



# The Big 3: Emerald, Ruby, and Sapphire Reign Supreme in the World of Gemstones

Year-round, Sapphires, Rubies, and Emeralds are the most sought-after gemstones. Treasured for their rich, brilliant hues, they have fascinated and bewitched all who lay eyes on them. Is it any wonder we designate them as the Big Three?

And during the holiday season, the demand for these breathtaking stones grows as we highlight in our [Holiday 2020 brochure](#). We no longer refer to precious and semi-precious stones, yet Sapphire, Ruby, and Emerald remain precious in our hearts precisely because the finest stones are rare and costly.

I've often wondered if their holiday popularity is somehow related to the color of Christmas lights. But I think the opposite is true: our festive lights' color captures the beguiling power of these jewel tones. We offer all three in [Notable Gems™](#) and calibrated stones so you can meet all budgets. Here are some fascinating facts and tales that will nurture wonderful conversations with customers.



## Sapphire

Ancient lore tells us that blue Sapphire brought spiritual enlightenment and inner peace. Sapphire also bestows wisdom, insight, and discernment to choose rightly when faced with obstacles and difficult situations. This jewel extended to the belief that Sapphire had the power to make peace between warring parties. Today, natural healers believe Sapphire has a positive effect on health issues, from hearing problems and inflammations to burns and cancer. It also has a calming effect, soothing a mind fighting depression and bringing joy to the wearer.

### A Storied Sapphire

The Star of India – at 563,35 carats, one of the largest and certainly the most famous blue star sapphire – was discovered in Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) two to three centuries ago. Moorish traders purchased the rough stone, taking it to India, then under British rule. They considered Ceylon a part of the Indian colony, and by rights, the Moors should have sold the Sapphire to them. Instead, they sold it to a European dealer. Eventually, it was mistakenly named the Star of India instead of the Star of Ceylon. The stone is famous not just for its size and flawlessness but because its sharp six-rayed star appears on both sides.

# The Blue Belle of Asia

In 2014, this magnificent 392.52-carat antique cushion stone set a record for the most expensive Sapphire ever sold at public auction claiming \$17 million. The peerless blue beauty was originally intended as a gift to Queen Elizabeth II on her coronation. But it never made it to her jewel collection, disappearing for a good number of years. In recent years, a Saudi investor purchased it for an unknown price.



## Ruby

Who can resist ruby's luscious red? Throughout history, ruby has embodied all of life's intensity: power, passion, and love. Kings, princes, and the wealthy sought rubies for their exquisite beauty, rarity, and prestige. Many rubies were not set in jewelry in medieval times but admired for their intoxicating shade.

## Not Just for Women

Ruby was considered the essence of wifely devotion: a fire burning within, enduring challenges and temptation. And ancient warriors implanted ruby beneath their skin, believing

it imparted both courage and invincibility. Not a bad combination to have on the battlefield. Others thought it bestowed perfect safety, cured diseases of the blood, and denoted integrity and generosity. It also had the power to warn its owner against danger – perhaps someone was trying to steal the ruby. Wow! That was *a lot of responsibility*, even for the “King of Precious Gems.”

## Peak Hue

The ancient Burmese people first mined Ruby about 3000 BCE in the region around Mogok. They described the finest ruby as having the color of “pigeon’s blood,” a vibrant medium red with secondary purple hues. The Burmese set ruby in pure gold with its intense yellow color. The yellow canceled out the blue in the purple undertones, producing that rarest occurrence: a visually pure red. To this day, “pigeon’s blood” remains the most valuable ruby color. So much so that a large transparent ruby commands higher prices per carat than diamonds of the same weight.

## Sunrise Ruby

This remarkable untreated pigeon blood Burmese Ruby is a rare 25.596-carat gem of the finest purity taking its name from a poem by Rumi, the 13th-century Sufi poet. In May 2015, it set a remarkable record for a colored gemstone selling for \$30 million to an anonymous buyer. This price was three times the previous record for a ruby. Cartier set it in a platinum ring with shield-shaped diamonds on either side – a magnificent creation.

