

# Gemstone Forecaster

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## Apollo and Artemis Diamonds sell for \$57.4 million at Sotheby's



Who are Apollo and Artemis and why are blue and pink diamonds named after them? Let's recap Greek mythology.

As most know, Zeus was god of the sky and of thunder, who ruled over Mount Olympus. Zeus had an affair with Leto, who became pregnant. When his wife, Hera, found out she ruled Leto would not be allowed to give birth on land. Leto fled to Delos, a floating island, and had two opposite sex twins. First she gave birth to Artemis, a female, who then assisted with the birth of Apollo, who was born nine days later. Apollo is the god of the sun and Artemis, the goddess of the moon. Naturally, the blue diamond is named Apollo, and the pink diamond is Artemis.

The fancy diamond pear shapes are not identical. The Fancy Vivid Blue is 14.54 carats and internally flawless. The Fancy Intense Pink is 16 carats, and is also internally flawless. The Apollo Blue was estimated to sell between \$38-\$50 million and the Artemis Pink between \$12.5-\$18 million, or approximately \$50-\$68 million total for the pair. Turns out the blue sold for \$42 million and the pink for over \$15 million.

They were offered individually, so they could have easily been broken up. Luckily, both stones were purchased by the same anonymous buyer.

The pair was immediately renamed. Apollo was renamed the Memory of Autumn Leaves, and Artemis the Dream of Autumn Leaves. Guess the new owner really likes autumn leaves, although we prefer the names of the Greek God and Goddess. However, according to custom, the new owner buys the right to name the stones whatever he or she likes.

If you don't have a spare \$57 million, and wish to create a less expensive alternative to the Apollo and Artemis earrings, one of our private collectors has the following two colored diamonds:

<http://www.preciousgemstones.com/210Fpbdiam.html>



### Attention collectors: Ethiopia Gone Wild

A new deposit of high-quality emerald has been found in the Seba Boru, Ethiopia. More than 100 kilograms of emerald rough have been found. Naturally, the mining is accomplished by “old school” hand tools, without heavy machinery or modern technology. As expected, most of the material is commercial quality - light in color and heavily included. However, a few gem quality crystals have been discovered and do not require clarity enhancement. It has been reported these emeralds are very similar in appearance to Brazilian and Zambian emerald. They appear to get their color from chromium and vanadium. It is possible for the gem grading labs to differentiate these stones from material from other locations. Famous gemologist Cap Beesley says “The material is a beautiful yellow green and many of the colors transition into Colombian colors.”

This exciting discovery in Ethiopia might provide a new source of large, high-quality emeralds for the gem and jewelry trade. So far, this deposit appears to be promising and collectors might want to jump on these stones if and when they

become available and the prices are low. Some dealers say the material is 30-40% below Colombian emerald prices. No one knows how significant this deposit will be or if it will stop here. However, Beesley contends, “I think the deposit will be important.”

Almost miraculously, some gem quality sapphires have also been found in the Tigai State in northern Ethiopia. Very little is known about these rocks. The highly suspicious photo below is from an Ethiopian dealer. This photo may well have been “Photoshopped,” because the color seems almost unbelievable. However, other photos show the rough appears to need heating. Utmost caution is imperative with these stones until a major lab has an opportunity to inspect the goods. One major problem with these new finds is the US Department of State has issued a warning to US citizens not to travel to Ethiopia, citing a potential for civil unrest and arbitrary detention. In addition, the Ethiopian Government is known to shut down the internet, cellular data and phone services. Stuck in a third world country without a cell phone? No thanks.

We will follow these finds with interest and keep Forecaster readers informed.



## Gem News

### 10 Interesting facts about sapphire gemstone.

CitizenKane.info

by Andre Salam

May 12, 2017

*A well researched article about sapphire. Sometimes we like to review the stones collectors trade in most frequently. ED*

Sapphire is among the most precious colored gemstones, along with ruby and emerald.

Fine sapphires, rubies and emeralds are highly sought after and can sometimes be priced even higher per carat than diamonds.

Here are 10 facts about sapphire of which you might have been unaware:

#### **Sapphire can be of any color other than red.**

Sapphire is mostly associated with the color of blue. Yet sapphires come in a variety of colors, like green, yellow, pink, violet, purple, orange and intermediate hues. Sapphires can also be colorless, and even gray or black, as well as parti-colored, that may combine different colors. Basically, sapphires can be of any color except red, due to the fact that red corundum is called "ruby".

