

Consumer Corner

Free Online Guide Makes Shopping For Gemstones Crystal Clear

(NAPSA)—If you've ever wandered into a jewelry store and marveled at the beauty of gemstones—but didn't know the difference between tanzanite and topaz—then meet online gemstone expert Ruby Tuesday.

She can be your guide to a fun and interactive online gemstone tutorial at www.gia.edu.

The world's leading nonprofit jewelry educator, the Gemological Institute of America (GIA) created the free tutorial as a service to gem lovers and gem shoppers everywhere.

"How to Buy a Gemstone in 7 Simplified Steps" introduces you to the intriguing, diverse and complex world of gems. You can learn about the important factors that affect gemstone values, along with the history, lore and care of 20 popular gemstones.

Virtual Graduate Gemologist (G.G.) Ruby Tuesday familiarizes you with some of the gemological tools that professional jewelers use when grading colored gemstones. You will leave the site understanding the four Cs of colored gemstone grading—color, clarity, carat weight and cut.

As you navigate through the site, you will be able to move gems into mountings to see how they look in actual jewelry. You can



Virtual GIA Graduate Gemologist Ruby Tuesday guides visitors through seven interactive challenges in GIA's new colored-stone tutorial at www.gia.edu.

shine a virtual penlight into phenomenal gems like opal and alexandrite to reveal their unique reactions. You will also be able to use a virtual loupe to reveal the inclusions that help in identifying gems. To help you learn about the importance of carat weight, there is a balance scale that shows examples of the carat weight of gemstones.

Ever wonder where a gem like Ruby is "born"? Explore the interactive map and discover where many popular gems are formed. The tutorial's extensive gem

library and glossary also help to give insight into gemstone terms and usages.

Those who successfully complete Ruby's challenges receive a "Smart Gemstone Shopper Award."

GIA's nonprofit mission is to uphold the public's trust in gems and jewelry by making knowledge about gemstones and jewelry available to both jewelry retailers and consumers.

The Institute, which created the international standard for diamond grading, launched a similar tutorial in 2000. In "How to Buy a Diamond," a virtual GIA G.G. named Lucy leads visitors on an interactive journey through the Four Cs of diamond grading. Tens of thousands have completed the popular online tutorial and learned the universal language of diamonds.

"GIA is dedicated to assisting people as they strive to become more astute in their jewelry shopping," explains GIA President William E. Boyajian. "The Institute's 'How to Buy a Diamond' tutorial proved to be such a valuable resource for consumers that we wanted to expand that educational opportunity into the world of colored gemstones."

To meet Ruby and learn how to shop for a gemstone, visit www.gia.edu.