

# Fall Gemstones

By Sherrie Wilkolaski



Ladies get your sapphires and emerald's out of the bottom of your jewelry boxes and get out there and find some new pieces in royal blue to add to your fall collection.

Fall is my favorite season. Changing of the leaves in robust warm red, orange and golden-yellow tones, makes me smile. The first sign of an autumn breeze and I'm digging through my closet pulling out my favorite boots, sweaters and coats. There is of course an evaluation of the wardrobe to see what items might be missing or needed and a shopping spree is a must. One area of a girl's attire that is never overlooked with the change of season is her jewelry; diamonds, rubies and emeralds...oh my! Just as fashion fluctuates, so do gemstones, and what was in last season may or may not be hot this year.

Have you ever wondered who is making recommendations on our gemstone palate? I decided to do some digging and went right to the top of the gemological food chain and spoke with Jerry R. Ehrenwald (G.G., A.S.A., A.A.A., N.A.J.A.), president and CEO of the International Gemological Institute (IGI) since 1981. Not only did I learn about the upcoming fall gemstone palate, I was introduced to a leading industry innovator, who has influenced the market in a big way, from security to design. Mr. Ehrenwald was a delightful interview and I appreciate the time he put into answering my questions.

### Gemological Expert

Jerry is a graduate gemologist with a lifetime of industry experience. He is responsible for IGI's trade laboratory and is also president of International Gemological Information, the Institute's independent appraisal division, since its inception. The information division was established in New York as a source for unbiased appraisals of gems and jewelry – providing appraisals and identification reports, as well as appraisal updates for consumers, retailers, public accounting firms, national law firms and international banks.

He started cutting diamonds for his father's diamond cutting company when he was 11 years old, nearly six decades ago. "That is where I first learned the planning and process that go into cutting and polishing diamonds." He has received United States and Belgium patents for inventing the process of laser inscription of diamonds for identification purposes (Laserscribe<sup>SM</sup>).

### Synthetic Gemstones

With an extensive pedigree in the business of gemology, he has lived through some incredible technological advancements, from developing his own laser inscription process to experiencing other synthetic products coming into the market. He says of the biggest challenge in the business of gemology, "First is the influx of synthetic (man-made) diamonds and the ability for gemologists to detect them. Synthetic diamonds were first developed in the 1950s by General Electric (GE). However, they were not commercially available until

relatively recently. The technology is continuing to advance and synthetics are being regularly produced in bigger sizes and nicer colors. Identification – being able to detect man-made versus natural – is a growing challenge.

"Second is the rapid development of new treatments for both diamonds and gemstones, and gemologists' ability to not only identify the type of treatment, but also how it affects the value of the stone.

"However, as IGI is a state-of-the-art lab with all the latest detection equipment, when one submits a diamond for a grading report, IGI is able to identify all synthetic diamonds and treatments."

The traditional diamond market has got to feel an impact with the growth of the synthetic gemstones entering the marketing. Jerry feels there is room for both

authentic and synthetic stones in the market, "Lab-grown diamonds and gemstones have been emerging in the industry for years now and it's no question they are here to stay, and there's certainly room for this new option alongside natural diamonds. IGI offers lab-grown diamond grading reports that attest to the authenticity and the value of a particular man-made gem, just like a naturally mined diamond. However, as technology continues to improve, proper disclosure of lab-grown gems – by all members of the industry supply chain – will be a growing focus."

### Fall Gemstones

After covering his credentials and talking about technology, I was anxious to talk about the fashion of fine jewelry, to get his take on whether jewelry design changes as quickly as fashion does. He said, "Fine jewelry design trends do generally mirror those of the fashion world. For example, per National Jeweler, London Fashion Week revealed Asian-inspired aesthetic and influence in both apparel and jewelry designs. That said, classic jewelry designs stay in style because fine jewelry is typically a long-term investment for the average consumer." Okay, we're getting somewhere, but I still wanted to understand who is setting the tone for our jewels each season. "As with fashion, the Pantone Color Institute has a significant impact on the jewelry realm and on-trend hues in general. Specifically, Pantone's 2014 Fall Color Report serves as a guide for seasonal apparel and accessories. Royal blue is projected to be a popular color this season and can be incorporated with sapphire

accessories that complement the darker hues of autumn. Sapphires and emeralds have been a staple during cold-weather months in recent years, and it is no different this fall. These gems perfectly complement the earth tones of popular autumn apparel, and

pack the perfect punch against common fall neutrals like black and brown." Ladies, get your sapphires and emeralds out of the bottom of your jewelry boxes and get out there and find some new pieces in royal blue to add to your fall collection.

### Diamond Technology

The conversation moved from fashion into the changes he's seen over the years, "When the diamond business first started in the U.S., the industry's primary hub was around 47th street in Manhattan, known as the Diamond District. That's when diamonds were mostly sold by family-owned businesses, mom and pop stores, etc. The market has grown so much since then that diamonds are now sold in major retail chains, big box stores and online. So, the biggest change has been the shift from more traditional brick-and-mortar shops to the majority of jewelry being sold in mass market retail centers." Speaking of diamonds, I was intrigued by his laser inscription technology, Laserscribe<sup>SM</sup>, and the process he went through to invent it. "I invented this technology while in the process of cutting diamonds with a traditional saw blade. There are two processes for cutting rough diamonds – if the stone is symmetrical, you can slice it and create two polished diamonds from the original rough. However, sometimes rough diamonds have an internal strain – like a knot in wood – which requires an alternative method of cutting other than a saw blade. Therefore, I started using a laser because it can slice the "knot" in a rough diamond, dividing it into the desired two pieces (rather than having to first polish it down to one half). One day, a friend and customer of mine brought me an extremely flat, yet big, stone. The size restricted it from being made into a regular polished diamond, and he challenged me to laser inscribe a famous family's crest on to the diamond. I spent two weekends laser inscribing and he ultimately loved it. That then led me to discovering that I could inscribe numbers on a diamond.

