

Amethyst



Birth stone: February

Anniversary stone: 4th & 6th year of marriage

History:

Amethyst is a member of the quartz group, all forms of quartz are piezoelectric. When rubbed an electrical charge is created which turns the stone into a magnet that attracts lightweight objects.

Amethyst can occur in a variety of different shades and colours with the most recognisable being the deep purple that we see in jewellery today. The most important amethyst deposits are found in Brazil but there are several other amethyst mines around the world from Canada and India to Sri Lanka and Zambia.

Purple has long been considered a royal colour symbolising power and wealth and was very popular with Kings, Queens and members of the catholic church hence why amethyst is often referred to as "*the stone of bishops*".

Deriving its name from the Greek word "*amethystos*" which translates into "*not drunken*", the amethyst was considered to be a strong antidote against drunkenness with wine goblets often being carved from this gemstone.

Characteristics:

Amethyst is the most precious stone within the quartz group. Made popular by its deep passionate colour and relative affordability, it is highly desirable to jewellery designers. Seen as an ideal choice for jewellery due to its regal colour and wide tonal range from light to dark purple, amethysts are available in a wide variety of shapes and sizes and lend themselves to creative cutting and design concepts. Suitable for use in pendants, earrings and rings the round brilliant cut is often used to show the stones colour to it's best advantage.

The Mohs' scale measures a gems relative hardness on a scale of 1 to 10 based on the stones "scratchability". Diamond is the hardest at 10, sapphire and rubies measure 9, with pearl at around 3 ½ and amber at 2 ½. Amethyst is relatively hard measuring 7 on the Mohs' scale.

Care and Cleaning:

Whilst the amethyst is a fairly hardwearing gemstone, it is recommended that prolonged exposure to direct sunlight should be avoided as the stone can become paler. To keep your jewellery looking its best it can be cleaned using warm soapy water and a soft toothbrush.

As with any fine jewellery, amethysts should be removed when doing any heavy work to protect the stone from damage. Rapid changes in temperature should be avoided as this could damage the stone, for this reason ultra sonic and steam cleaners should not be used.

Legend and Lore:

It is believed that the mythical origins of the amethyst stems from ancient Greece. Dionysius, the god of intoxication, was insulted by a human and was so angry that he swore revenge on the next mortal he saw, conjuring up two tigers to carry out his wish. A young girl named Amethyst was on her way to pay tribute to the goddess Dianna and became the victim of the attack. Dianna turned Amethyst into a quartz statue to protect her from the tigers and it was the tears of wine that Dionysius wept that turned the statue purple creating the famous gemstone we know today.

The amethyst is surrounded by many legends, it is said that people who desire the colour purple like to make personal statements and express their individuality. A gemstone of great healing and meditative powers, the amethyst is a stone that symbolises friendship and trust.

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