# Savvy Marketing?

Ruby and Sapphire are both corundum. Color separates them with ruby's hue from trace elements of chromium: the more chromium, the deeper the shade. Throughout history, ruby included all shades of red from light rose – a pink – to blood red. Historically, the lighter hues were considered “female rubies” while, the darker hues were “male rubies.”

Today in Asia, these lighter “reds” are still considered rubies. In North America and Europe, we call them pink Sapphire. The change happened in the late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Why? A vibrant, medium red ruby is the preferred and most valuable color. This made the lighter rubies less valuable. But their beauty deserves its share of value. By creating pink Sapphire, jewelers didn't need to compare it to ruby. Pink Sapphire has a separate category and standards getting its popularity from its much-loved vivid hue. That sounds like savvy marketing to me.



## Emerald

Let's go back to the Emerald City of Oz and forget about clicking the heels of our ruby slippers. Let's click our emerald slippers instead and enter a realm of captivating

beauty that has long exerted a powerful attraction from the rulers of ancient India to today's A-Listers.

## **The Ultimate Emerald Devotee**

Cleopatra's passion for Emeralds knew no bounds making her the gem's most famous devotee. Her love led her far beyond jewelry. She wore emerald encrusted robes – a luxury by any standard. And she gave loose emeralds as gifts to visiting dignitaries – all of them men. Between 1000 and 3000 BCE, the earliest emerald source was discovered in Upper Egypt near the Red Sea. This later became known as "Cleopatra's Mine." Was this the origin of her many emeralds?

## **"The Green of Growing Things"**

The name "emerald" comes to us from the Greek word, "smaragdos," which may originate from either the Hebrew word "izmargad" or the Sanskrit word "marakata," meaning "the green of growing things" – fresh, vivid, radiant. I like the Sanskrit version, which communicates the lush range of emerald hues. Think of the first leaves of spring and follow this verdant trail to the richer shades of spruce green. Along the way, you embrace a world of growth that reflects emerald's mesmerizing power.

## **Catherine the Great's Necklace**

The Empress of Russia was famed for many treasures. Add this 75.61-carat Colombian emerald necklace to her riches. She

received it in the 18th century and ultimately it passed through many collectors' hand to reach Pierre Cartier. In 2019, it was auctioned for \$4.5 million.

## **Kermit Was Wrong – Way Wrong!**

Kermit the Frog famously sang, “It’s not easy being green,” but when you’re admiring an emerald, you realize he got it all wrong. In addition to its famous beauty, extraordinary powers have been attributed to emerald through the ages. Read these, and you’ll realize that all of your customers need to have emerald jewelry – the more, the better.

- In the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE, Aristotle wrote that emerald increases its owner’s importance in presence and speech during business transactions.
- Throughout history, many cultures believed emerald enhanced fertility and fidelity: not a bad combination.

By the Middle Ages, emeralds had the power –

- To keep a woman chaste – but not a man!
- Reveal truth and falsehood.
- Provided an antidote to spells, enchantments, and demons.
- Foretold the future if worn on the left side – but not the right.
- To make people more intelligent and honest.
- To change hues alerting its wearer of danger.

Whichever of these jewels your customers want, you'll discover a stunning array in our Notable Gems™ and our calibrated stones, which include lab-created sapphires, rubies, and emeralds to meet all your needs.

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For more interesting facts about gemstones and more information about the Big 3, check out some of our previous blog posts!

[Gemstones for All: Five Gemstones for Men and Women](#)

[Cursed Diamonds and Gemstones: All That Glitters Isn't Gold](#)

[Sell With A Story: Fancy Colored Sapphires](#)

[Sell With A Story: Blue Sapphire Gemstones](#)

[Sell With A Story: Rubies](#)

[Sell With A Story: Emerald Gemstones](#)