

UNDERRATED GEMSTONES FOR YOUR JEWELLERY DESIGNS

For ages Gemstones continue to attract our imagination and their visual effect often soothes our eyes. Although gemstones such as Diamond, Ruby and Sapphire are sought after, their price is often prohibitive for most of the general population. There are quite a few gemstones, that are affordable and comparable in terms of beauty, particularly in jewellery. A few underrated gemstones that have beautiful and unique qualities, colours and natural markings are briefly described in what follows. It is possible that some readers may like and fall in love with a stone or two.

Sunstone



Sunstone is a plagioclase feldspar, which when viewed from certain directions exhibits a spangled appearance. Its Hardness 6-6.5 on Mohs scale, Refractive Index (RI) 1.580-1.570 and Specific Gravity (SG) 2.56. This stone of joy and good luck is a distant cousin of moonstone (one of our most popular stones) and comes in a beautiful warm orange/brown colouring. Sunstone has reflective inclusions which reveals a stunning sparkly and metallic lustre that looks like golden glitter – a beautiful choice for jewellery designs.

Amber

Amber is a soft organic gemstone. Its hardness: 2-2.5, RI: 1.540 and SG: 1.08. Being soft, it is a second choice in jewellery making. But it is a fascinating gemstone as it is formed through the fossilisation of tree resin. Interestingly, the organic materials found within the stones such as insects and plants. Jewellery studded with amber stones get noticed because of its unique appearance. This ancient gemstone is thought to bring good luck and wisdom.



Peridot



looks wonderful alongside amethyst, citrine and quartz. It's known as 'the sun gem' stone, bringing harmony to those who wear it. It is the birthstone for the month of August and the 16 year wedding anniversary gemstone.

Peridot is gem-quality olivine and a silicate mineral with the formula of $(\text{Mg}, \text{Fe})_2\text{SiO}_4$. Its hardness : 6.5-7, RI: 1.654-1.690, SG: 3.34. It is of vibrant green colour and is one of the few gemstones that comes in only one colour. It

Aventurine



Aventurine is a variety of quartz or chalcedony which has beautiful speckles of shiny particles. Its hardness: 6.5-7, RI: 1.535-1.539 and SG: 2.65. The most common colour of aventurine is green, but it may also be orange, brown, yellow, blue, or grey. Its glittery appearance is due to the metallic inclusions of chrome-bearing fuchsite (a variety of muscovite mica), making it a beautiful stone in jewellery designs. Aventurine is known as the gemstone of opportunity, good luck and wealth.

Sodalite



pyrite which creates a similar mottled effect. Most sodalite will fluoresce orange under ultraviolet light. The more uniformly blue material is used in jewellery, where it is fashioned into cabochons and beads. Sodalite is believed to be a stone of emotional balance and helps boost self esteem.

Sodalite is a royal blue coloured stone with beautiful white calcite markings, although the veins can also be grey, yellow, orange or pink. Its hardness : 5-6, RI: 1.483, SG: 2.30. It is often mistaken for lapis lazuli which contains calcite and

Pyrite

lustre. It is a great choice to use in men's jewellery too. Pyrite is believed to bring good luck and fortune.



The mineral pyrite is also known as 'fools gold', due to its similarity with gold. Its hardness: 6-6.5, RI: $a = 1.730$; $b = 1.758$; $\gamma = 1.838$ and SG: 4.8-4.9. It is an iron sulphide. Pyrite is a common gemstone but not often being used in handmade jewellery designs. It has a metallic, brassy yellow

Chrysocolla



Chrysocolla is a unique gemstone. The colours range from bright blue to green, often compared to turquoise, chrysocolla is a great affordable alternative. Its hardness : 2.5-3.5, RI: 1.575-1.673 and SG: 1.9-2.4. Many chrysocolla stones have copper deposits running through it, creating lovely speckled patterns across the surface. Due its wide availability, and vivid, beautiful blue and blue-green colors, chrysocolla has been popular for use as a gemstone for carvings and ornamental use since antiquity. It is often used in silversmithing and goldsmithing in place of turquoise and is relatively easy to work and shape. It is said to be a stone of harmony and hope.

Iolite

Iolite was discovered in 1813 and is named after the French geologist Louis Cordier Iolite as Cordierite. It is also known as 'the water sapphire' is a gorgeous violet coloured gemstone. Its hardness :7-7.5, RI: 1.537-1.547 and SG : 2.59. It possesses pleotropic properties having a sparkly, shimmery effect when viewed in sunlight. Iolite is an affordable alternative to blue sapphire and it looks wonderful when placed in a design using different coloured gemstones such as citrine, tourmaline and aquamarine.



Hematite

Hematite it is shiny and metallic. It is a form of iron oxide, when polished it has a red/brown colour. Its hardness : 5.5-6.5, RI: 2.940-3.150 and SG : 5.26. It is believed that Hematite is a gemstone of protection, reduces negativity and boosts self confidence.



References

1. <https://www.jewellersacademy.com/blog/twelve-underrated-gemstones-for-your-jewellery-designs>