What's New in the Mineral World?

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Here I am again at my desktop station, ready, as springtime seeps into the air and the red taillights of the Tucson Show recede into wintry haze, to offer a briefing about what mineral dealers' websites are up to these days. Of course, many dealers are marketing what they or their emissaries picked up in Tucson, or in Munich or Denver before that, so as usual I'll go easy on things already described in print reports—you'll read about some exciting ones shortly in the Tucson report in the May-June *Mineralogical Record*. And in the brief meantime I've also found a few new things to report, plus many online revisitations of older material. I'll lead off with two new goodies from China, offered by two dealerships based in—well, of course—Spain.

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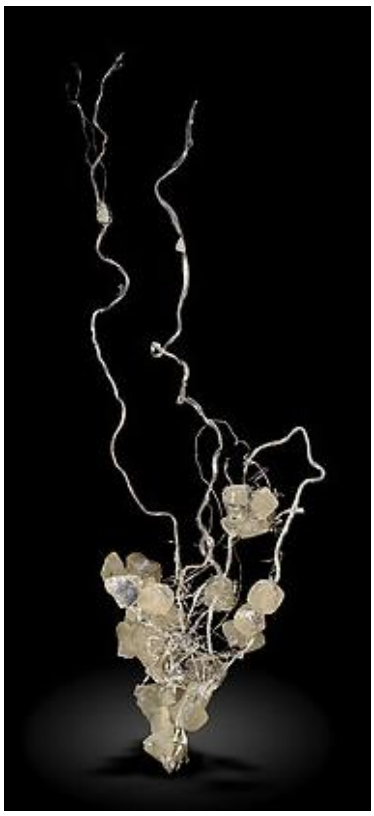
Silver and calcite, 2 cm, from the Jizishan deposit, Linqu, Weifang Prefecture, Shandong Province, China. *Fabre Minerals* specimen and photo.



Silver and calcite, 9 cm, from the Jizishan deposit, Linqu, Weifang Prefecture, Shandong Province, China. *Fabre Minerals* specimen and photo.

What's New on the Web

A tag line in Jordi Fabre's regular ads in our magazine is "Always Something Different!"—and, sure enough, a March update of *Fabre Minerals* (FabreMinerals.com) displays four new specimens of **wire silver with calcite** "from a find made in a small gold working, currently closed" (Jordi writes) in the Jizishan deposit, Linqu, Weifang Prefecture, Shandong Province, China. The specimens, ranging from 2 to 9 cm, consist of bright, very thin wires of silver in intimate intermixtures with equant, translucent white calcite crystals, some of the latter strung like fat beads on the silver wires. I show you here the two specimens at opposite ends of Jordi's size range, a thumbnail costing $419 and a cabinet-size piece costing $4199. These new silver specimens are not to be confused with those long since known from the Hongda and Jingwa mines in other parts of China; Jordi observes that the Jizishan deposit "showed no evidence of such good silvers until now."

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Calcite, 9 cm, from Longyan, Fujian Province, China. *Mch Minerals* specimen and photo.

The other Spanish dealership, *Mch Minerals* (mchminerals.com), has a February update offering five cabinet-size specimens from a "new discovery" at Longyan, Fujian, China: impressively sharp, clean-looking **calcite** crystals, both as loose groups and as well-spaced scatterings on dark matrix. The calcite crystals are hexagonal-tabular with a sandwich effect, showing pale pink centers between snow-white outer zones; they are opaque but lustrous, and highly fluorescent orange under longwave ultraviolet light.

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Sanidine, 3.7 cm, from Fosso Ricomero, Vetralia, Viterbo Province, Lazio, Italy. *Quebul Fine Minerals* specimen and photo.

