

Jasper: Pictures in Stone

A stunning gemstone mined in the Wild West!

Jasper is an ornamental gemstone composed mostly of chalcedony, microcrystalline quartz, in association with other minerals, which give it colourful bands and patterns.

There are countless local varieties of jasper, but some have been unique enough and produced in enough quantity to be named and collected. One of the most famous of these is Biggs Picture Jasper. Biggs is generally a dark brown jasper filled with wonderful swirls in colors of light brown, yellow, blue, or grayish blue. Biggs jas-



Ocean Jasper Ring

per was discovered while constructing Interstate 84 through Sherman County. Near Biggs, Oregon. The find is now covered by the freeway so material is scarce. The most famous jasper in Idaho is the Bruneau jasper, a rusty-brown and tan gem-quality stone. The Bruneau deposits are, for the most part, covered by unpatented mining claims and are situated approximately 50 road miles south of Bruneau in Owyhee County. This is a classic orbicular jasper with overlapping circles of color.

Quite often a gem stone is named for the person by whom it was first discovered. That's why Morrisonite is named for James Morrison, who for over half century made his home in a canyon of the Owyhee river in eastern Oregon. During those years Mr. Morrison explored much of that rugged area known locally as the Owyhee breaks, searching for artifacts

and gemstones. Morrisonite is a fantastic green and tan orbicular jasper.

For many years the mines near Denio, Nevada produced a dendritic agate that was pretty much black and white. Now the mine is yielding an amethystine like agate or jasper that has been named Amethyst Sage. It is a very beautiful gemstone with purples, whites, grays and of course the black dendritic bushes.

Ocean Jasper, a stunning orbicular jasper, was mined between 2000 and 2006 from the Northeast coast of Madagascar. Prior to that, small pieces of float material had been discovered, but nobody knew where the source was. A systematic search by Paul Obenich uncovered the deposit in an area that could only be reached during low tide! In 2006 the deposit ran out and the gem world waits to see if more will be found.



Bruneau Jasper Ring

Rocky Butte Picture Jasper is another Oregon Picture Jasper. The primary location of origin is the Owyhee Mountains of Eastern Oregon, near the Idaho border. This jasper is one of the more unusual of the picture jaspers and is widely known for its splendid array of colors often including greens, tans, reds, and blue-gray.

We have a great collection of jaspers to choose from, and are always working on new jewelry designs!



An assortment of jaspers including Rocky Butte (top right) and Biggs (bottom)



Amethyst Sage Jasper and Sugilite custom set in 14KT Gold