

BIRTHSTONES ~ TOURMALINE (*October*)

Tourmaline -

Tourmaline, like garnet and sapphire, occurs in almost every color of the rainbow from soft pastel tones to bold and brilliant colors that excite the senses. The people of ancient Ceylon referred to these

beautiful gems as "turмали", the Sinhalese word for many colors. Varying vibrant hues within the tourmaline group are such that they command a name that separates them from the more common hues. The vivid reds and hot pinks are known as Rubellite, vibrant greens that crystallized containing the chemical chromium and are called Chrome Tourmaline, and the violetish to greenish blues are referred to as Indicolite. The pink variety is often used as the birthstone for October. Not only does tourmaline occur in such a spectacular range of color, some of these colors occur in a single gemstone and are called "bi-color" or "parti-colored" tourmalines. In fact, one color combination known as "watermelon" tourmaline, occurs with a pink center and green perimeter. Tourmaline is mined in many areas of the world including Brazil, Afghanistan, East Africa and the United States.



Enhancements - Color enhancement of tourmalines is very common. Dark blue, blue green, and green tourmalines are often heated and/or irradiated to improve their color. Heat and irradiation color enhancement of tourmaline is permanent.