
Gubelin Newsletter #27, Thursday, March 19, 2009

Headlines:

- *** New Services (1): Origin determination of spinel
- *** New Services (2): Identification of the exact type of tourmaline
- *** New Services (3): Disclosure of initial testing date
- *** More Off-Premise Testing planned for New York, Hong Kong and Bangkok
- *** Fieldtrip to Sri Lankan sapphire mines successfully completed
- *** Article on Type Ia, HPHT-treated coloured diamonds published in French gemmological journal
- *** Credit cards accepted for payment of Gubelin Lab services

*** New Services (1): Origin determination of spinel:

In recent years, spinel has gained an ever-increasing importance in the coloured gemstone market. Since clients are now increasingly asking for the determination of the geographical origin of their spinels, the Gubelin Gem Lab has conducted a research project aimed at distinguishing between red and pink spinel from the major sources, i.e. Vietnam, Burma, Tajikistan and Tanzania. This new service is available at the Lucerne laboratory with immediate effect.

*** New Services (2): Identification of the exact type of tourmaline:

Tourmalines are known as the 'dust-suckers' of the world of minerals. Their structure allows the integration of virtually any chemical element. The resulting breadth of chemical composition leads to a large number of different tourmaline gem types, such as elbaite, dravite, rossmanite, liddicoatite and uvite. Standard analytical equipment has not so far been able to detect some of the very light elements such as lithium, sodium and boron, which play an important role in tourmalines. This has hindered the determination of the exact species and variety. Thanks to today's sophisticated analytical tools, and smart software developed in-house, the Gubelin Gem Lab is now in a position to offer accurate determination of the exact type of tourmaline.

*** New Services (3): Disclosure of initial testing date:

The point in time when a gemstone was initially tested might be of interest to the current owner, since it indicates a minimum age since it was mined. To cater to this need, the Gubelin Lab has decided to add a specific note to its reports stating the date it first saw and tested that stone. This note is available on request free of charge.

*** More Off-Premise Testing planned for New York, Hong Kong and Bangkok:

The Gubelin Gem Lab has decided to conduct more Off-Premise Testing services, to cope with the increased demand from clients being serviced on-site. The Gubelin gemmologists are again testing in New York in the second half of May, in Hong Kong (during the Jewellery & Gem Fair) as well as in Bangkok in the second half of June. On request from clients we are also testing at other locations.

*** Fieldtrip to Sri Lankan sapphire mines successfully completed:

A high percentage of blue sapphires sold in Sri Lanka have not been mined there, but come from African countries such as Madagascar. Sometimes the actual origin of some of those African sapphires is unknown, not disclosed correctly, or the stones are intentionally and misleadingly offered as Sri Lankan. This might lead to unwelcome surprises when such stones are submitted to the gem lab for origin determination. To collect even more samples first-hand in the mining sites, our Dr. Dietmar Schwarz

visited various mining areas in Sri Lanka. He saw mines in the areas of Elahera, Bogowantalana, Kolonne, Okkampitaya, Embilipitiya and Ratnapura, and collected hundreds of samples for the Gubelin Reference Collection.

*** Article on Type Ia, HPHT-treated coloured diamonds published in French gemmological journal: After publishing two articles on diamond treatments and synthetics, the French journal *La Revue de Gemmologie AFG* has issued yet another scientific contribution on diamonds by our Dr. Eric Erel. His latest research addresses the treatments of coloured Type Ia diamonds under high-pressure, high-temperature (HPHT) conditions.

*** Credit cards accepted for payment of Gubelin Lab services:
For your convenience, we accept Master and VISA credit cards for payment of Gubelin invoices. This easy and secure form of payment is also accepted at our Off-Premise Testing sessions in New York, Bangkok and Hong Kong, as well as at the BaselWorld fair.

The Gubelin Newsletter is issued periodically by the Gubelin Gem Lab and provides concise and up-to-date information on current topics in the jewellery and gemstone industry, as well as news from the Gubelin Gem Lab itself. Your e-mail address is on the distribution list of the Gubelin Gem Lab. To unsubscribe from the mailing list, reply to info@gubelingemlab.ch, and type 'unsubscribe' in the subject line. All previous Gubelin Newsletters can be viewed in the archive section of the Gubelin website (www.gubelingemlab.ch).

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