



Lapis Lazuli

One of the most significant stones in world history, Lapis Lazuli has been mined in Afghanistan as early as the 7th millenium BC! It was used for the eyebrows on the funeral mask of King Tutankhamun.



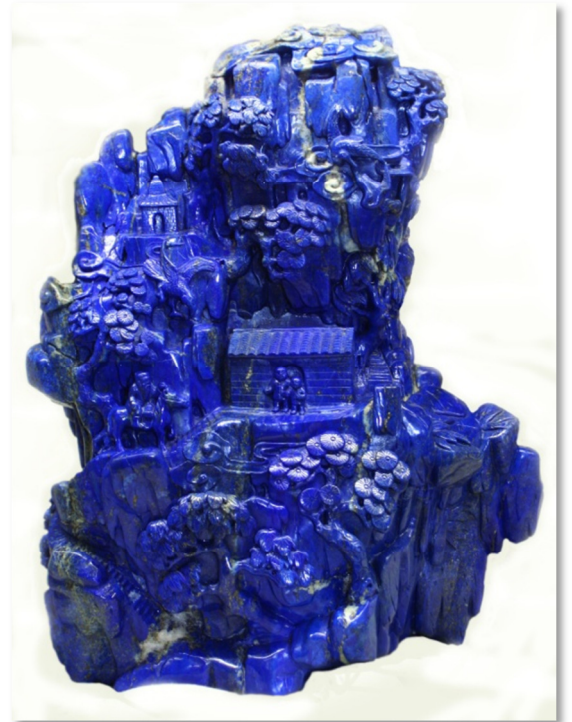
The word Lapis alone simply means 'stone', Lapis Lazuli translates from Medieval Latin to 'stone of azure'. Therefore the name should always be said in its entirety, never just 'Lapis'.

Technically, it is a mix of Lazurite and calcite, pyrite is a common inclusion.

There are many different grades of Lapis Lazuli, the best being pure azure blue with minimal calcite. Although technically, pyrite is considered an inclusion in Lapis Lazuli, if the stone is cut to display bands of pyrite, it is still highly sought after.

Girl with a Pearl Earring by Dutch artist Johannes Vermeer was painted in 1665 using ultramarine, a natural pigment made from Lapis Lazuli.

This spectacular Lapis Lazuli carving believed to date back to the Chinese Qing Dynasty (1644–1912) was acquired by The Crystal Caves in 2007. It is of the same era as the carving referred to William Butler Yeats' poem 'Lapis Lazuli' about the carving given to him on his 17th birthday.



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