

Of all the blue coloured gemstones my favourite is aquamarine, the birthstone for March. This sparkling watery blue stone as its name suggests means 'sea water' in Latin because most commonly it has a greeny blue colour in its natural state.

Romancing the stone - Aquamarine

by Sally Thornton

Things to know about Aquamarine

1. Aquamarine is a member of the Beryl family along with green emerald and lesser known yellow heliodor and pink morganite.



18ct Aquamarine & Diamond 3 stone ring £1,025

4. The majority of early 19th century pieces were foil backed to enhance their colour and brilliance.

5. It was only in the last century that it was discovered that the green tones of Aquamarine could be removed, whilst the blue colour would be intensified by heat treatment.

2. As with all gemstones there are myths and legends and so befits aquamarine; sailors used to take this stone to sea with them in the belief it could protect them from harm.

3. In the 14th century it was reported that aquamarines were ground into flat plates and made into spectacles to enhance the clarity of view.



9ct white gold Aquamarine panel pendant on chain £620



9ct white gold pear shaped Aquamarine pendant on chain £185

6. Today, we don't often see the green blue aquamarine except in antique jewellery as although stones in various hues ranging from sea green, sky blue or dark blue are available, modern taste prefer clearer sky blue colours.



Silver and Aquamarine pendant by Roger Wagner c 1900. Note the greeny blue colour.

8. Aquamarine is dichroic, so to take advantage of this and to intensify the colours it is frequently seen as an emerald or a step cut. As a result of this rectangular style, the stone became a favourite of the Art Deco period with some fabulous aquamarine pieces being created.

Whilst browsing in our library I discovered a small book called 'A Short Treatise On Gems' written in 1912 by a London gem merchant, W. Sydal. He comments that "an aquamarine that is well cut, of good colour and around one carat is worth about £3.00". How times have changed!



9ct white gold Diamond & Aquamarine panel style ring £660

9ct white gold Aquamarine & Diamond earrings £395



9ct white gold Aquamarine & Diamond pendant £365

7. As a result of the popularity of blue Aquamarine, it is frequently confused with blue topaz. The only simple guide is that topaz has a very high polish and a slippery feel compared to aquamarine.



9ct white gold pear shaped Aquamarine and Diamond ring £650

9. Today, we still see this cut of stone used to great effect and it works particularly well with diamonds and set into white metal. The influence of Art Deco runs through the modern jewellery we purchase today.

10. Although the colour of heat treated Aquamarines is generally considered to be stable and you should care for them in a way you would other jewellery, you should never the less take care not to allow them to become overheated as they may lose their colour.



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