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SUMMER 2003

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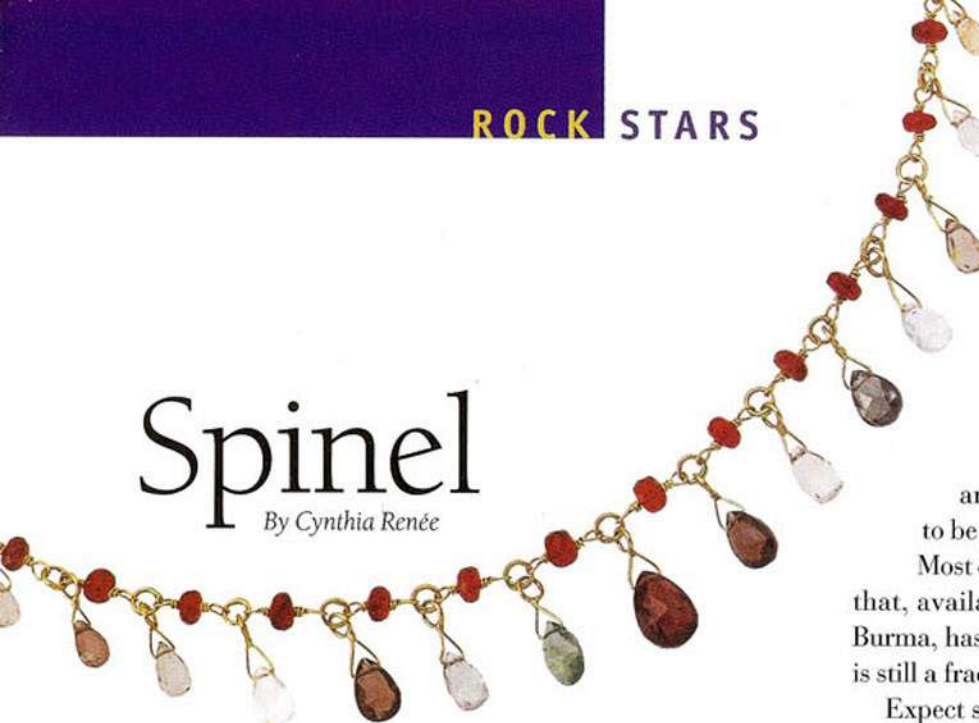


USA \$4.95
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SUPPLEMENT TO
RAPAPORT DIAMOND REPORT

Spinel

By Cynthia Renée



Talisman

If ruby is red velvet, what gem is red satin? Red spinel! Wars have been fought over it and women wooed with it, yet most people haven't heard of this stoplight-red gem.

Before the science of gemology, red spinel was often confused with ruby. History abounds with stories of famous spinels that were incorrectly named "ruby," including the Black Prince's "ruby" in the Crown Jewels of Great Britain. Spinel is a sleeping beauty unknown to most people; it is generally requested only by collectors. Spinel's relatively low price doesn't reflect its beauty and rarity.

Iolite

Erik the Red wore blue. The Viking "Sea Kings" navigated the rolling seas with the help of the blue gemstone iolite, sometimes referred to as "water sapphire." Iolite — from "ios," the Greek word for violet — is a strong pleochroic gem, which means that when the same gem is viewed from different directions, different colors are seen. Taking advantage of this property, the Vikings used thin slices of iolite to make light polarizers in order to counteract the effects of haze and mist.

Looking through the iolite disks, the Vikings could chart the positions of the sun on overcast days.

With its ability to appear differently colored when viewed from a different angle, iolite demands good cutting to bring out its beauty. Sloppy cutting can turn the stone inky or



Rajola



grayish. Well-cut and polished, iolite is a not-so-moody blue. The finest iolite will have more gray than a fine blue sapphire and less violet than most tanzanite, and it does not equal the color intensity of either of those stones. Most of the iolite that is used in jewelry today comes from India, Sri Lanka, East Africa or Brazil.

Fine-colored iolite stones, with few or no inclusions, that are over 10 carats are quite rare; most iolite seen in jewelry is under 3 carats. Usually, the larger the gem, the darker the color will be. Iolites under 1 carat are the more delicate shades of sky-, periwinkle- or lilac-blue. Jewelry designers use iolite either faceted or in the domed cabochon cut. Like most colored gems, care for your iolite ring by removing it before playing sports, housework or gardening. ♦

Coupled with spinel's immense beauty is its durability — it's even durable enough for wedding rings. Still, remove it before roofing the house. ♦



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