

Company History & Information

082LSw125
004585

Introduction

Canada's first "commercial grade" precious opal deposit, the "Klinker Opal Deposit" was found near Vernon, British Columbia on Thanksgiving Day in October 1991. The precious opal from this sight was given the name "Okanagan Opal" by the prospectors who found the deposit. This deposit has already attracted significant local and international attention through the publication of several articles written by opal expert Paul Downing (*published in both the Rock & Gem and Lapidary Journal magazines in 1992 to 94*), through a government paper published in 1997 and through numerous other newspaper / magazine articles.

A private company, Okanagan Opal Inc., has been exploring and developing this deposit since October 1993. The size and full economic potential of the deposit is as yet undetermined however the development which has taken place over the past four years has indicated that this is a significant discovery; not just a "flash of color". The precious opal occurrences are controlled by fracturing, stratigraphy and rock porosity and occur in mid-Miocene aged shallow dipping ash / lapilli tuff and matrix supported lahar volcanic rock sequences.

Although the size of rough opal being mined is relatively small (from small chips up to ~25 grams), there is evidence that as mining proceeds to depth less fracture opal is being found. To date mining has been conducted close to surface with the maximum open-cut depth being only ~3.5 metres. The opal from this deposit has proven to be very stable.

"Okanagan Opal" exhibits a good to very brilliant, flash to broad flash play of colors, often covering the full rainbow spectrum and the opal occurs in broad range of both opaque and transparent base colors. Both solid and boulder opal material is found at this deposit and is cut into finished gemstones. Smaller solid boulder opal material is generally utilized in the manufacture of calibrated doublets. Opal chips are being used in inlay or channel jewellery. At present all cuttable rough opal material is being reserved for "in-house" use. Good quality gemstones are being cut from the material mined from the Klinker Opal deposit site and precious opal jewellery is being made and sold by Okanagan Opal inc.

Solid and boulder opal loose stones are graded and can be purchased individually. Prices range from ~\$25 to a few thousand dollars per stone. Doublets are graded and sold individually at prices ranging from ~\$25 to several hundred dollars per stone. There is a good quantity of precious opal bearing "collectors specimen" material for sale ranging in value from \$3 or less to several hundred dollars per piece. Additionally, there are variable amounts / quantities of cabbing and faceting grade common / jelly opal rough ranging in value from \$1 to \$100 per gram, in sizes from 0.2 to 5.0 grams.

Since 1994 specific locations at the site have been open to "Fee Digging". The site offers excellent precious opal, jelly opal and common opal material, various agates (white / grey to blue / grey banded agate, carnelian agate, moss agate, etc.), small geodes and various crystalline and drusy silicate mineral lined cavities in various volcanic rock units. A daily fee of \$30 (CDN.) is assessed for "digging" which will allow the collector to keep up to five pounds of material. An additional charge will be assessed for extra material collected. For insurance reasons there is no "fee digging" allowed in the main work areas and any or all established "fee digging sites" may be subject to closure from time to time. Fees, terms and conditions are subject to change without notice.

Company Information

Okanagan Opal Inc. is developing the first "commercial" precious opal deposit to be found in Canada. The company was formed in 1993 to explore and develop the property to the mining stage and to conduct the manufacture and marketing of finished product. The company conducts the cutting of its opal gemstones at our cutting shop in Vernon, BC.

Okanagan Opal Inc. is the first company in Canada to produce and market "Canadian" precious opal gemstones. The retail tourist market is a market in which the consumer is constantly seeking an exclusive Canadian Made "One and Only" product. Retail marketers of Okanagan Opal jewellery products are now able to offer tourists a unique and valuable gift item which is presently available from no other source.

Contact us by E-mail for further information:
Bob or Alana Yorke-Hardy at Okanagan Opal Inc.

