



## J A S P E R

First Draft

15.11.06

- Origin** Jasper (a type of chalcedony) is formed in veins or slabs when silica rich solutions solidified in a variety of situations.  
It is a cryptocrystalline variety of quartz - meaning it has individual crystals too small to be seen with a light microscope. It also occurs as a petrifying agent in fossil wood.
- Composition** Silicon dioxide  $\text{SiO}_2$  plus other minerals, such as haematite and other iron-bearing minerals, which give the WIDE range of colours and patterns.  
Dendritic mineral inclusions can produce 'vegetative' growths.
- Structure** Trigonal Mohs scale 7
- Colour** Almost all colours appear in the full range of jaspers! Opaque. Jasper will take a very high polish.  
Numerous types of jasper have been found and are mostly named after their appearance or their source, e.g. Picture, Red, Orbicular, Wild Horse, Wonder, Riband, Imperial, Brecciated etc.  
ORBICULAR JASPER - named after the many 'orbs' or small spheres (from 1 - 10mm diam.) in its matrix which appear as circles on cut sections. It is sometimes referred to as Ocean Jasper as it is found in tidal areas on the Madagascan coast. Typically green, pale grey, pink/orange and sandy yellow.  
PICTURE JASPER - is valued for its superb miniature 'landscapes' and range of colours. It is a petrified or silicated sample of fine mud which entered gas pockets in a molten lava flow, became super-heated and then solidified. Historically, panels of jasper have been used to richly adorn church interiors (superb examples can be seen in the Czech Republic and Russia).
- Sources** Crystals jasper comes from:  
Orbicular jasper - sourced from Madagascar in challenging circumstances. Access to an important working is affected by tides. Recent civil unrest further impeded the very limited supply of this beautiful stone. Our supplier cuts, shapes and polishes our jasper in the capital of Madagascar.  
Other jaspers are widely sourced from around the world.
- Crystals Story** Jasper is very suited to imaginative carving work, being relatively low in cost. The Chinese, especially, have appreciated the many colour and pattern variations and their enthusiasm has resulted in a huge explosion of bead colours and shapes in the last 2 years. Much of this energy has come from a key supplier and friend of Crystals. The Guangzhou (Canton) area excels in jasper animal carvings.

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