I said that in this report I wouldn't repeat much news from the printed accounts of last season's big shows, but here is one bit of such news after all. In the HQLP section of the 2021 Munich report (in January-February 2022) I told you about some intriguing **sanidine** specimens brought to Munich by an Italian dealer, these very lately found in Fosso Ricomero, Vetralia, Viterbo, Lazio, Italy. And now I can say that some miniatures and thumbnails of this new, surprisingly nice-looking sanidine are available on the current website update of *Quebul Fine Minerals* (quebulfineminerals.com). We weren't able to fit a photo of one of these specimens into the Munich layout—no, not even of the fine thumbnail I picked up there for just 15 Euros (less than $20)—but shown here is a 3.7-cm matrix example for which Nadya and Todor of *Quebel* ask just $45. The sharp, complete, pale brown to yellow-brown, very thin and *translucent to transparent* sanidine crystals reach 3 cm or so; some specimens are loose floaters while others show the sanidine crystals resting in brown matrix of extremely young (Pliocene-Pleistocene) volcanic-pyroclastic rock.

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Villiaumite, 3.2 cm, from the Lovozero massif, Kola Peninsula, Russia. *Minservice* specimen and photo.

Speaking of Italian dealerships, the website of *Minservice* (minservice.com) regularly displays the wares, not only of Athos Locatelli's *Minservice* itself but also of five other, smaller Italian dealers, and great is the educational value and fun of scrolling through all of these offerings of one-of-a-kinders, mostly of older specimens from classic European—predominantly Italian—localities. From a March 26 update on *Minservice*, here is an excellent cluster of purple-red cubic crystals of **villiaumite** (NaF: the very rare cousin of halite) from the Lovozero massif, Kola Peninsula, Russia, for $63.

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Fluorite, 6.5 cm, from the Les Rocs quarry, Buxiéres-les-mines, Allier, Auvergne, France. *Minservice* specimen and photo.

Another out-of-the-wayer from *Minservice* is this specimen of the unusual **fluorite** from the Les Rocs quarry, Buxières-les-mines, Allier, Auvergne, France, with the fluorite expressing itself, distinctively for this locality, as bright purple and yellow spherical aggregates of microcrystals all over a 6.5-cm matrix ($93).

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Hopeite, 9.1 cm, from the Broken Hill mine, Kabwe, Central Province, Zambia. *Silvia's Crystals* specimen and photo.

Meanwhile, in a December 6 update of *Silvia's Crystals*, accessible also from *Minservice*, there is a terrific cabinet-size **hopeite** specimen from the old classic occurrence in the Broken Hill mine—No, not New South Wales, Australia. but the Broken Hill mine in Kabwe, Central Province, Zambia. It is a cluster of orange-brown hopeite crystals in a size and quality almost never seen on the market since the mine was enjoying its heyday in the mid-20th century ($383).

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Anglesite on galena, 6.7 cm, from Monteponi, Iglesias, Sardinia, Italy. *Ferrero's* specimen and photo.

And don't touch that dial just yet, for a March 26 update to the website of *Ferrero's*—again, you may reach it through *Minservice*—offers this fine antique **anglesite** specimen (with several old labels) from Monteponi, Iglesias, Sardinia, Italy: a liberal coating of sharp white, blocky anglesite crystals to 1.4 cm over galena ($153).

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Clinochlore, 5.9 cm, from the Chisone Valley, Torino, Piedmont, Italy.
***Ferrero's* specimen and photo.**

Finally, *Ferrero's* shows us a splendid **clinochlore** from the Chisone Valley, Torino, Piedmont, Italy. This is an occurrence I'd never heard of before, but the specimen probably comes from one of the rodingite veins which commonly crop out in this northern Italian region. Sorry, this one is marked as already "sold"—but I found the specimen, and the photo, impossible to pass by.