The name "sapphire" originates from a number of languages.

In Hebrew, "even Sapir" is the mineral of Moses' stick, the material of the throne of the Almighty God and the mineral ground of Eden.

Greek "sappheiros" and Latin "saphirus" both stand for "blue".

All of these names previously referred to both sapphire and lapis lazuli.

#### **Sapphire and ruby are a part of the same corundum family.**

Sapphire is a part of corundum family that also includes ruby. Considering that, the name "sapphire" can be applied to any corundum except for red. If the corundum is red, then it is called ruby. Both ruby and sapphire share the same chemical composition and mineral structure. Only trace amounts of other elements determine if the gemstone is ruby or sapphire.

For example, quite a small amount of chromium gives corundum its pink color, thus the gemstone is called "pink sapphire". If larger amounts of chromium are present, the color of corundum becomes more saturated and can produce a gemstone of deeper red color, then becoming a ruby. The name "ruby" is used for a corundum that has a color that ranges between orangy red and slightly purplish red.

At the same time, iron and titanium, as trace elements, can produce a blue color in corundum. Blue corundums that range from violetish blue to a greenish blue are called "sapphires."

Other trace elements can create corundums of other colors rather than red or blue. Those corundums are called "Fancy sapphires".

#### **In its purest state, corundum is colorless.**

The mineral corundum consists of aluminum and oxygen only. If no trace elements are present, the sapphire is colorless, although most corundum contains trace elements that cause certain color.

When the color of a sapphire is other than blue, this color is used as a preceding adjective in order to describe a stone. For example, "orange sapphire", "pink sapphire", etc. While the word "sapphire" when used alone always stands for a blue sapphire.

#### **Most of gem trade names for sapphire color are inspired by nature.**

The color terms used in trade to describe sapphire are mostly stemmed from the richest colors present in nature.

For example, some blue sapphires are often compared to the color of cornflower.

Another name used is "twilight", resembling the color of the sky a few moments after sunset.

Some sapphires ranging from pastel lavender to rich violets are called Lilac sapphires, inspired by the color of lilac flower.

A rare pinkish-orange sapphire, which is the most valuable next to blue sapphire is called Padparadscha, taking its name from the nature again. It is said to be a mixture of a sunset and lotus blossom colors. The original source of Padparadscha is Sri Lanka, and padparadscha means "lotus flower" in Sinhalese.



Besides the names that were inspired by nature, some sapphires with a deep vivid blue-violet color, mostly originating from Mogok, Myanmar, are called Royal Blue.

The most sought after color is a velvet blue sapphire originated at Kashmir, India.

Currently Kashmir source is almost depleted making Mogok, Myanmar the leading source of the best quality sapphires available today.

### **Sapphires are mined in numerous locations worldwide.**

Both fancy colored and blue sapphires come from a number of locations, including India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Madagascar, Nigeria, Australia and other countries.

Most of corundum forms in metamorphic rocks, although it is rarely mined from the rocks it is formed in, due to the fact that the mining process is very expensive and most of the gemstones get broken during the process.

Nowadays, most of the corundum is mined from the stream sediments. The stones are concentrated in small placer deposits, and most of the sapphires are found by washing the gravels of these deposits. This work is usually done by hand by local people.

### **Sapphires are among the most durable colored gemstones in the world.**

Sapphires are one of the most durable gemstones. Their hardness, ability to withstand scratching, is rated 9 out of 10 based on Mohs Scale of Hardness.

Due to such a high hardness, sapphire even has a number of industrial uses. Diamond is the only gem that can scratch sapphire. Sapphire durability and hardness makes it a perfect choice for a jewelry pieces worn daily, as well as for engagement rings. Some of the most famous engagement rings use sapphire as a central stone.

### **Sapphire has been one of the favorite gemstones of royalty for centuries.**

Sapphire has long symbolized truth, sincerity, and faithfulness and has been associated with romance and royalty for centuries.

Sapphire was used in jewelry, as robe decoration, and throughout history it was believed that sapphire possesses mystical

properties and can protect its owner from evil and harm.

Considering the durability and beauty of a sapphire it was often used as a central stone of engagement ring.

For example, in 1796, Napoleon Bonaparte gave a sapphire engagement ring to his beloved Josephine. The ring features two pear-shaped gemstones, a blue sapphire and a diamond, weighing less than 1 carat each, in a setting called "toi et moi".

The ring was sold for \$949,000 which is almost 50 times more than the pre-sale estimate.

