

Rutile in Quartz - Object of the Month

Celine, a work experience student from King Edward School for Girls in Edgbaston, describes her choice of Lapworth Museum Object of the Month.

Title: [Rutile in quartz - Lapworth Museum - Object of the Month \(/facilities/lapworth-museum/about/object-rutile-quartz.aspx\)](/facilities/lapworth-museum/about/object-rutile-quartz.aspx) (follow link for video)

Duration: 1.45 mins

Hi, I'm Celine Shaw and I'm from King Edward's in Birmingham and I'm here for a week on work experience. Here I have some rutile in quartz. The outside is quartz, it's transparent and it's composed primarily of silicon dioxide and inside there are some rutile crystals and they consist of titanium dioxide.

The rutile is quite interesting because it has the highest refractive index of any known mineral and it also exhibits a high dispersion, which is why, when it's found in other minerals, it often appears in long shots of colour and thin. The name derives from the latin word Rutilis which means red and it's given this name because often it's quite intense red colour. In this example it's actually quite silvery and here it's also quite silvery, kind of golden, so there's variation in colour.

So, rutilated quartz is often found in, to name a few countries, in Madagascar, Sri Lanka, India and Switzerland. In fact in Switzerland there's quite a lot of rutilated quartz and they call it 'flèches d'amour', which means arrows of love. They call it this probably because there's quite a lot of acicular crystals penetrating the quartz and it looks like love arrows.

Because it's so uniquely beautiful it's often used as a gemstone in jewellery and decoration and it's thought by some Earth-based religions that this gemstone can relieve feelings of loneliness and depression and it can also empower originality and bring personal strength.

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