

FIREWORKS IN STONE



Andrew Gulij's stones, clockwise from top left: citrine Gem-Intrusion[™] with coral, lapis, and chrysoprase; rock crystal Gem-Intrusion[™] with pyrope garnet; citrine Gem-Intrusion[™] with coral, lapis, turquoise, and malachite; and natural light blue fopaz Gem-Intrusion[™] with malachite, turquoise, and red coral. Photo: Andrew Gulij.

Natural inclusions can be beautiful, as are the golden shafts of rutile in quartz. Inspired by these natural beauties, cutter Andrew Gulij, of Gem Fix in San Diego, California, gave birth to the Gem-Intrusion[™] line, one of a number of his innovative cuts (another, the Stellar[™], is featured in the project opposite; directions for cutting it follow the ring project).

Mother Nature is limited in the types of inclusions she adds to gemstones during growth, but Gulij has no limitations. He has introduced hand-cut and shaped "needles" of turquoise, lapis, coral, tiger-eye, variscite, and sugilite into gems such as citrine, aquamarine, rose quartz, or peridot. He has fabricated intrusions of transparent materials as well: chrome tourmaline, rubellite, sapphire, and rubies. The carefully placed inserted materials reflect from the interior surface of the stone, like images in a hall of mirrors. The visual effect is like fireworks trapped in stone.

For the greatest visual impact, Gulij works with stones larger than five to six carats, prefers to work with faceted stones of more than 15 carats, and he has fashioned Gem-Intrusions[™] as large as 200 carats. Because of these sizes, 60 to 70 percent of designers use the stones in pendants,



GEM-INTRUSIONS[™] PRICES

STONE NOTES

Gem-Intrusions[™] are priced per stone. Pricing depends on the type of stone, the size, and the complexity of the work.

On average, a citrine of 10 to 20 carats can run between \$400 and \$700. Stones such as aquamarine, pink tourmaline, or peridot can command prices up to \$25,000.

The copyrighted and trademarked Gem-Intrusions[™], as well as stones featuring other interesting cuts, are available online at www.gemfix.com or at the Gem Fix shop in San Diego, California.

though stones on the smaller end of the scale make surprising center stones in rings. The intrusions give designers an expanded choice of options. Accent stones can pick up the body color of the "mother stone" or the color of one or more of the intrusions. (Gulij frequently uses more than one color and type of gem material for the intrusions.) Rose, green, or peach golds can emphasize the intrusion colors, as can strands of beads.

The tiny needles are shaped precisely by hand to fit holes drilled into a stone that Gulij has custom faceted. Once fitted and held in place by a touch of adhesive, the inserted materials are secure. However, these stones should be cleaned carefully. Avoid the steamer. Many of the stones Gulij uses are temperature sensitive by themselves, let alone in combination. To use a steamer is to almost guarantee disaster. It is best, says Gulij, to treat them as you would an opal doublet.

Clean carefully with a mild soap, warm water, and a soft brush.

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