

The birthstone for July is the glorious red gemstone, ruby. With its rich red colour, ruby has always been associated with passion, warmth, red hearts and valentines. As well as being July's birthstone, we also use ruby to celebrate both the 40th and 15th wedding anniversaries.

Romancing the stone - Ruby

by Sally Thornton

Things to know about Rubies

1. With its hardness and bright lustre that gives the stone its sparkle, ruby is unquestionably for a jeweller a near perfect gem.
2. Ruby's brilliant red hue, attributed to an inextinguishable fire within the stone, gave it the Sanskrit name "ratnayaka" which appropriately means "the leader of precious stones".
3. Prior to the 1800's and due to the similarity in colour, red spinel, red garnet and ruby were all thought to be one gemstone, ruby. Perhaps one of the most famous examples of this mistaken identity was given to the 'Black Prince Ruby' set into the imperial state crown which actually turned out to be a large red spinel!

4. Rubies and sapphires, which both come from the corundum family, are chemically very similar. Only colour differentiates them, which is due to the chromium in ruby and the titanium found in sapphire.

5. It is the ruby's rich red colour that catches our eye and the best stones are often described as being a 'pigeon's blood' red. The finest and highly sought after come from the Mogok region of Burma.



18ct gold oval ruby & diamond cluster pendant £725



18ct yellow gold ruby & diamond cluster ring £1,995



9ct yellow gold emerald cut ruby & diamond cluster ring £650



9ct gold second hand ruby & diamond cluster ring £195

9ct yellow gold open heart ruby pendant & chain £184



7. Rubies gained prominence during the Renaissance when they were brought into Western Europe along the trade routes from the orient and these were set into pendants and stomachers.
8. Mrs Simpson, who greatly admired this gemstone, was given a fabulous ruby and diamond bracelet by King Edward VIII in May, 1936 and inscribed 'Hold tight'



18ct yellow gold 3 stone ruby & diamond ring £950

10. One of our design briefs from a customer involved using rubies and diamonds set into a Celtic inspired brooch. The finished design combining yellow gold, diamond points with the small red accents from the rubies worked beautifully. We hope our customer was pleased with the finished result as much as we were!



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Recently, I had the pleasure of selling a second hand ruby and diamond ring. The reason for mentioning this particular ring was the deep and rich red colour of those rubies and needless to say the ring sold itself.

6. One characteristic of a ruby is a velvety soft effect known as silk, which is the result of inclusions or fine needles within the stone that reflects light to give a hazy shimmer at the surface.

18ct white gold pear shaped ruby & diamond cluster ring £1,625



18ct white gold graduated ruby & diamond channel set ring £1,850

9. Rubies are the perfect gemstone for a jeweller to work with. Their hardness and ability to resist surface wear makes them very practical and so can be found in many types of modern jewellery. We generally have faceted cut rubies in a round, oval, pear and cushion shapes to work with.

18ct yellow gold 9 stone channel set ruby & diamond half eternity ring £1,245