Now to make some sort of amends to Jack Crowley of *The Crystal Mine* (crystal-mine.com), who of late has been digging world-class specimens of the complex Mg-Fe borate **ludwigite** at a remote site in Idaho. In the online report immediately preceding this one I noted these specimens, and showed a photo of one of them. Now, in his latest update (posted February 1), Jack mentions delicately that the "preliminary" specimen I displayed is "one of the more inferior from this find"—much less delicately I had called it *ugly*, as

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Ludwigite, 4.5 cm, from the Spring Gulch/Valley View mine area, Quartzite (White Rock) Canyon, Spring Mountain district near Big Windy Peak, Lemhi County, Idaho. *The Crystal Mine* specimen; Jack Crowley photo.

indeed it is. But in the February 1 update Jack offers several new (or newly prepared) specimens which are black, mildly glistening bundles of prismatic ludwigite crystals, some with good terminations, and these are actually rather handsome; in any case they represent what's most likely the world's best occurrence of this rare species. Jack gives the locality *in full* as the Spring Gulch/Valley View mine area, Quartzite (White Rock) Canyon, Spring Mountain district near Big Windy Peak, Lemhi County, Idaho. To find the ludwigite specimens on his website, go to Gallery → New Arrivals. The piece shown here is priced at just $30.

Jack, you may recall, has been the author or coauthor of a number of articles in the *Mineralogical Record*, most notably the "Mines and Minerals of Peru" special issue (July-August 1997) and two articles on Idaho minerals: "Pyromorphite from the Coeur d'Alene" (September-October 1982) and "The Bunker Hill mine, Kellogg, Shoshone County" (November-December, 1981).

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Quartz, 4.3 cm, from Aiguilles des Améthystes, Argentiére Glacier, Mont Blanc massif, Haute Savoie, France. *Edelweiss Minerals* specimen; Felix Garcia photo.

Many, many reports have gone by since I last mentioned Felix Garcia's *Edelweiss Minerals* website (edelweissminerals.com), where fine minerals newly taken from clefts in the Alps are frequently offered for modest prices. In an April 1 update, Felix shows us 20 miniature-size **smoky quartz** specimens from recent collecting at Aiguilles des Amèthystes (famous for rare Alpine amethyst), on an edge of the Argentière Glacier (famous for octahedral pink fluorite), on the heights of the Mont Blanc massif above Chamonix, Haute Savoie, France. The new specimens are loose stacks of sharp, pale smoky and transparent, flattened quartz crystals; Felix says that white faden lines run down their common centers, but in most cases the lines are nearly invisible (at least to me) in the photos. As of mid-April, about half of these lovely Alpine quartz specimens are already sold; prices of the ones still available range from 30 to 165 Euros (~ $33 = $180).

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Quartz, 11 cm, from the Turbenalp, Binntal, Wallis, Switzerland. *Alpine Minerals* specimen and photo.

Gerd Wiedenbeck's *Alpine Minerals* website (alpine-mineralien.de) also offers a goodly number of highly presentable **quartz** specimens of Alpine persuasion, but they are totally different from Felix's, being single crystals and groups of colorless, transparent quartz of the "Tessin" habit. "Tessin" quartz crystals are prismatic but barrel-shaped, i.e. tapered in both directions along *c* until they come to sharp points at the ends: the habit is named for the Swiss canton called Tessin in German, although it is Italian-speaking and is more commonly called Ticino. However, quartz crystals of Tessin type are found all over the Alps; the source of Gerd Wiedenbeck's specimens is the Turbenalp, Binntal (Binn Valley), Canton Wallis, Switzerland. There are dozens of these "Tessin" quartz specimens on the website now, in a large array of sizes and prices; the single crystal shown here, which exemplifies the habit quite well, is an 11 cm-long whopper but, at 94 Euro (~ $103), not likely to be a budget-buster.

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Fluorite, 5.5 cm, from the Clara mine, Oberwolfach, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. *Alpine Minerals* specimen and photo.

Sticking a while yet with Gerd Wiedenback's *Alpine Minerals* website—never featured in one of these online reports before—I must say I'm impressed with the site's offerings of Alpine minerals generally, of Pakistani brucite, of fluorite, and of contemporary material from Iran. Gerd's **fluorite** selection includes specimens from many standard, easy-to-find localities, especially in England (where Gerd is involved in specimen-extraction work at the old Greenlaws mine), but also it features two miniatures from a classic locality not at all commonly seen these days: the Clara mine, Oberwolfach, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. These two fine fluorite specimens show sharp, translucent, white to very pale blue cubic crystals to 2 cm on matrix; the piece shown here is priced at 169 Euros (~ $185).

