



TURQUOISE



Vivid shades of turquoise define the color that's named after this gem. Turquoise is sought after by designers around the world. Typically, turquoise is judged on three criteria—its color, its texture, and the presence or absence of matrix.

TURQUOISE - COLOR

Turquoise's color ranges from dull grays and yellows to greens to blue but the most prized color is an even, intense, medium blue which is sometimes referred to as Persian blue in the trade. But some consumers prefer a greenish blue, and some contemporary designers actively seek turquoise in unusual green hues. Generally, saturated blue shades are the most valuable.



TIPS AND ADVICE

BUY FROM A JEWELER YOU TRUST.

Turquoise is commonly treated to improve its stability and color. If you are looking for turquoise that has not been treated in any way, make sure your jeweler has the gemological expertise and knowledge to identify turquoise treatments. All treatments should be disclosed.

TURQUOISE - CLARITY

Turquoise is semi-translucent to opaque. It might have veins of matrix running through it (matrix is a remnant of the surrounding host rock). Spiderweb turquoise refers to thin seams of matrix that create delicate web-like patterns across the face of the gem.



CARING FOR TURQUOISE.

Natural turquoise is porous and can be damaged by chemicals in cleaning products, perfume, and cosmetics which can affect its color. It can also absorb skin oil which will darken the color of the material. Put your turquoise jewelry on after applying products to your skin like sunscreen, lotion, make up or hairspray, and remove before using household cleaning products. Never put turquoise into an ultrasonic or steam cleaner. Cleaning with mild soapy water is best.



TURQUOISE - CUT

Turquoise is often fashioned as a cabochon. The dome shape sets off turquoise's color,

texture (fine or coarse), and any matrix, beautifully. Manufacturers and artisans also fashion turquoise into beads for necklaces, and into small, flat pieces that are popular in jewelry inlays. When polished, turquoise with a fine texture will have a waxy luster; turquoise with a coarse texture will have a dull luster.

ALTERNATIVES TO NATURAL TURQUOISE.

Turquoise imitations range from plastic to glass to other natural minerals such as dyed howlite, variscite, amazonite, and pectolite. Synthetic turquoise is also available.

TURQUOISE - CARAT WEIGHT

Turquoise is available in a wide range of sizes, although large pieces of turquoise without any visible matrix are rare. All sizes are used in Native American jewelry. Large sizes have been popular for carvings. For any size, the quality and evenness of the color is the overriding value factor.



FINE QUALITY TURQUOISE HAS LONG-LASTING BEAUTY.

Turquoise jewelry has been found in the tombs of ancient Egypt. It still retains its beauty.

FAQ

Q: ARE DARK VEINS IN TURQUOISE GOOD OR BAD?

A: It's a matter of personal preference and depends on the market where the turquoise is being sold. Turquoise with no matrix is most desirable and manufacturers try to fashion turquoise so that no matrix is visible. However, some collectors prefer the look of turquoise with spiderweb patterns especially if they are evenly distributed across the face of the stone. Black colored matrix is usually most preferred for contrast but matrix can also be brown, yellow and other colors.

Q: DOES IT MATTER IF TURQUOISE IS BLUE OR GREEN?

A: In general, turquoise with an even, intense medium blue color, sometimes called robin's egg blue in the trade, is preferred. Unusual colors like yellow green and pure green are in demand for use in inlay jewelry.

Q: IS PERSIAN TURQUOISE MORE VALUABLE?

A: Fine-quality turquoise from historical sources like Iran, New Mexico and Arizona can command a small premium from collectors, but pricing is primarily based on quality, not geographic origin.

Q: WHY ARE THERE SUCH LARGE PRICE DIFFERENCES FOR TURQUOISE THAT LOOKS SIMILAR?

A: Price differences are dependent on the quality and desirability of the color, the presence or absence of matrix, and if the material is treated.

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