

GEMFIELDS



Ruby – Birthstone of July

LONDON, 01 JULY 2021

With their warm red hue and fiery spirit, rubies are a fitting birthstone for the month of July, which heralds high summer for much of the world. Once described as “the heart of Mother Earth”, these rich red gemstones have long been prized – with early cultures believing they contained the power of life and represented the blood flowing through our veins. They are as eye-catching as they are steeped in history, the pinnacle of both old and new world glamour.

Rubies have long been thought to possess talismanic properties – to many, symbolising passion, prosperity and protection. In the days of old, warriors would wear them into battle, and even in the present day, they are still sometimes laid beneath the foundations of buildings to bless those who live and work there. Their name comes from the Latin “ruber”, meaning red. Ancient Hindu texts refer to them – in the earliest written accounts of them, in Sanskrit – as “the king of gemstones”; and the Chinese have always embraced rubies, and hailed the “lucky” colour red. This perception of an aura of healing around rubies has endured: Fabergé even has a Rose Gold Fluted

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Healing Ring with Hidden Rubies in its current Colours of Love collection.

But rubies are not just pleasing to look at. They have their roots deep beneath the earth's crust, where they were formed between 500 and 800 million years ago under extreme heat and pressure, in a remarkable quirk of nature. They are amongst the most rare and valuable of the world's gemstones, with larger ones often costing more per carat than colourless diamonds. Contrary to the popular perception, rubies come in a range of colours – not only pure red. They can vary from more purplish to orangey reds, with the most sought-after shade being vivid red. Rubies contain many structural and chemical similarities to another beloved, coloured gemstone – sapphire – differing only in terms of the quantity of the trace element chromium.

Both rubies and sapphires belong to the mineral family corundum, one of the hardest minerals on earth. The red variety of the corundum crystal, densely packed with the chromium that gives it its deep red colour, is what we call a ruby. The 33,600-hectare Montepuez mine, owned by Gemfields in partnership with local company Mwiriti, is located in Northeastern Mozambique. This corner of the earth is one of the world's leading locations for the highest quality responsibly mined rubies, which cover the full colour spectrum.

Gemfields has always worked to the principle that those who mine precious gemstones should do so with transparency, legitimacy and integrity and has ensured its operations at Montepuez benefit the local community. Gemfields' Mozambican rubies are renowned for their fluorescence, colour and clarity perfection – the three characteristics that ruby-buyers are most advised to look out for. Their natural inclusions – or imperfections – tell the unique story of each ruby's geological journey from deep beneath the earth.

Jewellery specialist Joanna Hardy, who is the author of the book *Ruby*, enthuses about the unique qualities of these rare red gems. "There is no coloured gemstone that fuels passion more than the ruby," she says. "Place a ruby in front of any man or woman and there will be an instant response to this vibrant red gem." And after a difficult year with the pandemic, and life beginning to return to normal, what better way to mark the start of the new Roaring Twenties than with a sizzling red ruby?

As iconic as they are precious, rubies have endured in popularity on the red carpet and beyond. They are a firm favourite with A-listers. Jennifer Lopez, Sandra Bullock and Margot Robbie are amongst the famous names born in July who embody the spirit of their uniquely spirited birthstone.

High resolution imagery (clockwise): <https://we.tl/t-cKPH0qoVeF>

Fabergé featuring Gemfields Colours of Love Cosmic Curve Ruby Ring, £7,320

Valani Atelier x Gemfields Vela Earrings, featuring Gemfields Mozambican rubies, US\$75,000

GFG Jewellery by Nilufer x Gemfields Artisia Triple Bar Ring, featuring Gemfields Mozambican rubies, £2,750

AYA x Gemfields Mondoro-Tonga Necklace featuring Gemfields Mozambican rubies, £1,800

Margery Hirschey x Gemfields Earrings featuring Gemfields Mozambican rubies, US\$4,400

Backes & Strauss x Gemfields Piccadilly Mystery Red Heart 33 Watch, featuring Gemfields Mozambican rubies, £46,000

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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.

Gemfields Foundation is the charitable arm of Gemfields, through which donors can contribute funding to directly support community and conservation projects in Africa, magnifying the scale of the work already carried out by Gemfields itself.

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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