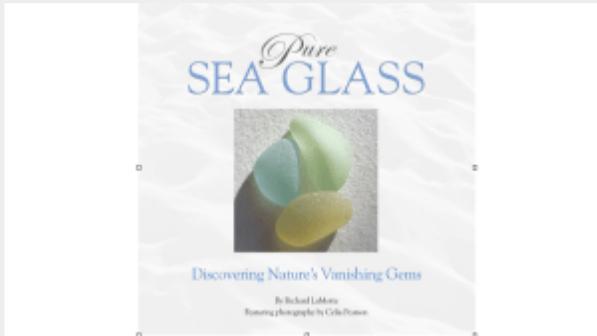


Sea Glass: Vanishing Gems



With the weather finally warming up and the corona virus flattening, it won't be long before beach combing becomes a regular routine. What could be better than feeling your bare feet in the warm sand as you look for unique shells and some of nature's vanishing gems — sea glass.

Richard LaMotte's research on sea glass combined with Celia Pearson's fabulous photography has resulted in "Pure Sea Glass: Discovering Nature's Vanishing Gems." This is not only an informative and well researched book, but an attractive coffee table book guaranteed to be picked up by family and guests.

Who knew that one book like this would integrate the knowledge of tides, winds, weather forecasts, historical records and even boating charts. Add to this that LaMott has included in his research 30,000 shards of sea glass to present this detailed and in-depth, pleasantly readable book. Readers quickly learn that there is a distinction between genuine sea glass "found with smooth surface in a natural beach setting" and the antique sea glass "that has developed a distinctive white crystalline patina." The latter is what is referred to as "pure sea glass" and shares qualities with actual gems.

The first chapter of this book is titled "History in the Sand" and it is a fascinating read. The author quotes marine biologist Rachel Carson who maintains "in every curving beach, in every grain of sand there is the story of earth." This book makes the quote ring very true. For thousands of years, artisans have used sand, soda, and lime to create

glass. How clever of Mother Nature to add to the process of recycling glass. The results are often more beautiful than the original bottle or glass object thrown overboard or set afloat.

Collectors will delight in learning about the various colors and which colors and shapes of sea glass are more valuable than others. Some people collect sea glass for jewelry making, as does the author's wife, while some display sea glass in jars or give them away as gifts. In the chapter "The Value of the Hunt," the author points out that there is "healing power found where water meets shore," which like so many other poetic phrases suggests the touch of the poet in LaMotte's pleasant style of writing.

This fine book also addresses the joy of a treasure hunt, which has provided ageless excitement and is something that families can enjoy doing together in this age as well. The author also suggests prime locations for finding the best glass as well the best times for finding it. There are also technical aspects in the text regarding the quality of pure sea glass which is affected by sun, shade and storms. One of many side bars offers a recipe used for making traditional soda-lime glass. There is also a section on appraising rarity. Ironically, it is our focus on recycling and preserving cleanliness of our oceans that is making pure sea glass more and more rare.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the glorious colorful images captured by fine art photographer Celia Pearson. Her love of the East Coast brings this author and photographer together and the result is not only a fine read, but photos that look like art presentations.

Pure
SEA GLASS



Discovering Nature's Vanishing Gems

By Richard LaMotte
Featuring photography by Celia Pearson

An Imprint of Schiffer Publishing, Ltd., Hardcover 226 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9753246,
\$34/95