

WHAT'S CRYSTAL ?

Here's here all you wanna know about "The History of Glass Making", "What's Lead Crystal?", "Some Common Glass & Crystal Making Techniques", "Where's Crystal in Feng Shui", Aura & "Aura Imaging" combined with "The Healing Side of Crystal"

Please sit back, scroll down and enjoy this journey.....

The History of Glass Making

No one knows exactly when or where glass was first made. Glass appears to have been produced as far back as the second millennium BC in Mesopotamia. Glass was a lot less common back then than it is today.

The art of glass making eventually reached Egypt. The Egyptians used a method called core-forming. A shaped core was made of clay and dung, then molten glass was wrapped around it and shaped by rolling it on a smooth surface.

It was very much later, around the end of the 1st century BC, that a new method, glass blowing would revolutionise glass production. This art was probably discovered along the Eastern Mediterranean coast, probably in Syria. By blowing through a hollow tube, the experienced glassblower can quickly produce intricate and symmetrical shapes out of the "gather" of molten glass at the end of his tube (rod). Alternatively, he can blow the molten glass into a mould. The glassblowing innovation, along with the backing of the powerful Roman Empire, made glass products more accessible to the common people. As the size of the Roman Empire increased, the art of glass making spread spread to many countries.

A flourishing glass industry did not develop in Europe until the end of the 13th Century, when Venice became a major glass making center. They may have picked up their glass making techniques through their contacts with the near East countries during the Crusades. The Venetian provided the link between the ancient & modern glass making arts. Venetian glass was noted for its brilliance & for its light, imaginative forms.

So by the 15th Century, Venice had become the major producer of glassware in Europe. So highly esteemed were the Venetian glass makers, that they were forbidden to leave the Island of Murano, lest their precious trade secrets be imparted to others.

However, it was to be another 2 centuries later that in 1676, an Englishman named George Ravenscroft; searching for a way to improve the luster and clarity of his glassware found that by adding lead oxide to his molten mixture he could not only improve the clarity (crystal clear) of the glass but dramatically increase the weight, the index of refraction and the ability to cut the material without fracturing. This new glass became known as lead crystal and very quickly became the perfect medium for glass cutters and engravers. Over the past 300 years, their skills, proudly passed from generation to generation, have given lead crystal it's world famous reputation.

The presence of lead in crystal softens the glass and makes it more accessible for cutting and engraving. Lead increases the weight of the glass and causes the glass to diffract light.. Lead crystal is made from a mixture of sand, potash (potassium carbonate) and lead oxide. The components are heated to at least 2,400 degrees Celsius until molten and red-orange in color. The temperature is then slowly reduced to the "working" temperature. Glass can contain up to 40% lead, if maximum hardness is desired. On the other hand, crystal can contain less than 24% lead if it has a high proportion of barium oxide, which ensures high quality light diffraction.

The main difference between glass and crystal is the lead content. Glass is composed of sodium and potassium. Crystal is also composed of sodium, but in addition, it contains silicone, and has a lead content of 10-24%. The lead makes the glass heavier and, most importantly, the lead

changes the refraction index of the item, which makes it appear brighter and cleaner. Because the refraction index is higher and lead crystal is not as brittle as standard glass, it is possible to make deeper and more complicated cuts in crystal.

To deserve the name “lead crystal” the glass must meet 3 criteria defined by rigorous rates and percentages . Below these measures, one can only talk about “crystal glass” or “crystalline”.

	Metallic oxides	Density	Refractory index
Full lead crystal 30%	PbO > 30%	> 3.00	> 1.545
Lead crystal 24%	PbO > 24%	> 2.90	> 1.545
Crystal glass, crystalline (Cristallin in French)	ZnO, BaO PbO, K ₂ O Separately or together > 10%	> 2.45	> 1.520
Crystal glass, crystalline (resonant glass in French)	BaO, PbO K ₂ O Separately or together > 10%	> 2.40	

Lead crystal is a material rich in symbols :

Symbol of life, lead crystal is a reminder of the four elements, ultimate components of life : earth, fire, wind and water.

Symbol of purity, glass has often been used as a representation of innocence and virginity. Many Italian Renaissance paintings show virgins depicted next to glass objects through which light passes without altering them.

Symbol of greatness , lead crystal, considered as a precious material, has often been reserved for the elite. Beyond its symbolic meaning, lead crystal has won acclaim with its sparkle its intensity , its transparency and its unequalled musicality.

Some Common Glass and Crystal Making Techniques

PANTOGRAPH or GUILLOCHE

The pieces are dipped in wax, and then the wax is scraped away in a particular pattern. After this is done, the glass is dipped in a mild acid. Where the wax has been scraped away, the acid burns a pattern in the glass.

SANDBLASTING

Parts of the piece that are not to be sandblasted are covered, and then a small nozzle is used to shoot a fine stream of silica at the piece. This technique is often used in combination with cutting.

COLOURING THE GLASS

To make coloured glass, different pigments are added to the glass-mass. For example, to produce green, copper oxide is added to the mixture. To produce blue, cobalt oxide is added. As well, it is possible to produce black, brown, red, orange, yellow and purple glass, in a myriad of shades.

CUTTING

Although it is possible to make some cuts in sodium potassium glass, lead crystal is the material of choice for this technique. Because of the higher refraction index of crystal, cuts in the crystal both add to the interest and appearance of the piece, as well as making it appear very clean and bright.

MACHINE ENGRAVING

Machine engraving is used on both hand-made and automatic production pieces. This technique is used to ensure uniformity from piece to piece.

Lead crystal, which is mouth blown in the traditional method, may from time to time have a few minor bubbles contained within the piece. This is generally accepted as a by-product of the traditional process and does not detract from the piece. On occasion, small, barely perceivable lines may be detected within a piece of crystal. These represent slight variations in the density of the molten crystal, which remain after the crystal has cooled. These lines are called cords and are also considered a by-product of the traditional process.

