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## **Diamonds, Cubic Zirconia And Moissanite: How They Differ**

**By Jill Renee**

Diamonds are known for their sparkle and brilliance making them popular in jewelry as their shine is unmatched by any other gemstone. Symbolizing eternal love, diamonds are popular in engagement rings and wedding jewelry. Because of their hardness, diamonds are also used to cut and wear away other substances and are used for industrial purposes in drills, saws and engraving tools.

The jewelry and industrial uses for diamonds created a demand for the stones and also prompted the creation of imitations which mimic the qualities of a diamond with some differences. Cubic zirconia and moissanite are two of these that are popular in jewelry.

Both are diamond simulants meaning non-diamond materials are used to create them and simulate the properties of a real diamond. Both are less expensive than a diamond and have their advantages and drawbacks.

### **Cubic Zirconia vs. Diamonds**

Cubic zirconia (or CZ) has been used in jewelry since the 1970's. Cubic zirconias are more reflective than glass or crystal so they sparkle like diamonds. A CZ is not as hard as a diamond but weighs more, a fact that does not lessen cubic zirconias appeal since traditional carat sizes are small enough that their weight isn't perceived as greater. The majority of diamonds have inclusions, or flaws (these are measured by the Clarity component of the four C's of diamond buying.) CZs are optically flawless and they are colorless, another characteristics that is found in few diamonds as most diamonds have some yellow shading to them.

### **Moissanite vs. Diamonds**

Moissanite is the jewelry name for silicon carbide and was introduced as a gemstone in the late 1990's. Moissanites are more refractive than diamonds meaning they shine more brilliantly making this one of the easiest ways to tell it is not a diamond. A moissanite is not as hard as a diamond but is harder than a cubic zirconia and it weighs less than a CZ. Moissanites do have inclusions like diamonds and may have green shading to them.

## Diamonds, Cubic Zirconia And Moissanite: How They Differ

Both cubic zirconia and moissanite have a close visual resemblance to diamonds - they offer the luster and fire of diamonds while being mostly colorless and can be cut in the same shapes as diamonds. In jewelry making cubic zirconia and moissanite are not as popular so they are harder to find in specific cuts and are not regularly found in jewelry stores or traditional online jewelry sellers.

Jill Renee is the president of Danforth Diamond, an online jewelry seller specializing in diamonds. Learn more about buying diamonds at:

<http://www.danforthdiamond.com/education/index.htm>

### **Fabulous Facts About Moissanite Stones**

**By Catherine Olivia**

Moissanite is a very affordable alternative to diamonds, one that everyone can afford. The reproduction of moissanite in a laboratory began in 1995. Created moissanite is a lab created stone that is based on the structure of natural moissanite, which is a crystal found in meteorites. Because moissanite occurs so rarely and is so small in nature in order to supply jewelry needs it is grown in labs.

Moissanites are not sold by carat size like diamonds, but are sold by size measured in millimeters. Charles & Colvard who are the sole-source manufacturer of moissanite do not allow jewelers to sell loose stones.

Laboratory created moissanite has a hardness rating of 9.25. The hardness rating of a diamond is 10. It is said that the most important characteristics of a jewel are it's beauty, durability and rarity. Some lab created moissanite stones actually have more brilliance and luster than actual diamonds. These are called optical qualities. Created moissanites are as clear or "eye clean" as SI quality diamonds. Created moissanite is able to withstand heat better than a diamond. At a temperature of 1100 degrees Celsius a diamond will catch fire, burn, and eventually vaporize. A created moissanite stone will remain intact.

The good news about created moissanite is that some jewelers cannot tell the difference between colorless created moissanite and colorless diamonds. However, you want to make sure that what you are purchasing is actually a moissanite and not a much cheaper imitation CZ. There are lab instruments available to jewelers to help them distinguish the difference. Jewelers can use a probe called a moissanite probe or microscope and some know how to distinguish "double refraction" in moissanites.

To make sure that what you purchase is a moissanite and not a cheap imitation make sure you buy from a reputable dealer and get a written verification from this dealer. It is also suggested that you get a written verification of the stone as well as a certified appraisal.

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