Yellow sapphire is the favorite gemstone in Thailand where yellow is the color of the King.

But the most famous sapphire engagement ring nowadays is probably the ring given to Lady Diana Spencer by Prince Charles in 1981, which is now worn by Kate Middleton. It features an 18 carat sapphire surrounded by diamonds.

### **Sapphires sometimes command higher prices than diamonds at the auctions.**

Some fine sapphires can be priced even higher per carat than diamonds. The most expensive sapphire sold at auction is the "Blue Belle of Asia," the world's fourth largest faceted blue sapphire.

The "Blue Belle of Asia", a stunning 392.52 carat Ceylon sapphire, was sold at Christie's Geneva on November 11, 2014 for a record price of \$17.7 million.

According to presale estimates, the "Blue Belle of Asia" was the second most expensive lot at the auction, however it became the most expensive lot sold, followed by a colored diamond set by Bulgari. This was the first time that a colored gemstone became the most expensive lot sold at the auction outperforming even diamonds.

### **Some sapphires show such phenomena as color change and asterism.**

Some sapphires can show a phenomenon called asterism or star effect. This occurs when inclusions of tiny, rutile needles create a six-ray star pattern. Although twelve-ray stars are also known, six-ray stars are the most common. These sapphires are often called "star sapphires".

In 2015 the world's biggest blue star sapphire weighing 1,404 carats was found in Sri Lanka. Its estimated value is over \$300 million.

Besides fancy and star sapphires, there is also such a variety as a color-change sapphire. Color change sapphires exhibit different colors in different lighting conditions, mostly going from blue in daylight to purple in incandescent light. Some rare color-change sapphires show green color in daylight changing to reddish brown under incandescent light.

### **Some lab grown sapphires are hard to distinguish from natural sapphires.**

The first synthetic sapphire was created in 1902 and quite often lab grown sapphires can be distinguished from natural sapphires by gemologists only with the use of professional equipment. Synthetic sapphires range in price and quite frequently they are used in less expensive jewelry.

Considering the beauty of sapphire, its durability, and variety of colors, this gemstone makes a perfect and meaningful gift for any occasion to the loved ones.

### **10 unsolved heists we won't soon forget Diamonds, cash and famous works of art were the targets in these brazen robberies complete with Hollywood-style schemes.**

**MMN.com**

**Angela Nelson**

**March 30, 2017**

*It's summertime. Let's read an interesting article about one of our favorite subjects - heists! ED*

One of the world's largest gold coins is a 221-pound behemoth from Canada called the Big Maple Leaf. Until this week, the 21-inch wide, inch-thick coin had been housed in Berlin's Bode Museum, but it was stolen on March 27, 2017 — and police have no idea how the thieves pulled it off.

The face value of the coin, which has the head of Queen Elizabeth II on one side and a maple leaf on the other, is 1 million Canadian dollars, or about \$750,000, but by gold content alone, it's worth as much as \$4.5 million.

Police say burglars apparently used a ladder and broke in through a window above some railway tracks around 3:30 a.m. — a time of night when the trains stop running. From there, they had to smash through the bulletproof glass surrounding the coin, and lug the hefty item through the museum, up a flight of stairs and out the window, the New York Times reports.

Police are asking the public for any information they may have. In the meantime, the theft got us thinking about past robberies where thieves got away with priceless objects or large amounts of cash. While it's too early to say whether the Berlin coin robbery will go down in history like the following 10 unsolved heists, it definitely fits the bill as an interesting crime caper.

### **The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum robbery in Boston**

On March 18, 1990, two men disguised as police officers walked into the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston and told the security guard they were responding to a call. The guard let them enter, but once inside, they handcuffed that guard and a second one, and locked them in the basement.

They got away with 13 extremely valuable pieces of art worth \$500 million, including Rembrandt's "Storm on the Sea of Galilee" (1633), "A Lady and Gentleman in Black" (1633) and a self portrait from 1634; Vermeer's "The Concert" (1658–1660); Govaert Flinck's "Landscape with an Obelisk" (1638); five Edgar Degas' impressionist works; and Edouard Manet's "Chez Torton" (1878–1880).

To this day, no one knows who the robbers were or where they hid the goods from the largest theft of private property in history. Empty frames hang in the museum as placeholders for when the stolen works are returned. The Gardner Museum is offering a \$5 million reward for information leading to the recovery of these works in good condition.

