

Diamonds are forever

The most spectacular sparklers in the world have arrived at the Natural History Museum in London. Eight of the world's most incredible diamonds are on display and together for the first time, so prepare to be dazzled.

The De Beers Millennium Star takes centre stage. Cut from a rough diamond of 777 carats which was discovered in the Republic of Congo, it was first unveiled at the Millennium Dome in 1999. The following year it became the target of a foiled robbery and has not been displayed in the UK again, until now.

"Visitors have an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see some of the world's most beautiful and rare diamonds", said Natural History Museum director Dr Michael Dixon.

For every 10,000 "white" diamonds, just one coloured or "fancy" diamond (as they are known) is mined. This exhibition focuses on the variety of these naturally coloured diamonds, which are the most valuable gemstones in the world. They include:

Steinmetz Pink Almost 60 carat and the largest fancy vivid pink. It took almost two years to cut and was first revealed around the neck of model Helena Christensen in Monaco, 2003.

Incomparable A yellow diamond of just over 407 carats. It is the third largest cut diamond in existence.

Ocean Dream A deep blue-green colour, the world's largest naturally occurring fancy diamond at 5.51 carats. Its dramatic colour is caused by exposure to natural radiation over millions of years in the Earth, which makes it particularly rare.



Moussaief Red A highly sought-after deep red diamond—5.11 carats—very few of which are known to exist.

Heart of Eternity A heart-shaped vivid blue, exceptional for its light tone and deep saturated colour. At 30.82 carats this is the largest of its kind in the world.

Allnatt Seriously striking, a cushion-shaped yellow diamond that is over 100 carats.

616 The name of this uncut diamond crystal also represents the number of carats. This piece is the largest single diamond crystal in the world, greater in carat weight than any cut diamond known today.

Alongside the headliners, is The Aurora Collection—featuring a glittering array of coloured diamonds from emerald green to blood red—all appearing for the first time in Europe. Dazzlers from the Royal Collection, include RnB singer Usher's diamond-studded watch and a bejewelled purse given to Nicole Kidman by Robbie Williams as a thank you gift.

You may not want to take your partner, but this exhibition is eye-opening in more ways than one. As you marvel, you can learn how these "great miracles" of nature are created, from their humble beginnings as carbon molecules, to the beauties on display. Don't miss out on this enchanting exhibition, whether you're a "diamond geezer" or not!

What: Diamonds exhibition
When: Mon-Sat 10.00-17.50, Sun 11.00-17.50
 8 July 2005 – 26 February 2006
Where: Natural History Museum, London
Web: www.nhm.ac.uk/diamonds
How much: £9 adults, £6 concessions, £24 families (up to five, minimum one adult), free for under 5s
Ticket hotline: 0870 013 0731

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