

## Green Gems are Rapidly Making Chinese Converts

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In May 2016, Christie's Hong Kong Magnificent Jewels sale saw a spectacular purchase made by Chow Tai Fook. The 5.03ct Aurora Green diamond, graded by the Gemological Institute of America (GIA) as a fancy vivid green colour with VS2 clarity, sold for over HK\$130 million, or almost HK\$26 million per carat, to the Hong Kong-based jeweller. The sale broke two records and to this day, it remains the highest price, as well as the highest price per carat ever achieved by a green diamond at auction.

Quek Chin Yeow, deputy chairman and chairman of international jewellery at Sotheby's Asia, explains: "The colour green is popular in Asian jewellery collecting circles given their passion for jadeite, and [the passion for green] has extended beyond this quintessentially Asian stone."

Indeed, in Chinese communities where jadeite and white diamonds consistently dominate auctions, green diamonds are seen as a happy combination of the two gems. Their rarity and high price give those who can afford to collect them a clout that the other two simply cannot.

Any discussion about green gems would be incomplete without any mention of emeralds. At the same Sotheby's auction, 20 or so lots were allocated to jewellery featuring emeralds either as centre stones, or as the main accent gems giving pieces that were predominantly white diamonds a touch of green.

While overall demand for emeralds may be growing, emeralds from one origin still reign supreme. Quek reveals: "The favourite would be Colombian emeralds, of which Asian collectors are particularly fond."

For those for whom money is no object, the appeal of a high-priced, high-quality emerald can only be increased by setting it into even more expensive jewellery. Luxury jewellers have responded accordingly, using the green gem liberally in their most expensive collections.