



Garnet

Fort Wrangell, Alaska

Fine, well-formed, deep red garnet crystals were discovered in a ledge on Wrangell Island. A former mayor of the Town of Wrangell willed the ledge of garnets to the children of Wrangell. The children remove single crystals and crystal groups in their rock matrix (a metamorphic rock called schist) and sell their finds to tourists and collectors that come through the area on cruise ships.

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Copper

Ahmeek mine, Michigan

These crystals are described as *hopper crystals* because the edges have grown faster than the faces, leaving depressions in each of the crystals. The native copper deposits found in Michigan's Upper Peninsula are unique in the world. The copper contains a significant amount of silver as well. In fact, native silver specimens are sometimes found with the native copper.

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Azurite

Bisbee, Arizona

Mining began in the Copper Queen mine in Bisbee, Arizona in 1877 and lasted until 1975. In just under 100 years, this mine produced more than 8 BILLION pounds of copper! Native copper and fine specimens of azurite and malachite were found here. The city of Bisbee was named after Judge DeWitt Bisbee. He was one of the people who financed the Copper Queen mine when it first began.

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Feldspar

New Hampshire

Feldspar is the most common mineral in the crust of the earth's continents. It is a silicate mineral. Trapped inside nearly all feldspar are radioactive elements. When these radioactive elements break down, they release radiation. This radiation causes clear quartz to turn black. The smoky quartz that is typically found with feldspar is black because of this radiation. Feldspar crystals like the ones pictured here are found in mountains made of the igneous rock granite.

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Rhodochrosite

The Alma Queen

Sweet Home Mine, Alma, Colorado

In 1965 a man named John Soules hired a miner named Warren Good and they discovered a good sized pocket filled with fine rhodochrosite crystals. Mr. Soules went to Texas and while he was gone, Mr. Good discovered a HUGE cavity filled with spectacular rhodochrosite crystals. Mr. Soules said it was 7 feet high, 4 feet deep and 2 feet wide! The Alma Queen, pictured here, came from this great find. Today, the Alma Queen is considered one of the finest mineral specimens ever found anywhere in the world.

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Gold

Jamestown, California

In 1848, gold was discovered by James Marshall on the American River at Sutter's Sawmill. Word spread of this discovery very quickly. By 1849, hundreds of people from all over the world rushed to California in search of finding their fortunes in gold. Some of these "Miner 49ers" were very successful; others were not.

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Quartz

var. Amethyst

Wilkes County, Georgia

Gem-quality amethyst was first discovered in Wilkes County, Georgia in the 1920's. Back then, the famous jewelry company, Tiffany & Company, mined deep purple amethyst crystals to make gems. In 1988 a new deposit of amethyst was found in an area known as Jackson's Crossroads near the town of Tignall. Some of the finest amethyst crystals found in the United States, and possibly in the entire world, come from this site.

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Beryl

var. Aquamarine

Mount Antero, Colorado

In the fall of 2004 a miner named Steve Brancato discovered a very large pocket that was filled with large, beautiful, gemmy aquamarine crystals. The specimens were even more spectacular because the aquamarines grew with large, black smoky quartz crystals, silvery books of mica crystals and small, white feldspar crystals. Steve named the pocket after his mother, Diane.

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Tourmaline

Himalaya mine, California

For over 100 years gem-quality tourmaline crystals have been removed from the Himalaya mine in San Diego County, California. The mine has over 5 miles of tunnels. It first opened in 1898 and since that time has produced about 250 thousand pounds of pink and green tourmaline crystals! This is more tourmaline than any other mine in all of North America. Many mineralogists, gemologists and mineral collectors claim that the Himalaya mine is the most important tourmaline mine in the world.

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