Diamond

**Diamond Summary**

With a history dating back to the 3rd century the diamond has become perhaps the most popular and coveted of all gemstones. A symbol of wealth, class and style, it is the norm for both engagement rings and eternity rings to be set with diamonds.

**Main Article**

The most coveted of all gemstones, the earliest references to diamond can be found in ancient Indian Sanskrit texts, which briefly discuss the country’s diamond trade. An Indian text from the 3rd century BC also refers to diamond as a gemstone that exhibits brilliance, high refractive properties and boasts the ability to scratch metal. Since ancient times through to today, diamond jewellery has always been a symbol of wealth.   
   
Whilst diamond is sourced in many locations throughout the world, Surat in India currently cuts and treats some 90% of the world's supply, most notably smaller, lower carat diamonds. Diamond trader De Beers, which operates in Johannesburg and England, controls the single largest portion of diamond trade in the world. The Jwaneng mine in Botswana, which is operated by De Beers, is capable of producing up to 15 million carats of diamond per year. In terms of trade however, the city of Antwerp in Belgium is considered the diamond capital of the world, where most of the world's diamonds are purchased and sold. Antwerp's diamond cutters are also generally regarded as the most skilled.   
   
Diamonds are renowned for their fiery appearance, which is caused by white light entering the gemstone and dispersing into spectral colours. A diamond's carat, cut, colour and clarity are used to describe each stone's appearance and determine its basic value, while more detailed information about the gemstone's characteristics is used to ascertain its true market value.

Whilst the purest diamonds are colourless, exhibiting zero hue and boasting complete transparency, coloured diamonds are the rarest of all and therefore the most expensive. A diamond’s colour is determined by the type of mineral in which the diamond was formed. Diamonds exist in a number of colours, although the rarest, most expensive coloured diamonds are pink, which are primarily mined from the Argyle Diamond Mine in Western Australia.

A diamond's origin, its cleanliness and the institute that examined the stone are major determining factors of its monetary worth. Due to rigorous inspection of diamonds under magnification, only 20% of all the world's diamonds boast a high enough rating for them to be considered acceptable for use as a gemstone.   
   
All diamonds intended for use as gemstones undergo a process of "cutting". This entails carefully sculpting the diamond until it reaches its optimum shape without showing any sign of inclusions. The process is an extremely delicate one, involving a mix of scientific knowledge, technical expertise and the right tools in order to produce an optimum lustre through creating carefully sculpted facets on the stone. A final process of polishing will also also be carried out to smooth away any minor blemishes not possible with cutting alone.   
   
Diamond wedding rings were traditionally the wedding ring of choice among newlyweds, but in 1947 De Beers ran a marketing campaign with the now famous slogan "a diamond is forever", pushing diamond engagement rings to the forefront. More recently, diamond eternity rings have also become a popular gift among both married and unmarried couples.

Diamond is the birthstone for the month of April, and traditionally the astrological stone for Aries.

diamond engagement rings: 33,000 monthly searches  
diamond jewellery: 18,100  
diamond wedding rings: 9,900  
diamond eternity rings: 5,400