

How I Became An Antique Dealer by Brenda Ginsberg

Unlike most people, I didn't choose to come to live in the USA. I came to Florida kicking and screaming, but needing to hold my family together and this is the background for finding myself a square peg in a round hole, knowing nobody at all, and pretty much isolated and ignorant about the culture and society around me.

Possibly thinking it might save my sanity, my husband commanded me to 'try to sell something on the internet'. I couldn't see myself further from being in 'sales', but my husband is a determined Israeli. And so it began.

Now, try to remember back to 1997: the internet was very much in its infancy; there was almost no commerce and nobody had ever heard of a digital camera. So, I was literally a pioneer.

I started out selling any old junk from my house, progressed to auctions and unsold property and quite fast realised that a) I had no interest in selling junk, but that b) I was fascinated by antiques. There is so much to draw one to antiques: the history, the sociology, the art, the provenance and that's just the beginning. I dived into whatever caught my fancy - antique silver, fine porcelain, miniature paintings and antique glass to name a few realms. Years went by and the focus of my interest shifted increasingly to jewelry. The fact that it is small and easier to pack and ship or carry from place to place played a part. But ultimately, jewelry combines everything that fascinates me. It is truly wearable art and each item is unique and has its own history.

After a few years, my sole area of interest remained antique jewelry. I spent a few months in New York at the GIA, studying about diamonds and later did other courses, like pearls. Times have changed tremendously. The old dealers have mainly died off or gone out of business for other reasons. The internet is enormous and being a sole proprietor, I am a very tiny fish in a very big sea. Luckily for me, I never did this work in order to make tons of money and get rich. I'm lucky that my business has supported itself and allowed me to own beautiful items that I could not even dream about and to travel with the excuse of buying for work.

I love to share knowledge and information. My old pedagogic profession surfaces in the form of a blog. I publish a post every week, writing about all sorts of jewelry-related topics - like gems, kinds of mount, what to look for in..., tips for cleaning and caring, watching out for fakes, earrings through the ages, trends and more.

I hope you will join me in the fun and exciting world of antique jewelry.

This is a short section of a recent blog of mine. You're invited to read more on the following site: www.brendaginsberg.com and brendaginsbergjewelry on Instagram

Please scroll down on the **Home Page** to see the Blogs 😊

Antique and Vintage Ruby Jewelry - Introduction to the July birthstone - Post 26 , June 20th,2025

Rubies, often called "the King of gems", is July's birthstone. #7149



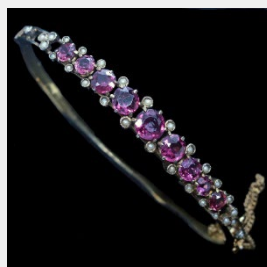
One of the most amazing countries I ever visited was Myanmar (Burma) which I was lucky enough to visit during the brief window when the country opened up, around 2010. There is so much to see and learn there. But one of its marvels is that it is the source of the world's most sought-after rubies. Antique ruby jewelry in every form is gorgeous and sought after.

Rubies, ranging in colour from light pink through deepest pigeon-blood have long been used in jewelry and along with their blue brothers, the sapphires, come directly under diamonds in hardness and desirability. Mystical qualities attributed to this valuable gem confer power, energy and passion to the wearer. While the tone of colour is strictly personal - Asians tend to love the darkest pigeon blood, Americans, the pinker tones, always look for a clear gemstone that talks to you and that you would like to see on your great-great-grand-daughter's finger, or worn around her neck.

We can aspire to fabulous antique ruby set jewels, but given the price of the very best antique jewelry, it's often worth looking into alternatives.

For years, even the Georgians searched for more affordable jewelry choices, while maintaining their high standards of workmanship. Rubellite, actually tourmaline, named because of it's similarity to ruby, is one choice.

Rubellite bracelet



#3850

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Written by Brenda Ginsberg in August, 2025

A Word About me:

I was born on Table Mountain. My parents brought me home to a newly built house in Somerset West, where we lived. In the middle of high school, I was transferred to Herzlia, where I learned the basics of Hebrew, Zionism and lots of ideology - the typical topics of South African Jews.

I studied a variety of subjects at UCT and became a high school teacher at Livingstone Senior Secondary – in the old days of apartheid when you got a police record just for applying for a job there. Ultimately, I found myself in Israel and being a ‘stubborn Litvak’, stayed. Fortunately, the Israeli ministry of labour paid for me to study computer programming, which changed the course of my life – not only in having a well-paying job (by then Israeli standards), but introducing me to great people.

When my young family and I moved into the South African Fed building, I met more great people. My immediate neighbor downstairs being Gail, whose mirpesset I flooded when watering my plants.

I’ve described my move to the USA in the previous blurb about how I got involved in selling antique jewelry.

I am married to Reuven, have 3 children, 2 of whom reciprocated the surprise move to the USA by moving to Israel and staying put.

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