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Wulfenite, 3.5 cm, from the Chah Kharboze mine, Anarak district, Isfahan Province, Iran. *Alpine Minerals* specimen and photo.

Iranian specimens on the *Alpine Minerals* website (scroll down the long listing of *neue Mineralien*) include cerussite from the Nakhlak mine, green "demantoid" garnet on matrix from Belqeys Mountain, zunyite from the Persian Gulf coast, and wulfenite from both the Ahmad Abbas mine, Yazd Province, and from the Chah Kharboze mine, Anarak, Isfahan Province. This latter occurrence has become renowned for its very brilliantly red to red-orange wulfenite crystals ("the best red wulfenites in the world," Gerd optimistically calls them), but, lest Arizona collectors in thrall to the wulfenites of the Red Cloud mine get squirmy about this claim, recall that Chah Kharboze wulfenite crystals are almost never larger than a few millimeters, and specimens seen on the market are almost never larger than small-thumbnail size. And so, it is size, even more than beauty, which makes Gerd Wiedenback's best Chah Kharboze **wulfenite** specimen noteworthy: it is a 3.5-cm matrix with a top surface totally covered by upstanding, fiery red-orange wulfenite crystals. Price: 240 Euros (~ $265).

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Fluorite, 6 cm, from the "Hidden Forest Pocket," Diana Maria mine, Weardale, Durham, England. *Crystal Classics* specimen and photo.

The topic of English **fluorite** having just now arisen, I will direct you (as I've done often before) to Ian Bruce's *Crystal Classics* website (crystalclassics.co.uk). For several years now, Ian and Diana Bruce's "UK Mining Ventures" company has surpassed itself, year after year, in fabulous numbers of fabulous fluorites taken from the Diana Maria and subsidiary mines near Weardale, County Durham. In the print report from the 2021 Denver Show (January-February 2022) I described the only two pieces then ready for sale from the just-opened "Hidden Forest Pocket" in the Diana Maria mine: as the Chris Stefano photo published with the report makes clear, "Hidden Forest" fluorite is characterized by exceptionally lustrous, wholly transparent cubic crystals with dark purple core zones sharply hedged in by forest-green rims. Well, more "Hidden Forest" fluorites have been readied for sale by now, and you'll find them scattered about on the "Latest Additions" page of the *Crystal Classics* website. The gorgeous example shown here, measuring 6 cm, costs $1,500.

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Crocoite, 21.5 cm, from the Adelaide mine, Zeehan, Tasmania, Australia. The *Adelaide Mining Company* specimen and photo.

Even large and spectacular specimens of **crocoite** from the Adelaide mine near Zeehan, Tasmania, Australia, are nothing new, but as a thumbnail collector I can tell you that excellent specimens of Tasmanian crocoite *of thumbnail size*, with attractive, not too outrageously delicate, girderwork clusters of crystals, are very hard to come by—yes, even at the locality, which I visited in 2021 as the guest of Adam Wright, chief of The Adelaide Mining Company (see the resulting article in the November-December 2021 *Mineralogical Record*). Well gosh, I even looked down into an unexcavated part of the great "Red River Pocket" and saw millions of crocoite crystals protruding from every wall into the void channel in the center, and I even looked at thousands of specimens that Adam had in his home, and I saw nary a *really fine thumbnail*, or even a potential-plausible thumbnail, among them. This may be about to change—or at least Adam hopes so, as an April 4 update on the website of *The Adelaide Mining Co.* (theadelaidemine.com) has four pages under the heading of "Crocoite Thumbnails." Indeed this site has been greatly expanded lately, for there are also sections for "Larger" and for "Special" crocoites and for "Old" and "New" ones. Shown below, just for the sheer amazement of it, is one of the specimens now up for sale on the site: a 21.5-cm object that's like some edifice or artifice brought to earth from the planet Zebulon. It shows hundreds of tiny red whisker-sprays sticking everywhere onto red-orange jackstraw-works, the structure itself exceedingly delicate…splintery, myriad, fractal. And this is a typical one of the major pieces that Adam mounts in special

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glass cases so as to convey them to Munich and Tucson each year, and the damage is negligible each time, he says. This specimen is priced at $17,000.