It should be noted that each piece of true hand cut lead crystal is a unique product of the individual artisan or artisans who have produced it. For example within a set of stemware of the same pattern there may be very slight variations in pattern size and spacing of the elements. This only serves to embellish the charm and appreciation of such artisanship and is by no means considered a detriment. Absolute product consistency is only achieved by fully mechanized production, not by a craftsman.

WHAT IS FENG SHUI?

The underlying principle of Feng Shui , which literally means Wind and Water, is to live in harmony with your environment. It has been around in the western world for over 3000 years and is often referred to as the Chinese Art of Placement. It affects every aspect of life and the way it is applied can be either influential or detrimental to the way you live.

By applying the principles of Feng Shui to your life you can open up a whole new world - a new way of looking at and listening to your environment. You can start getting your environment to work for you. By making positive Feng Shui changes you can improve every aspect of your life, including your HEALTH, WEALTH and HAPPINESS.

In the West, Feng Shui is not a science as its principles cannot yet be proven by any scientific method. It is not a religion, although some of its advocates may consider it part of their religious rituals. It is not necessary to follow any religion to understand or practice Feng Shui. It is not just a philosophy as it encompasses many practical tools and techniques. It is not a belief system: asking someone if they believe in Feng Shui is like asking them if they believe in the weather. Feng Shui is not a question of faith but a fact of life.

WHAT PART DOES A CRYSTAL PLAY IN FENG SHUI?

Light is a powerful way of activating the chi energy in your environment. Crystals encourage and disperse natural light and are one of the most popular Feng Shui cures. Hang a beautiful crystal in the window and you will experience the beauty of rainbows filling the room with Sheng Chi (positive energy). Keep a crystal close to you, to maintain that powerful Yang energy so necessary for your well being.

What is Aura?

During an occasion at one of our trade shows in Orlando, we have learnt a lot from our dear friend **Guy**, the leader of **AURACLE Team** – a company specializing in “Aura Imaging”. He generously shared his study and knowledge of this process with us. And we want to share it with you.

The Aura is a colorful field of electromagnetic energy that surrounds your body. It is no longer a question of whether we have an aura, since science has now proven its existence. There are many ways for to “see” your aura through our Living Aura Imaging technology.

What is Living Aura Imaging ?

Living Aura Imaging is an interactive multimedia biofeedback system that uses cutting edge technology which allows you to view your aura in interactive real time on the computer monitor. This system is ideal for showing changes in your auric field as it responds to your thoughts, feelings, **healing modalities**, health products and other stimuli. Many people do follow up sessions to see how they are progressing.

How Does Living Aura Imaging Work?

Biofeedback probes on the handplate pick up your body's energy from your hand and communicate that information back to the computer. The monitor then displays this information as a colorful energy field which represents your actual aura. Knowing more about your auric colors helps you to relate better to others and capitalize on your strengths.

What Does It Mean To You?

The Colors of Your Aura

Indigo

Relates to having opportunities for better communication with your inner self, inspirational, kindness. A person with this color can be trusting of the future and inspirational to others.

Violet

Violet is the magical, mystical color. Great opportunities for spiritual searching and ultimately deeper connection with Spirit. Abilities of charm, eroticism and enchantment are enhanced.

White

White in our aura gives us the ability to see things in a holistic way. A time of great spiritual motivation and faith.

Brown

Unsettling, distracting, materialistic, negating spirituality.

Gray

Dark, depressing thoughts, unclear intentions, presence of dark side of personality.

Red

Red relates to the base chakra. This is the color of the physical. Red is passion, vitality, enthusiasm, sex, strength of will and beginnings. Without red, nothing would get started.

Orange

Orange is the color of ambition and drive, selfexpression, original and lateral thought. Artistic and creative skills can be finely tuned by wearing

Yellow

Every shade of yellow indicates a function of our intellect, talent for organization, discipline, personality and ego.

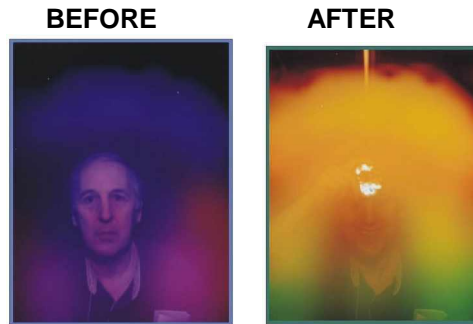
Green

Green is the balance of ying and yang; healing, nurturing, compassion, love, growth, prosperity, and change.

Blue

Blue is the color of truth, loyalty, calmness, peace, sensitivity, commitment and love in friendship. Listening and communication are enhanced.

Here's our friend **Guy** in Aura Imaging Studio **Before** and **After** he holds one of our **Crystal Diamonds**:



The Size & Shape of Your Aura

The size and shape of your aura indicates the energy surrounding you. An aura that is close to the head indicates shyness or introversion. An aura that extends upward and outward indicates powerful energy, activity and extroversion. An aura that is even on all sides is a person who is well balanced and/or consistent. An aura that has gaps or holes in it usually symbolizes a loss or a will to let go of something significant. A band of different color on the edge of the aura signifies the person's strongest desires, goals or tendencies at that time.

Color Location Around Your Head & Its Meaning

Right Side (Masculine Energy) is the color energy you are expressing to others each and every day. It represents your recent past or the energy that is leaving you.

Center (and Above) is the color energy that best shows you what you are experiencing right now in yourself and your life.

Left Side (Feminine Energy) is the color energy that shows you what you are attracting in the near future into your life. The time period could be from a few hours to a few months.