Products & Services Information

NOTICE: *The Products and Online Ordering areas of this website are currently under construction. More updated information will be available soon.*

General Opal Information

History related to opal can be traced back for over one thousand years. Some refer to opal as the "Prince of gems" others call it the "Queen of gems". Regardless of which of these is right one thing is certain -- opal is a gemstone befitting royalty; as anyone who owns one knows. The wondrous beauty of a brilliant play of colors emanating from an opal is unsurpassed by any other gemstone -- the brightness and pattern of the play of color from every opal is different.

For the past one hundred years Australia has been the undisputed major supplier of precious opal to the world, with lesser amounts being supplied from Mexico and Honduras. The States of Nevada, Idaho, California and Oregon have also supplied some opal to the domestic and world markets. Production from Australia has diminished substantially over the past 10 years.

Prior to October 1991 there were no documented precious opal deposits in Canada. The discovery of the "Klinker Opal Deposit" has changed that. Okanagan Opal Inc. has been developing the property since 1993 and is now in position to offer consumers a unique line of precious opal jewellery created from opal mined from this deposit.

The opal from this deposit occurs as late stage, postorogenic, fracture fillings and vesicle fillings in inter layered Tertiary aged lahar volcanic debris flows and lapilli ash-tuff beds. The base color of the opal ranges from white to dark brown opaque, to clear to amber translucent and transparent material. The better grade precious opal from the deposit displays a brilliant array of multicolored flash to broad flash patterned "play of color". The property yield both solid and boulder opal.



Description of Products and Services

Okanagan Opal Inc. is marketing finished opal jewellery which is created from precious opal mined from the company's opal deposit near Vernon, B.C.. The product line includes a developing and expanding assortment of jewellery items including gold and silver pendants, earrings, rings all set with opal gemstones and opal doublets cut by the company from the company's own opal. The company is also working to create a line of inlay jewellery in which to utilize small solids, opal

chips.

The company cuts a broad selection of capped or backed opal doublets and solid and boulder opal gemstones. Opal gemstones are cut as oval shaped cabochons in standard calibrated sizes and in freeform shapes and sizes. The sizes, shapes and types of opal gemstones produced by the company are typical of those produced in the opal industry elsewhere in the world.

Precious opal from the company's deposit has proven to be stable and is comparable in quality to similar types of opal available from other sources. The opal from the company's deposit demonstrates a flash to broad flash pattern of fire which varies in brightness from commercial to extra fine on an established international scale. Product quality is guaranteed against defects in workmanship and opal stability in accordance with industry standards.

Okanagan Opal Inc. also offers the opportunity to "dig your own opal" and if desired we will custom cut or polish the opals that you find.

Opal Product Information

In the opal jewellery industry there are several products that are made from the rough precious opal that comes from the mine site. To be classed as precious opal the material must exhibit a "play of color" which is caused by the diffraction of light passing through the opal.

The various opal types found in the Okanagan Opal deposit are:

1. Solid Precious Opal Stones with various base types:

- crystal opal which is clear with a play of color
- semi-crystal which is translucent with a play of color
- white to brown opaque with a play of color

2. Boulder Opals

Any of the above opal types where the opal itself is still attached to the host rock (vein type boulder opal) or disseminated within the host rock (opal in matrix). The opal rock and the opal are cut and polished to the size of the pre-cut cap.

3. Opal Doublets (both capped or black-back doublets are produced)

a) Capped doublets are a two layer laminated product in which a pre cut quartz cap is epoxied to a piece of boulder opal using waterproof glues. The boulder opal is then trimmed cut to the size of the pre-cut cap.

b) Black-backed Doublets - crystal opal is laminated onto a black base - we use black serpentine. The black back supports the opal, provides thickness and often enhances the color

General Pricing Information

All prices are listed at retail (delivery charges extra). Prices listed are subject to change without notice. Until a secure "shopping cart" purchasing is implemented all orders are COD.

Click on "**product**" button at top of page to view product line and price information.
Click on individual product pictures to see enlarged view and to get description and price information.