### **The Tucker Cross theft**

In 1955, a Bermudian man named Teddy Tucker was scuba diving in the wreckage of the San Pedro, a Spanish ship that sunk near the Florida Keys during a hurricane in 1594, and he found this 22-carat gold-and-emerald cross. He

brought it home and sold it to the government of Bermuda, and it was displayed in a museum on the island (that he and his wife owned and ran) for several years.

However, in 1975, just before an official visit by Queen Elizabeth II, the cross was stolen and replaced with a cheap replica. Authorities don't know who stole the cross — which was considered to be the most valuable object ever found in a shipwreck — or where it may be now.

### **The Antwerp diamond heist**

The Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC) in Belgium is the diamond-exchange capital of the world, and in February 2003, it was the site of a \$100 million diamond heist.

As U.S. News and World Report says: A group of Italian thieves known as the "The School of Turin" broke into the underground vault of the Antwerp Diamond Center, then protected by infrared heat detectors, sophisticated locks [with 100 million possible combinations], and eight other layers of security. Despite this, the gang successfully looted 123 of the vault's 160 safes without setting off any alarms or leaving behind any signs of forced entry — security did not notice until the following day.

An Italian man named Leonardo Notarbartolo (a career thief) was convicted of being the ringleader and has since been paroled. He had rented an office in the AWDC shortly before the robbery and used its location to gain access to the bank vault. But he never gave away his accomplices or the location of the diamonds.

### **The Plymouth mail truck robbery**

In August 1962, a team of criminals dressed as police officers and armed with guns ambushed a mail truck traveling from Plymouth, Massachusetts, to the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. Using an elaborate scheme involving fake highway workers and traffic detours, the men got away with \$1.5 million in cash — all in bills smaller than \$20, and only some of it recorded — in what was, at the time, the largest cash heist in history.

The postal workers were blindfolded, bound and gagged, and put in the back of the truck. One of the men (authorities believe there were six of them) got in the driver's seat and drove for a

while before abandoning the truck with the mailmen still inside.

As GateHouse Media's Wicked Local reports: [U.S. Postal Service inspectors] worked hand in hand with the State Police, FBI and other law enforcement agencies, and managed to uncover evidence from the homes of two of the criminals, as well as eyewitness testimony. ... A grand jury indicted three suspects, but the linchpin of the case, Tommy Richards, who was slated to testify against the others, disappeared mysteriously, never to be seen again.

The remaining defendants were found not guilty, and the money was never recovered.

### **D.B. Cooper and a stolen plane**

In November 1971, a cunning air pirate known as D.B. Cooper skyjacked Northwest Orient Airlines Flight 305 headed from Portland, Oregon, to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. About 30 minutes after takeoff, Cooper told a flight attendant he had explosive devices and demanded \$200,000, four parachutes and a refueling truck upon landing at Sea-Tac.

Indeed, once the plane landed, Cooper's requests were met, and he released the passengers before taking off with a pilot and a handful of crew members for his desired destination of Mexico City. However, Cooper didn't intend to complete the journey. He strapped on a parachute and, from 10,000 feet in the air, jumped out of the plane into the night 30 minutes after taking off from Sea-Tac.

To this day, we do not know who D.B. Cooper was, and the FBI has processed thousands of suspects in the case of America's only unsolved skyjacking.

Arrests, prosecutions ... but no loot

*In the following five robberies, arrests were made and suspects were prosecuted, but the stolen goods were never recovered. In some cases, authorities believe the cash or jewels may never be recovered.*

### **Banco Central robbery in Fortaleza, Brazil**

The Guinness Book of World Records awarded this heist the title of "greatest robbery of a bank," and the plot sounds like something straight out of a movie.

In 2005, a group of men rented a property and set up shop posing as a landscape company a few blocks from the Banco Central in Fortaleza, Brazil. They spent three months digging a tunnel about 256 feet long and 13 feet below street level from their office to directly below the bank.

Over the course of a weekend in August, they used the tunnel to get into the bank and managed to avoid or disable all the bank's censors, thanks to a tip from a bank employee. From there, they broke through nearly 4 feet of steel-reinforced concrete to enter the vault and stole five containers weighing more than 7,000 pounds and holding about \$70 million worth of reals (Brazilian currency).

Bank employees didn't know anything had happened until they arrived at work Monday morning. And by then, the robbers had already fled the area. However, they made two mistakes that led to their demise.

