the Greek word Smaragdus meaning "green stone" and, in ancient times, it referred to just about any green colored gemstone. The birthstone for May, emerald is the most prized and precious variety of the gemstone group known as beryl, which also consists of aquamarine and other variations of beryl. Today, most of the world's Emeralds are mined in Columbia, Brazil and Zambia. The green color of emerald is incomparable in the world of gemstones and, for this reason, the color is commonly referred to as "emerald green". The green color in emerald is caused by the presence of chromium in the chemical composition of this particular form of beryl. Under



magnification the internal characteristics in an emerald, which include liquid bubbles, gas bubbles, internal stress fractures, and foreign crystals form a virtual garden within the gemstone. Most natural Emeralds contain a variety of these internal inclusions, commonly referred to as "jarden", which is French for garden. Perfection in emerald, as in most all things, is the most rare of nature's treasures. Emerald is the birthstone for May and symbolizes rebirth and youth.

Enhancements - When mined from the earth, almost all Emeralds have internal inclusions, or "birthmarks", some of which distinguish them as natural gemstones. Since early times, merchants would purify the color of Emeralds by immersing them in oils or paraffin, which would fill the fissures that were open at the surface and render them almost invisible to the naked eye. Along with the use of oils and resins, there are much more sophisticated techniques being used today to clarity enhance Emeralds.