Crocoite, 3 cm, from the Adelaide mine, Zeehan, Tasmania, Australia. The *Adelaide Mining Company* specimen and photo.

Back, though, to the topic of crocoite *thumbnails*: each thumbnail-size specimen shown in the April 4 *Adelaide Mining Co.* update is mounted with hot glue in a Perky box, and most of them are very nice, very colorful and well sculpted, and most cost less than $50. If you don't go to Munich or Tucson so as to inspect Adam's crocoite spreads firsthand, this may be your best chance yet to acquire a fine *small* example.

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Natrolite, 5 cm, from the Poudrette quarry, Mont St.-Hilaire, Quebec, Canada. *Collection Arkane* specimen and photo.

Paul Lortie of *Collection Arkane* (collectionarkane.com) specializes in Canadian minerals, and now has three excellent miniatures of **natrolite** from the Poudrette quarry, Mont St.-Hilaire, Quebec, collected in 2017 by Gilles Haineault. Sprays of translucent white to transparent prismatic crystals of natrolite to 2 cm are nicely set off by associated aegirine, albite and gonnardite. The natrolite is strongly fluorescent green.

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Amethyst, 12 cm, from La Manche, Newfoundland, Canada. *Tyson's Fine Minerals* specimen and photo.

But just considering the multifaceted topic of minerals from Canada leads me back—for the fourth online report in a row—to the newly revamped, huge and varied website of *Tyson's Fine Minerals* (tysonsfineminerals.com). In the January 5 online report I described the somewhat peculiar way in which Rod and Helen Tyson have set up their site; suffice to say here that a surf through the many sections and subsections of the March 20 update will show you many good things you have heard of before and many you haven't, from places all over Canada. For one, there are several hefty, showy, large-miniature to full-cabinet-size **amethyst** crystal clusters from "La Manche, Newfoundland"—described by Mindat as the site of an old polymetallic mine, closed in 1929, near the shore of Placentia Bay in eastern Newfoundland. These crystal groups are lustrous, and royal purple color predominates in them; the piece shown here costs 350 Canadian dollars (almost the same as U.S. dollars these days).

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Apatite, 8 cm, from the Yates mine, Otter Lake, Quebec, Canada. Tyson's Fine Minerals specimen and photo.

More familiar to most of us are the stout, complete, dark greenish-brownish **fluorapatite** crystals in massive orange calcite from the old Yates uranium mine, Otter Lake, Quebec. Here is a fine one appearing now on the Tysons' site:

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Sphalerite, 6.3 cm, from the Sa Dana Hess mine, Watson Lake, Yukon Territory, Canada. *Tyson's Fine Minerals* specimen and photo.

And here's a Canadian something that's probably unfamiliar to you: **sphalerite** from the Sa Dana Hess mine, Watson Lake, Yukon Territory—as large, sharp, resinous dark brown crystals in a fine-looking cluster. To quote from *Moore's Compendium of Mineral Discoveries 1960-2015*, the Sa Dana Hess mine was "opened in the early 1990s" and quickly turned out a number of "promising" specimens of galena and sphalerite, but "no later significant supplies of such specimens have been forthcoming." For the piece now forthcoming from Tysons the price is 650 Canadian dollars.

