

GEMFIELDS



Emerald, the Birthstone of May

LONDON, 1 MAY 2021

With the arrival of May and the green shoots of spring all around us, jewellery buyers' thoughts inevitably turn to emeralds. Fresh, verdant and the birthstone of this most welcome of months, emeralds represent hope, peace, growth, nature and new beginnings: all of which are needed more than ever this year, as we emerge from the ravages of the pandemic and a hard locked-down winter.

One of the “big three” coloured gemstones – alongside rubies and sapphires – emeralds are twenty times more rare than colourless diamonds, and have always been iconic. They even have their own cut named after them – the “emerald cut”, a square shape with stepped facets that is one of the most popular shapes for engagement rings.

Emeralds have been prized through the ages, for their opulent appearance and glowing green hue and for their talismanic properties. First discovered deep within the earth some 5,000 years ago, they have long been associated with an almost otherworldly ability to heal: they are credited with everything from easing the pain of childbirth to foretelling the future (when placed under the

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tongue, apparently) and curing snakebites and demonic possession.

Romans believed emeralds could revitalise the soul; Indian Mughal emperors thought their greenness represented paradise; Moses and the early Christians saw them as representing the resurrection of Christ; and Cleopatra presented them to subjects as good luck tokens. More recently, they have been a status symbol for famous and aristocratic members of society, from Queen Victoria, whose emerald and diamond tiara from Prince Albert was a cherished possession, to Elizabeth Taylor, who was gifted them by Richard Burton. And they are still a most popular and glamorous choice for celebrities walking the red carpets today.

Daniel Nyfeler of Gübelin Gem Lab explains the historical allure of these vibrant green gems: “To hold an emerald in your hand, knowing that it has witnessed millions, even billions, of years of history on our planet is thrilling.”

When it comes to buying, choosing the right gemstone is critical. Gemfields is a world-leading supplier of responsibly sourced coloured gemstones; it takes pride in mining with integrity the finest emeralds from its Kagem mine in Zambia, owned in partnership with the Zambian Government (East African emeralds being some of the oldest and most intensely coloured emeralds in existence). Sharing some of the knowledge it has acquired, Gemfields has put together a Buyers’ Guide, which advises that, as well as considering “the six Cs” – colour, cut, clarity, carat, certification and character – a buyer should gravitate towards the gemstone that they love the most. In other words, follow your heart, and bear in mind evenness of colour and saturation as well as transparency in the supply chain.

Daniel Nyfeler sums up the way in which each and every emerald has its own totally individual character: “As it is a transparent gemstone, we can look deep into an emerald, wander around its deep green depth and study the inclusions that got trapped in the growing crystal aeons ago. This is humbling and exciting at the same time. It is often the small wonders within a gemstone that excite us most: for instance, a microscopically small inclusion that resembles an impressionist painting, a ballerina or a lily pad.”

After a challenging 2020 and start to 2021, there is now a real feeling of hope wafting through the air alongside the buds of May. And there is no better symbol of this current sense of recovery and rebirth than the emerald. It represents resilience, having endured for thousands of years, and quite literally grounds us to the earth.

Jewellery featured (clockwise from top left):

AYA x Gemfields Mozambique Ring (Double), £3,900

Backes & Strauss x Gemfields Miss Victoria Emerald Green, £19,380

Fabergé x Gemfields Colours of Love Cosmic Curve Emerald Eternity Ring, £10,920

Sandy Leong x Gemfields Emerald Cage Ring, £16,866

GFG Jewellery by Nilufer x Gemfields Project 2020 Earrings, £4,500

Zoe & Morgan x Gemfields Zera Necklace, £950

High resolution imagery: <https://we.tl/t-yB9aLbUrnV>

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About Gemfields

Gemfields is a world-leading supplier of responsibly sourced coloured gemstones. The operator and 75% owner of both the Kagem emerald mine in Zambia (believed to be the world's single largest producing emerald mine) and the Montepuez ruby mine in Mozambique (one of the most significant recently discovered ruby deposits in the world), Gemfields believes that those who mine gemstones should do so with transparency, legitimacy and integrity.

Gemfields introduced the most technologically advanced coloured gemstone sort house in the world at its operation in Mozambique, with state-of-the-art equipment, like optical sorting machines. In addition, a proprietary grading system, a pioneering auction platform and an active marketing presence have all contributed to Gemfields playing a significant role in the rise of African gemstones. Underlying this achievement has been the strong belief that coloured gemstones should create a positive impact for the country and community from which they originate.

Responsible sourcing for Gemfields means implementing industry-leading policies and practices across operations, transparency in its auction sales process, an active role in working groups to modernise the sector, projects to improve health, education and livelihoods for the communities around its mines and conservation efforts (#conservationgemstones) to protect Africa's great wildlife and biodiversity.

Fabergé – an iconic name with an exceptional heritage – is a member of the Gemfields Group. This partnership, and the beauty of Fabergé's designs and craftsmanship, improves Gemfields' positioning and brand perception, and helps to raise consumer awareness of responsibly sourced coloured gemstones.

As well as supplying the majority of the world's rough rubies and emeralds, Gemfields initiates activations to build desire for coloured gemstones: for example, collaborations with international jewellery brands and other creative partners. Often surprising, unexpected and unique, these collaborations are chosen to promote consumer awareness and increase the appeal of coloured gemstones, raising their profile, and, in turn, providing greater benefit to their place of origin in Africa.

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