

HONG KONG JEWELLERY

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THE GOLD IN SAPPHIRE





The Gold in Sapphire

Golden sheen sapphire is a new discovery of modern times. Discovered by Tanzim Khan in the mine in Kenya near the border of Somalia, the gemstone is a variety of corundum occurring as bronze, gold, yellow, green and blue in colour due to the unique molecular structure which reflects light creating a shimmering golden visual effect.

As other varieties of corundum, golden sheen sapphire is 9 on the Mohs scale, second only to diamond in hardness. “There are high levels of iron, hematite, and magnetite in the stone that align naturally to form an almost artistic inclusion pattern,” said Khan, owner of Bangkok-based **Genuine Gems & Jewellery Co, Ltd**.

Usually cut into thinner slices with large, well-polished tables, golden sheen sapphire ranges from transparent to opaque. According to Khan, however, clarity is less important for the gemstone. “Inclusions make golden sheen sapphire unique. Some stones have multiple colour zones that add to the beauty and uniqueness of the gem. Unlike most other precious gems, golden sheen sapphire is completely unheated,” he added.

Khan told *Hong Kong Jewellery* that polished golden sheen sapphire made its public debut at the Bangkok jewellery show three years ago. “Many people did not believe it was a sapphire, while others were very excited and made some large purchases for investment,” he said. After being excavated in Africa, the sapphire is cut in Thailand by skillful hands. “We have spent several years perfecting the cutting process of golden sheen sapphire. Fine quality gems have only been produced this year and they are a small fraction of the total output,” said Khan. “Commercial-grade gems should retail for a few hundred US dollars per carat while fine quality stones should be sold for several thousand dollars per carat because of scarcity.”

Besides jewellery designers, connoisseurs and gemologist, golden sheen sapphire has attracted special interests from Americas, Korea, Japan and China. According to Khan, the Kenya mine, the only source of golden sheen sapphire in the world, has already depleted. The inventory is expected to meet the market needs for another five to 10 years. (Photo courtesy: Genuine Gems & Jewellery Co, Ltd)ⁱ

ⁱ Hong Kong Jewellery Magazine Limited. 2018 . The Gold in Sapphire
<http://www.hkjm.com.hk/details.php?lang=eng&id=527>.