

# Labradorite

Labradorite is part of the feldspar group of minerals. Its name comes from the Labrador region of Canada where labradorite was originally discovered around 1770. Many people find it difficult to get their tongue around this name, the easiest way to say labradorite is in two syllables, putting the emphasise on the letters in bold, 'labrad' 'orite', Labradorite.

In 1940 during World War II, labradorite was accidentally discovered in Finland whilst a defence line was being built in Ylamma in southeast Finland. This makes it a more recent discovery than the famous labradorite from Canada and Madagascar. As countries are allowed to name their own gemstones, professor Aarne Laitakari, then director of the Geological Survey of Finland, chose the name spectrolite instead of labradorite. This choice reportedly stemmed from the gemstone's wide spectrum of colour. Spectrolite is now Finland's national gemstone.

Labradorite is very iridescent meaning it displays a spectrum of colour that changes depending on the angle at which you look at it and the colour which can be seen in a good piece of labradorite is really quite breathtaking. This effect is called schiller or labradorescence. Green or blue are most common but occasionally red, yellow or grey can also be seen. The finer the stone, the more distinctive and striking the colour.

The major source of labradorite is on the north central coast of Labrador in Canada where large blocks are available. It is also found in India, USA, Finland and Ukraine. The dark grey variety comes mainly from Madagascar.

With regards to crystal healing, labradorite is said to provide clarity to the inner self, enhance patience and offer a quick relief from feelings of anxiety and hopelessness replacing them with enthusiasm and inspiration. It dispels negativity and improves one's ability to co-operate with others. It is also believed to give perseverance and strength. Other benefits of labradorite are to help treat eye and brain disorders and to help regulate metabolism and the digestive process. Labradorite can also help to purge negative thought patterns, to give great insight and vision and it allows one to communicate these gifts in a beneficial way for the self and others. It is said to bring out ones finest qualities allowing you to be all that you can. Labradorite is a powerful self esteem building gemstone.

Labradorite is graded 6 to 6.5 on Mohs scale of mineral hardness.

The following links offer further reading on labradorite

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Labradorite>

<http://www.gemologyonline.com/feldspar.html>

<http://www.galleries.com/minerals/silicate/labrador/labrador.htm>