"I invented Laserscribe<sup>SM</sup> to provide both industry and consumers with added protection for their gemstones and fine jewelry.



A diamond identification number (DIN) works much like a vehicle identification number (VIN). It is the identifying code for a specific article."

His invention "helps protect jewelry by providing a means of positive identification if the article is ever lost or stolen. In addition, if the jewelry is LaserscribedSM and registered in IGI's database, through IGI's Registration and Recovery ServiceSM, the Institute will contact local police, search the auction market for the jewelry and alert jewelers and pawn shops of the lost or stolen property via Internet. The technology has enabled both consumers and trade members to locate valuable articles time and time again."

### Jewelry As An Investment

Purchasing a piece of jewelry is a type of celebration and creates memories for years to come. But does the sentimental value mean more than what it is valued at, as an investment? Jerry said, "Depending on the type of jewelry or gem, it can certainly be a good investment, but with any big purchase, you should do your research first. Leading diamond-trading network, Rapaport, has established four keys to diamond investing: price transparency, quality assurance, transaction costs and liquidity. Before moving forward, investors should understand how each of these affects the purchase at hand. In recent years, demand for diamonds in the U.S. has been on the rise with the strengthening economy. Given that they are traded internationally, they're not necessarily dependent on one country's economy and therefore have the potential to hold a relatively consistent value over time."

When it comes to appraising a piece, consumers should do their research to ensure that they are going to a reputable appraiser and that they are using proper benchmarks. "IGI provides appraisal reports that attest to the authenticity of a diamond, gemstone or article of jewelry and delivers an independent gemological evaluation of the gem's carat weight, color grade, clarity grade and quality of cut (the traditional 4Cs). To determine the estimated retail value, gems are evaluated according to the internationally accepted

system for diamond grading, which is the universal standard within the diamond industry.

"At an independent accredited lab like IGI, a team of experts – skilled graduate gemologists and appraisers – examines each stone and reaches a concurrent opinion on its characteristics, quality and value. Independent certification ensures you're truly getting what you pay for."

The JCK recently reported that jewelry sales are on the rise and have been consistently rising over the last two years. "As fine jewelry is a luxury product, sales tend to reflect the ups and downs of the overall economy. As the market has mostly recovered from the recession, the jewelry industry has seen a slow and steady increase in sales."

As our interview comes to a close I can't help but ask about his favorite gemstone, and feel, given the conversation, I already have the answer. His taste is classic and if you haven't guessed it already, his personal favorite gemstone is the diamond, "All diamonds and gemstones are a gift of nature and individual works of art with the help of man fashioning them into polished stones. To me, a one-carat diamond is as beautiful as a 20-carat diamond. Jewelry is a brilliant way of showing one's love and if given as a gift, should be adored and shared with that person."

Jerry Ehrenwald has the distinct honor of being named senior member of the American Society of Appraisers, one of a select few named to senior status in New York, whose discipline is gems and jewelry. He is a certified member of the Appraisers Association of America, as well as the National Association of Jewelry Appraisers. Ehrenwald is also part of the Twenty-Four Karat Club of the City of New York, a social club limited to 200 of the most accomplished individuals in the jewelry business. IGI is an independent, consumer-focused worldwide organization that provides objective and accurate grading, identification, and appraisal reports of gemstones and fine jewelry. For more information, visit: [www.igionline.com](http://www.igionline.com).



# Pantone's Fall 2014 Colors

As summer quickly fades into autumn, incorporate the coveted colors of the season – such as Aurora Red or Bright Cobalt – by combining fine jewelry with your favorite cold-weather fashions. Pantone's fall 2014 colors (listed below) inspire creativity and originality with a collection of unique hues.

Jerry Ehrenwald, president & CEO of the renowned International Gemological Institute (IGI) and a graduate gemologist with over 40 years of industry experience, offers insight on selecting the right jewelry and gemstones to brighten every woman's wardrobe this season:

**Radiant Orchid** – Pantone's 2014 color of the year can help transition your favorite summer pieces. Add an amethyst or spinel-stoned accessory for instant glam.

**Royal Blue** – Pair a gorgeous sapphire ring with a little black dress to add a dash of color to an already sophisticated look.

**Aluminum** – Incorporate a classic gray moonstone or quartz to offer a lighter take on the modern autumn gray.

**Aurora Red** – This romantic shade is most elegantly achieved with a ruby adornment, adding spark to any neutral outfit and ensuring all eyes are on you.

**Misted Yellow** – Keep the idea of summer alive, even after sunny weather fades. Golden beryl earrings or a canary diamond radiate the perfect warm glow.

**Sangria** – To spice things up, select a sangria-inspired garnet bauble to make a statement.

**Mauve Mist** – A delicate purple exudes understated elegance. Opt for an heirloom mauve opal for an evening out.

**Cognac** – Brown may be fall's most commonly worn color, but that doesn't mean you have to blend in. Distinguish yourself with rich browns in a topaz ring.

**Bright Cobalt** – A signature color of last year, this deep blue continues to captivate us. Try a turquoise or aquamarine necklace to add a splash of excitement to any dress.

**Cypress** – Another staple of colder months, stick to peridot or emerald accessories to "go green."

For more information, visit: [www.igionline.com](http://www.igionline.com).

