



Gemkids[®] JOURNAL

Volume 4



Topaz
(**toh**-paz)

Topaz is one of
November's birthstones.



GIA[®]

Topaz Colors

Topaz is found in many different colors, including red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, pink, brown, and colorless.

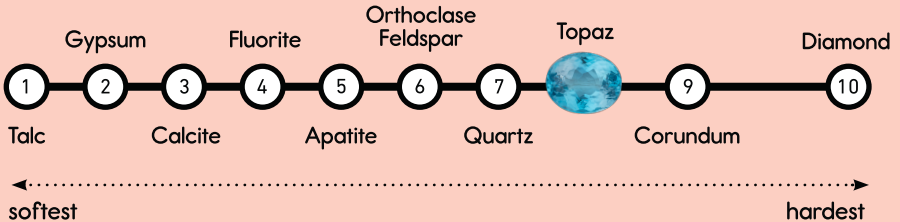


Did You Know?

Topaz crystals can grow to enormous sizes. A gem-quality topaz crystal discovered in Brazil in the 1940s weighed an incredible 596 pounds—about the same weight as an adult grizzly bear!

Hardness is a gemstone's resistance to scratching. Topaz is an 8 out of 10 on the Mohs hardness scale.

Mohs Scale



History

For centuries, people thought that all topaz was yellow and identified all yellow gemstones as topaz. Eventually, mineralogists realized that topaz is found in many colors and that other gemstones could also be yellow.

The name *topaz* likely came from *Topazios*, an ancient Greek name for an island in the Red Sea. Interestingly, no topaz is found on the island, but it is the source of a yellow-green gemstone now known as peridot.



Imperial Topaz

Different color varieties of gemstones are often identified by specific terms used in the gem and jewelry industry. For topaz, there is a color variety called Imperial topaz.



In the 1800s, pink topaz mined in Russia was named Imperial topaz in honor of the Russian czar (emperor). At the time, only the royal family was allowed to own Imperial topaz in Russia.

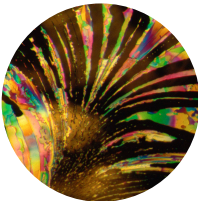
Today, most Imperial topaz comes from Brazil. The official discovery of topaz in Brazil was declared in 1768. The coloring of Imperial topaz found in Brazil ranges from an intense reddish orange to red.



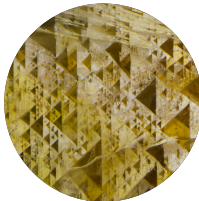
A Look Inside Topaz

Photomicrograph: A zoomed-in picture of a gemstone taken using a very powerful microscope.

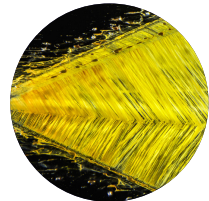
Inclusion: A characteristic found in a gemstone, such as another mineral, fracture, gas bubble, or even an insect.



A flat break in topaz that is partially healed.



Numerous inclusions of the mineral fluorite in topaz.



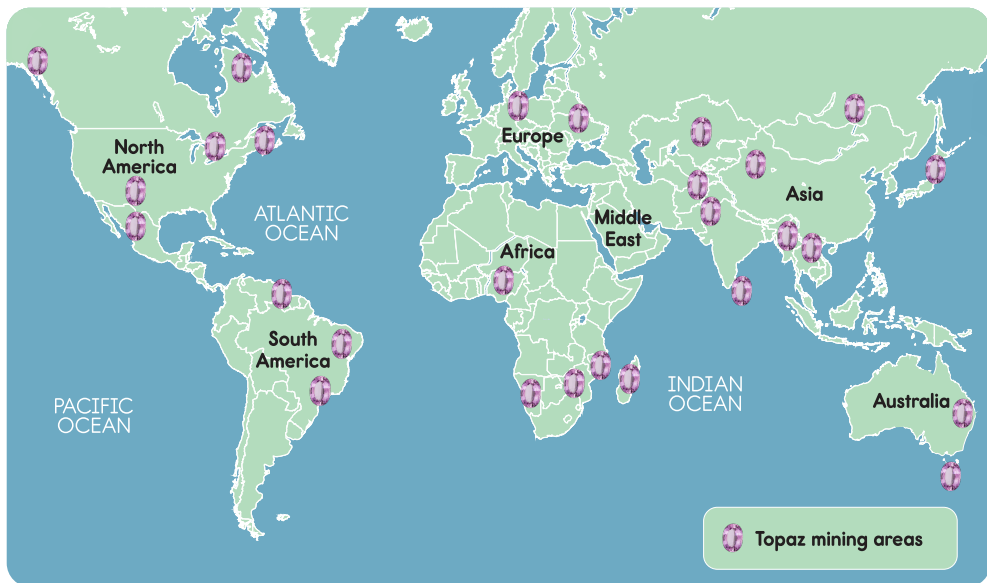
Topaz inclusions and their reflections displaying a V-shaped pattern.

Jewelry Box

Here are some beautiful pieces of topaz jewelry. Which one is your favorite?



Topaz Around the World



Design Me

Design your own piece of jewelry (such as a ring, earring, necklace, or bracelet) around each topaz.



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Cover: Imperial topaz crystal, courtesy of Bill Larson. Faceted Imperial topaz, courtesy of Edward Boehm.

Inside Left: Colorless topaz, gift of Neil Kravetz. Pear Imperial topaz, gift of Charles Lindberg. Pink and emerald cut topaz, gift of E.J. Gübelin. Orange topaz, gift of Jack Hasson. Blue Starbrite™ topaz, courtesy John Dyer Gems. Triangle yellow topaz, gift of Richard T. Lidacoot. Blue oval and yellow emerald cut topaz, gift of E.J. Gübelin.

Inside Right: Pear Imperial topaz, courtesy of Orni Privé. Blue topaz ring, gift of Jacques Prades. Blue topaz earrings, gift of Brumani. Pink topaz stomacher, gift of Stephen and Eileen Silver. SH Silver Co. Imperial topaz brooch, courtesy of Jewelerette & Co. Photomicrograph (right), courtesy of the John I. Koivula Inclusion collection.

Back: Blue topaz, gift of George H. Levine. Brown-orange topaz, gift of Max Stanley.

Photos by GIA, Robert Weldon, Orasa Weldon, Emily Lane, and David Dyer. Photomicrographs by Nathan Renfro and John I. Koivula.



Learn more about Topaz.