

09/24/98

Wink Mugged in Rio!

The Things I go through to bring you the goodies.

It was after a long morning of searching the gem sources of Rio that it happened.

(Translation: Resa and I did not get up until 9:30 and were just strolling back to the hotel after a delightful breakfast at a local bakery in Ipanema, a beach front neighborhood in Rio. All of the gems that I bought the day before were safely locked in a safe deposit box at the hotel. This just sounded too boring, so I spiced it up a bit...)

A young thief jammed his hand so hard into my pocket that he nearly knocked me to the ground, and was nearly caught then and there, as my pants were a little tight after three weeks in Brasil and he had trouble getting his hand out of my pocket before I could grab his arm.

He took off running and stopped thirty yards away to look back at the old man he had tried to rob. Imagine the look of surprise on his face when he saw this "old" man only a step or two behind him. I can still see the big round eyes and the sheer fear as he ducked my outstretched hand and took off again.

When he got to the edge of the local slum, I turned back and for the next few minutes listened to the catcalls of he and his friends as Resa and I hustled back more to the center of Ipanema where we belonged.

There were two good things that happened that morning. One, the thief got nothing but air from my pocket, my few dollars of change from breakfast were still there. Two, I did not catch him. **What on earth would I have done with a thief???**

The best news is what I did bring back from Brasil!

Incredible Gemstones Just for You!

From Minas Gerais to Rio de Janeiro, I searched for fine gems, and found a few that I knew you would like. Then when I got home, I sent them all to Richard Homer for

custom cutting. On some of the stones I lost as much as 30% of the original stone, **but ended up with stones of incredible sparkling beauty.**

I will not bore you with a list of stones, but will tell you that if you like rich royal blue tourmaline, then you will **love** the four fabulous custom cut tourmalines that I still have. Sorry, but the **incredible** pink tourmaline sold the very day that it got back from cutting.

These stones are an extraordinary blue color with a hint of green, and I do not have the words to properly describe them. These are a must see item, even if you do not want to buy one of them, you owe it to yourself to come and see them.

I also found a parcel of Brazilian emeralds that surprised me with their beauty. Normally I do not like emeralds from Brasil, but these are an exception. They look like fine Zambian goods.

In fact, when I sent them to the gem lab for identification of which treatments might have been used (virtually all emeralds are treated in one way or another, save for **very** expensive and **very** rare specimens) they called me to ask me from where in Zambia these came, as the inclusions were not the ones they were used to seeing in Zambian stones.

They were extremely surprised to hear that these came from a new Brazilian find, as these were some of the finest Brazilian emeralds they had ever seen at the lab.

I again apologize as I only have two stones of this parcel left. They simply are too beautiful to stay in the store long enough for me to write about them. (Sigh, if only I could have found more of them...)

Back to Antwerp

Just in Time to Buy Your Christmas Diamonds!

Resa and I leave October 11 to spend a quick week in Antwerp, Belgium. Once again we will meticulously look at hundreds of diamonds to choose the few that will make the grade at Winfield's.

What can we bring back for YOU? Please call me at (208) 344-0800 so that I can find that special stone that you are looking for.

Why Should I Buy a Diamond Now?

With the Asian currency crisis, DeBeers has lowered the quantity of diamonds that it has

released onto the market by approximately 43% so far this year. DeBeers has done this to prevent prices from falling. This has had some interesting effects. One is that certain sizes and qualities are very hard to find right now. Two is, that even though the Asian markets are not buying many diamonds, the people who cut for them are still buying goods and looking to sell them **somewhere!**

What this means to you is this. There are a lot of diamonds available to the American and European markets, and one of the very best places to find them is Antwerp. Prices are firm (even some small premiums) in some areas, and soft (up to 5 or even 10%) in others.

As has been the case for the last several years, the cutter is getting squeezed by the customer refusing to pay the price on one end, and DeBeers refusing to lower the price on the other. I predict that we will lose several cutters in the near future, unless some dramatic changes take place in the market, and I do not foresee those changes happening soon.

Many cutters are only working part time because of the reduced supply of goods to cut from DeBeers, and wise customers are refusing to pay their asking prices because of the low demand in other countries.

In short, this may be one of the greatest buying opportunities of the past several years. DeBeers has not been able to raise prices this year at all, and has withheld goods to avoid having to lower prices, yet the market still has to sell the goods that it has received. (Can you say Catch 22?)

The other bonus is this. Stones that were primarily cut for the Japanese market at very high premiums are now available for us in the United States for very low premiums. I am referring to the "Hearts and Arrows" cuts that are sort of an ideal cut's ideal cut.

Not too long ago, these stones sold for a thirty percent or higher premium over a regularly cut stone, now the premium is closer to 10-15% and this makes these magnificently beautiful stones highly affordable.

Once the economic crisis resolves itself, the demand in the Asian countries will rise, and although it will take some time to restore balance to the supply and demand, prices **WILL** increase, perhaps significantly.

As we come into the Christmas season, it will be harder and harder to fill in the holes in our inventories, so now is a good time to tell me what you would like. That way I can get it for you, **now**, instead of telling you why I can't, later.

Call now, (208) 344-0800 and let's find you that perfect stone!

Cruising the Wine Country

One of our clients, Tony Moody, has recently started a Cruise One franchise in Boise. He has asked me to tell all of you about him and since I like the idea of what he has, I have agreed to do so.

His company only sells cruises, and they do a lot of custom cruises. For late September and October, one of his cruises that sounds like a lot of fun to me is the wine country cruise. You leave San Francisco and sail up the Napa River and have the opportunity to stop at several wineries and taste the “fruits” of their vines.

These are three and four day cruises. If this sounds like fun to you, give Tony a call at (208) 336-0436.

Thanks for all the Referrals!!!!

Thanks once again to all of you who have been so wonderful about sending your friends to me. I promise to keep treating them just as well as I treated you, and I hope to see you again soon also!

Goodbye for now. I would write you more often, but you have kept me so busy that it is hard to find the time. As a result, I will just have to work harder to find you better values and bring you, as always, the finest jewelry for **a fraction of what you would pay a traditional retailer.**

Respectfully submitted

Wink Jones

P.S. Those tourmalines and emeralds really are special, call me when you have a minute to come see them!

P.P.S. Just received some award winning sculptures in gemstones, including the Waterfall Suite in Aquamarine (three pieces) and an absolutely stunning blue chalcedony perfume bottle. **WOW!** Add these to the list of must see items! If you have ever wanted a gift for someone special that was **absolutely one-of-a-kind**, then you will want to give one of these unique treasures!