

Amethyst

Amethyst is the purple variety of the quartz family. Its name comes from the Greek, and means “not drunken.” It was long believed that Amethyst would protect the wearer from getting drunk. I haven’t tried this myself; I am trusting the experts on this one. It is also thought that amethyst is helpful in overcoming addictions, and soothing various disorders including insomnia and headaches.

To be referred to as amethyst, quartz must be purple; however, there are a wide variety of shades of purple amethyst available. You will see gems from baby-girl lavender to intense regal purple. Amethyst is a 7 on the Moh’s scale for hardness; this means it is a very wearable stone and doesn’t scratch easily. The Refractive Index of amethyst is 1.544 – 1.533; it is doubly refractive. It has a density of 2.65, which is in the average range and will not appear overly large or small for the weight.

Amethyst is available from mines around the globe. Experts are able to distinguish from which region, and in some cases, which mine a particular specimen of amethyst originates. Amethyst will vary in color, shape of crystal, inclusions, and crystal formation giving hints as to where it’s from.

Amethyst is February’s birthstone, and one of the most popular gems used in jewelry today. Hint: amethyst is purple by definition- if it’s a green quartz- It’s not amethyst! Green quartz is called Prasiolite.