

## Natural Sapphire

### Beauty with no artificial sweeteners added

Sapphires have been highly sought after since the dawn of time because of their combination of beauty and durability. Unfortunately, another reason they are so sought after is their rarity. This wasn't such a big problem when the only folks competing for the limited selection were royalty of some sort. The last few centuries have seen a burgeoning middle class that has developed an appreciation for some of life's finer things including nice gems and jewelry. This increased demand can only be met by enhancing gemstones.

The earliest treatments of sapphire involved dyeing stones and putting foil on the backs. This was taking place probably shortly after mankind began cutting gemstones. The dyes would improve color and the foil back would brighten dark stones. We can only conjecture that at some point somebody noticed that their sapphire jewelry changed color after surviving a fire. Or it may

have been an early jeweler playing with his blowtorch. What we do know is by the 12th or 13th century, sapphires were already being treated with heat to try and improve color and clarity.

In the 20th century this process became much easier to control by using electric furnaces. It was discovered that the exact temperature reached was important, as well as how long the maximum temperature was held, and the

rate of cooling.

The last twenty years have seen an explosion of new treatments in the world of sapphires. Beryllium diffusion, which adds powdered beryllium to the sapphires under high heat, is used to improve the color of yellow and orange sapphires as well as ruby. Glass filling of fractures is especially common in rubies as a way of improving clarity and color. Some stones have so much filler, that the term 'composite gems' is used.

In the latest treatment for blue sapphire, it seems we have come full circle, and cobalt doped blue glass is being used to fill fractures, essentially turning inexpensive gray sapphire rough a brilliant blue.

So - is treated sapphire a 'bad' thing? Should you avoid it? Not necessarily, as long as you know what you are getting and pay a reasonable price for it. By far the majority of sapphires sold today (including ones we sell) have been heat treated. Nothing is added to the stone, and it is very stable. Most yellow and orange sapphires sold today are enhanced with beryllium diffusion. This is also generally accepted, partly because it is impossible to detect without specialized lab equipment. Less accepted treatments are glass filling and any type of dye.

On the other hand, if you are looking for a rare, unusual gem, check out some of the unheated sapphires we have available. All of the jewelry featured in this newsletter is made with sapphires in their natural colors. The pastel tones and brilliance in these is dazzling, and you will enjoy the knowledge that these sapphires are totally natural and have only been mined, cut and polished.

**2.67ct no heat green sapphire and diamonds in 18KT \$2400**

**1.18ctw no heat pink sapphires in oxidized silver and 22KT gold earrings \$900**

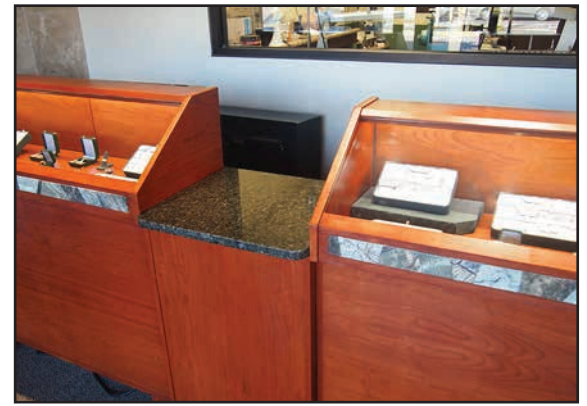
**0.99ctw no heat sapphires with diamond, black jade and ocean jasper in gold \$2200**

**1.19ct no heat sapphire in platinum \$3220**

**No heat sapphires with opaque sapphire slices and diamonds in gold bracelet \$5900**



# Grand Opening !!



Come out Saturday, October 19 and help us celebrate our grand re-opening! View the new store layout, check out the new classroom and crank out your own textured charm on the rolling mill. All while enjoying yummy snacks and great live jazz!

Open 10 - 6  
Snacks all day  
Live music 12 - 3



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East Side Trio featuring Reynold Philipsek on guitar, Michael Bissonette on percussion, and Matt Senjem on acoustic bass.



## Fall Bead Sale!

We have lots of new beads arriving now for the holidays.

Come in November 6-9 and all strands of beads will be

**50% OFF**

the single strand price regardless of quantity!

*Buy 25 strands at once, anytime before the sale and get the same 50% OFF!*

