



## Topaz (Precious)

### Definition

Topaz is a fluosilicate of aluminum, occurring in transparent yellow, yellow brown, pink, red, very light to light blue, very light green and violet. Colored stones are rarely vivid. The most common color is yellow with a red tint. The most valuable is pink. The term Precious Topaz is used to differentiate topaz from citrine quartz and other topaz substitutes which are in the same color range.

### Folklore

In antiquity, all yellow and brown gemstones, even green ones were called "topaz." The name most probably developed from the name of an island in the Red Sea, now Zebirget, formerly Topazos. The stone began to be used in Marco Polo's time (13th century). Topaz mounted in gold and hung around the neck was believed to dispel enchantment. When the powdered stone was put in wine, it was considered a cure for asthma, insomnia, burns and hemorrhages. Topaz was supposed to become obscure in contact with poison and to quench the heat of boiling water. All these powers were believed to be increased or decreased with the phase of the moon.

### Trade Names

- \*Imperial Topaz-(highly saturated red to orange-red)
- \*Sherry Topaz-(yellowish brown)

### Treatments

Heat, irradiation

### Consumer Care

To clean topaz jewelry, use a good quality commercial cleaner, rinse and towel dry. Most jewelry should be professionally cleaned and checked by a qualified jeweler every 3-6 months. Avoid swimming pools and hot tubs, as well as any harsh chemicals with any gold jewelry to prevent chemical attack of the gold alloys.

### Details

Species	Topaz
Specific Gravity	3.53+or- .04
Hardness	8
Toughness	Poor
Refractive Index	1.629-1.637
Birefringence	.008-.010
Optic Character	DR B+
Pleochroism	Varies with color of stone
Fluorescence	weak
Clarity Type	I

### Locations

Brazil, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Russia, Mexico, Nigeria, Rhodesia, Namibia, U.S.

### Care

Torch	poor
Ultrasonic	caution
Steamer	caution
Chemicals	
Chemical Composition	Al <sub>2</sub> (SiO <sub>4</sub> ) (F,OH) <sub>2</sub>
Pickling	fair