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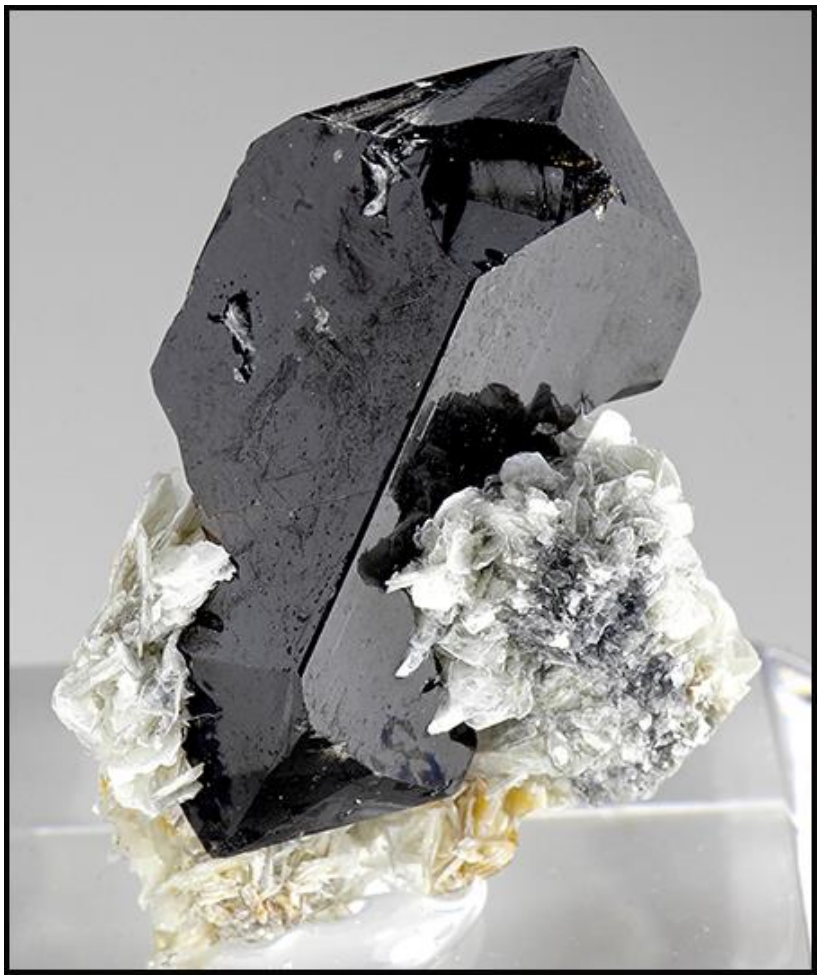

Cassiterite, 3 cm, from Mt. Xuebaoding, Sichuan Province, China.
***Weinrich Minerals Inc*. specimen and photo.**

What's an online report without some contribution from *Weinrich Minerals Inc.* (weinrichmineralsinc.com)? Not to seem to play favorites—but Dan Weinrich adds fifty or so new specimens to his "Latest Additions" section every few *days*, plus bigger batches on Wednesdays and Special Offers on weekends. As of April 12, it's somewhere around page 5 of "Latest Additions" that you'll find three exceptional specimens—a cabinet piece, a miniature and a thumbnail—of the distinctively lustrous and deep-deep black, *evilly* black you could almost say, **cassiterite** from Xuebaoding Mountain, Sichuan Province, China (Dan calls the locality "Huya," after the name of a village near the collecting site on the mountain). Usually these are fat compound crystals with accordion-pleated sides, but Dan's are single and smooth; here I show you the thumbnail because the muscovite around the crystal's middle sets it off so effectively. Dan prices this evil beauty at $1250 (the other two, much larger examples cost $17,500 and $25,000).

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Brazilianite, 4 cm, from the Telirio claim near Divino das Laranjeiros, Minas Gerais, Brazil. *The Arkenstone* specimen and photo.

