

How Diamonds Are Mined

We seldom think about how the diamonds we wear came to us. Natural diamonds, as opposed to synthetic diamonds or fake diamonds, are mined from the earth. There are currently two methods of mining diamonds: Pipe Mining and Alluvial Mining.

When pipe mining is used, the diamonds are extracted from the earth through volcanic pipes. These are not man-made pipes. These are natural pipes in the ground. Shanks are put into the ground next to the pipes, and tunnels are driven into the deepest parts of the pipe. The diamonds are not sorted out at the mine. Instead, huge rocks that are full of diamonds are brought out of the mine and moved to a screening plant for separation.

The Alluvial mining method is done in riverbeds and on beaches. Walls are built to hold back the water and the sand on the bank or beach is moved with a bulldozer until the level of earth that diamonds can be found in is reached. Again, the diamonds are not sorted here. Instead, the sand that contains the diamonds is bulldozed into trucks, and taken to screening plants.

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