As OZY reports: Outside, police would later find a large amount of white powder — chalk the robbers had used to cover their fingerprints. And they nearly succeeded, except for one print, their first slip. The second mistake? A member of the gang bought 10 cars at once the next day, paying cash and raising red flags in this poor region of Brazil. Improbably, the police managed to catch up with the trailer carrying those cars in another state, and inside three of the vehicles were bundles of 50 real bills.

Three dozen people were accused of participating in the heist; 26 ended up in jail for various crimes, and a few of them escaped. But only about \$8 million of the total amount was ever recovered, making this the biggest robbery in the history of Brazil.

### **The Great Train Robbery in England**

On Aug. 8, 1963, a train going from Glasgow to London was ambushed on the Bridego Railway Bridge in Buckinghamshire by a group of 15 robbers who rigged the track signals to stop the train in a remote location.

The robbers didn't have guns, but they did beat up the train driver before running away with over £2.6 million (equivalent to \$61 million U.S. today). They fled to a hideout, which police would later find and collect evidence from to

prosecute most of the gang. However, the money was never recovered.

Ringleaders were sentenced to 30 years in prison, including Ronald Arthur "Ronnie" Biggs, who later escaped, and Bruce "Napoleon" Reynolds, who went on to work as a consultant for a movie ("Buster," released in 1988) and published "The Autobiography of a Thief: The Man Behind The Great Train Robbery" in 1995.

### **Dunbar robbery in Los Angeles**

In September 1997, at least six men stole \$18.9 million in cash from the Dunbar armored truck depot in Los Angeles. Their evening began at a house party in Long Beach, where they went to establish an alibi. But they sneaked out shortly thereafter, changed into black clothing, and drove to the depot, entering through a side door shortly after midnight. They tied up the few employees who were working and forced them to lie face down on the floor.

As the L.A. Times reports: The armed robbers advanced on the vault area... and, using bolt cutters, broke the padlocks on metal cages containing the depot's cash. Most of the currency consisted of \$20 bills, destined for drop-offs at automated teller machines throughout the Los Angeles area. The robbers tossed the money into metal carts, which they wheeled to the building's loading dock and dumped into a U-Haul truck that one of them had rented for the robbery. Before departing, they smashed all of the security video cameras inside the depot and seized the videotapes.

The U-Haul was their undoing. Somehow, a plastic taillight lens fell off at the scene, which the FBI later matched to the rented U-Haul. The mastermind, Allen Pace III, was a former security officer for Dunbar who was very familiar with the security process, prosecutors said. He was convicted along with the rest of the group — four of whom pleaded guilty. While authorities recovered about \$5 million of the cash in the form of homes, cars and other valuables, the remaining amount — more than \$10 million — was never recovered.

**Brink's-Mat robbery in Britain**

In the morning hours of Nov. 26, 1983, six men wearing balaclavas entered a warehouse at London's Heathrow Airport belonging to security company Brink's-Mat. The warehouse vault contained more than \$3 million in cash, which the robbers knew because they had help from the inside. What they didn't know was that the vault also contained more than three tons (7,000 bars) of gold bullion.

The armed men tied up the guards and poured gasoline on them, threatening to light a match if they didn't offer up the keys and the codes to the vault. The thieves loaded the gold into a van and drove off, but they weren't free for very long. The inside man, Anthony Black, was implicated fairly quickly and squealed on his comrades. Another not-so-smart robber, Micky McAvoy, reportedly used his cut to pay cash for a house and bought two security dogs, which he named Brinks and Mat, to guard the property. He and Black's brother-in-law, Brian Robinson, were sentenced to 25 years in prison.

You can read more about the fate of the robbers in this Metro story, but police never recovered most of the gold.

**The Harry Winston heist**

The posh Harry Winston jewelry store in Paris was the scene of a 2008 smash-and-grab robbery in which four men dressed as women stormed into the store, pushed employees and customers into a corner at gun-point, stole almost every piece of jewelry on display and emptied two storage cases in the back. They made a fast getaway with more than \$100 million in merchandise, making it the largest jewel robbery ever in France and one of the largest in the world.

The thieves appeared to have inside knowledge of the store, The Guardian reports, because they knew the location of supposedly top-secret storage boxes and referred to staff by their first names. Eight men were arrested in what the French media dubbed the "steal of the century." The man believed to be the mastermind, Douadi Yahiaoui, was sentenced to 15 years in prison, the BBC reports, while others received as little as nine months in jail.

According to the BBC, police found \$19 million worth of jewelry from the heist stuffed in a drain in the Parisian suburb of Seine-Saint-Denis, but much of the loot has never been recovered.

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