Just as I'm nearing the end of writing this survey, what should come into my in-box but an April 12 update of Rob Lavinsky's *The Arkenstone* website (irocks.com), alerting interested parties to two new lots of Brazilian specimens Rob has just posted. There are, first, 14 thumbnails and miniatures (mostly miniatures) displaying familiar but ever-attractive, always desirable **brazilianite** crystals with albite, from the Telirio claim, Linopolis, Divino das Laranjeiras, Minas Gerais, Brazil. The specimens come in sizes from 2.5 to 5.5 cm, and they are priced between $125 and $750. Brazilianite from several localities in the region north of the town of Divino das Laranjeiras has been around for some time—indeed it was 1942 (and wartime!) when Ed Swoboda recognized the lovely yellow-green crystals he'd taken from Córrego Frio, just next door to the later Telirio claim, as a new mineral species. The beautifully gemmy, lustrous, yellow-green crystals were an instant hit with collectors and gem fanciers alike—see the J.P. Cassedanne article, with a very helpful map of the area and its many brazilianite sites, in the July-August 1983 *Mineralogical Record*. Brazilianite crystals from the Telirio claim (or "mine") are distinctively different from the Córrego Frio classics: while the latter are equant and tend to be more deeply colored and gemmier, Telirio crystals are short-prismatic, slightly flattened and wedge-terminated, and on average a paler yellow-green, though also gemmy, or at least partially so. (See the more recent article on the Telirio mine by Andrea Bartorelli and Carlos Cornejo in the May-June 2018 *Mineralogical Record*). And while the Córrego Frio

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crystals are associated with muscovite, Telirio specimens more often come with snow-white albite crystals, as do Rob's new ones. So, as I say, we have seen this material before, but it's good to see a fresh lot of it here, and at prices that seem quite reasonable at that.

Euclase with schorl inclusions, 3.6 cm, from the Chia mine, São José da Safira, Minas Gerais, Brazil. *The Arkenstone* specimen and photo.

Rob's other Brazilian offering is, on the other hand, something quite new: 13 thumbnail and miniature specimens of **euclase**, with that gemmy silicate species displayed as complete, colorless, transparent crystals to 4 cm with schorl, albite and muscovite—and the euclase crystals are included densely by black acicular crystals of schorl. Most of the specimens are loose, complete (or nearly so) single crystals, but there are also a couple of crystal clusters with muscovite. The specimens, Rob says, came from a single pocket discovered early in 2020 in the Chia mine, São José da Safira, Minas Gerais, and the schorl inclusions make them something different and *new* for euclase; prices range from $450 to $6,000.

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Aquamarine on albite, 7 cm, from the Haramosh Mountains, Skardu district, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan. *Fine Art Minerals* specimen and photo.

Many who make it regularly to the big Tucson, Denver and/or Munich shows have come to look forward to friendly encounters with busy, black-bearded Ghulam Mustafa, the uber-sociable dealer from Peshawar, Pakistan who always has something interesting at the stand of his *Fine Art Minerals* dealership: see a picture of Mustafa (the name he familiarly goes by) holding a giant aquamarine specimen in the upcoming 2022 Tucson Show print report. Somehow I've never consulted Mustafa's website (fineartminerals.com) before, but consulting it now I discover that he offers wonderful **aquamarine** specimens on the site, some of the finest having emerged from the same mountain group near Nyet Bruk, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan as produced the astonishing, 80-cm "King of Kashmir" specimen whose story is told by Daniel Trinchillo in the November-December 2020 *Mineralogical Record* (with the wraparound photo of the "King" on its front and back covers). Mustafa's website has nothing quite so tremendous as *that* (nor does anyone else's website), but the specimens that he does offer are nevertheless very fine. So I hereby conclude this report by showing you one of his finest: a gemmy blue, terminated crystal of aquamarine rising straight up from a just-right-sized matrix of crystallized albite, priced by Ghulam at (a surprisingly low, for the quality) $4,000. The locality given is "Haramosh Mountains, Skardu, Northern Areas"—near the village of Nyet Bruk, but note that the administrative division once called "Northern Areas" is now called "Gilgit-Baltistan."

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That will do it, this early springtime, for What's New Online. Keep shopping, collecting, visiting museums and private collections, hitting field sites, reading our publication…and break out the sunscreen, and **have a good early summer**.

Tom Moore

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