

This month with a new format, it is fitting that we take a look at Aquamarine the birthstone for March. Aquamarine is a durable and lively gemstone, its pale fire is flattering to most skin tones so even if you are not a mermaid you will want to add it to your treasure chest.

10 FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT AQUAMARINE

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by Sally Thornton

1 The name Aquamarine means seawater

2 Aquamarine can be found in lovely sea-green, sky-blue and dark blue colours

3 Greek legend says that sailors wore aquamarine amulets engraved with Poseidon to guard them against harm and possibly prevent seasickness.

4 Like Emerald, Aquamarine is also a member of the beryl family.

5 Aquamarines receive their greenish-blue colouring from a trace amount of iron.

6 Most Aquamarines come out of the ground with a greenish tint which was found to disappear with heating, leaving it a pure blue colour. This pure blue has become more popular over the last century so almost all aquamarines in the market today have been heat treated to create this permanent colour change.

7 Aquamarine can be very large with the largest aquamarine crystal ever called 'Dom Pedro' which weighed 26 kg and was cut in 1992 by Bernd Munsteiner

Clothing manufacturers sew care instructions into their garments but clearly for jewellers this simply isn't possible. Do bear in mind that coloured gemstones are not as durable as diamonds so treat them with care as you would a fine silk scarf. They will look so much better and last longer.

8 Queen Elizabeth II owns a matched set of aquamarine necklace, bracelet and earrings given to her by the Brazilian people shortly after her coronation in 1953. The Queen has added a matching tiara and sometimes wears the entire aquamarine ensemble for state occasions or diplomatic receptions.



9 Warm soapy water is always a safe cleaning method for aquamarine. Cleaning by ultrasonic and steam cleaners is usually safe unless the stone has liquid inclusions or fractures. Rarely, aquamarine might be fracture filled and these stones should only be cleaned with warm soapy water.

10 Aquamarine is 7.5 to 8 on the Mohs scale, which is a measure of hardness, so it is a durable gemstone for jewellery as long as it is treated with care to protect it against scratching and hard knocks.



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