



Q U A R T Z

(Rock Crystal)

First Draft

10.07.06

Origin	Imagine ice that had been frozen so hard into crystals by the gods that it would never melt . . . this was the 'explanation' for quartz for centuries. The Greek word kyros (meaning icy cold) is the origin of our word crystal. Quartz crystals form when silica rich molten rock cools down. It is found worldwide and makes up over one tenth of the Earth's crust.
Composition	Silicon dioxide SiO_2
Structure	Trigonal. Quartz can be naturally double terminated, form clusters, beds or single massive crystals. Mohs scale of hardness 7. Crystals can show 'ghostly' internal veils formed during interrupted growth patterns.
Colour	Clear quartz / rock crystal is colourless and transparent, often with beautiful fleeting rainbows. 'Herkimer diamonds' are exceptionally clear, completely terminated crystals that were formed in liquid suspension and originally discovered in Herkimer County, New York State. We have recently had stock of superb quality - many of us find them very 'buzzy'. Also: Citrine - yellow (rare in its natural state but, more commonly, heat treated amethyst) Amethyst - purple due to iron Smoky - light to dark brown, either natural or treated quartz / sometimes known as smoky topaz or Cairngorm Milky (Gyrosol) - milky white / cream due to gas and liquid bubble inclusions
Inclusions	Rutilated quartz contains needle-like rutile crystals of golden, orange or red colour - explaining the popular name of Venus Hair Stone. Tourmalinated quartz contains fine or thicker needle-like black tourmaline crystals, usually black, but, rarely green or pink.
Sources	Crystals quartz comes from every continent, from the peaks of the Himalayas to the deserts of Arizona.
Crystals Story	Where do we start? The company's connection with quartz and amethyst are the Central themes to Crystals' development. During the last 20 years, we have bought from all of the listed sources. Recently we have been buying from the USA and Brazil. In Minas Gerais there are significant quartz deposits including many special formations, such as Smoky elestial, natural citrine cathedrals and tourmalinated quartz. One of my most inspiring tasks has been to watch the cutting of boulder quartz into spheres, obelisks, wands and pyramids. Immense

skill shown by multi-generational families leaves one breathless. A modest house, a coffee in the kitchen and a walk into the rear yard. Then suddenly the magnificent collection of, say, lazer crystals. Cutting a deal can be problematic. At present Japanese buyers are prepared to buy wholesale consignments of AA Grade rutile quartz in Brazil for more than we would be able to charge in our shops in the UK. When crystal healing is 'fashionable' prices can rise sharply. A downturn sees craftsmen moving and leaving quartz cutting. This is the cause of variable quality and pricing. For example pyramid cutting is not in fashion. Huge slabs of boulder quartz can be seen in the back of a lorry. One visit saw the biggest quartz sphere ever, needing a crane and heading for Tuscon. This was not purchased by us, no one was strong enough! Crystals (UK) Ltd spends far more energy on quartz buying than sales justify as we believe quartz is a central part of our narrative. Many of our best pieces now grace colleagues' rooms, healing centres and stately houses. Specialist buyers focus on, say, elestial crystals. We are currently selling special value quartz and it is unlikely that these prices will ever be repeated. The Brazilian exchange rates now mean that new quartz will be more expensive.

Also

In 1880, the French Nobel physicist Pierre Curie (husband of Marie) discovered that quartz is piezoelectric - that is it will produce an electric charge on its surface when put under pressure from different directions.

During the Second World War, quartz was heavily used in radio transmissions - it was this demand that led to the development of synthetic quartz (not popular with Crystals staff!).

