

# PINK TOPAZ

**GHUNDAO HILL MINE  
KATLANG, PAKISTAN**

By Kim Markert



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## **Nice Dark Pink Topaz - Katlang, Mardan District Pakistan**

**Topaz is the name for the mineral species that is a number 8 on Mohs' scale of hardness. Due to the shape of the rough (elongated prisms), topaz**

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is generally cut as emerald cuts, ovals, cushions and pears. The most valuable topaz is a rich pink or red color, these can fetch prices in excess of \$3500/ct. at retail. They are however, rare in sizes above 5cts. The occurrence of pink topaz in Pakistan was discovered less than 20 years ago. In the fall of 1972, the topaz was first discovered by local residents who dug the crystals secretly and then brought them to the local markets. The government soon became aware of the illegal digging and requested detailed studies of the hillock. The deposits were taken over by the Gemstone Corporation of Pakistan in 1979. The pink topaz is found in one of two hills that rise abruptly from the fertile plain of the Mardan District in the neighborhood of a small village. This settlement of farmers and the hillock both bear the same name-Ghundao, and are located about 2.5 miles north of a small town of Katlang. The topaz hill is about 80 m higher than the village. The Ghundao hill is comprised of many folds that have been intruded in places by veins of coarse grained white calcite and quartz. These are the veins in which the pink topaz is found and there are two types of veins. The first, is short narrow irregular veins, several centimeters wide and less than a meter long. The second, are much larger veins which can be 2 m-6ft wide and several meters long. Topaz is mainly confined to the second type of calcite vein. The calcite veins completely penetrate the hill. The topaz is usually completely embedded in the calcite, but occasionally found protruding into cavities, or just lying loose in the debris. The total production of gem quality pink topaz recorded up to 1984 is 72,000ct of gem quality. The largest cut pink topaz from this area recorded in 1985 is 37.76 ct. This is the only known occurrence of pink topaz, all other pink topaz from other areas have been heat treated to get there color. The pink hue of the Pakistan material is so distinctive that the color-trained eye can distinguish it without difficulty. The color is due to trace elements of chromium( $\text{Cr}^{3+}$ ).



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**Extremely rare purple-lavender hued topaz on matrix from Katlang District.**

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**This is a fabulous pink topaz from Katlang! The crystals show a bright pink color, great clarity and luster.**

**References: [www.mindat.org](http://www.mindat.org) / [www.Gems and Gemology](http://www.Gems and Gemology)**

**Pala International/[www.palagems.com](http://www.palagems.com)**