This is either a late-spring or early-summer report, the distinction depending less on latitude than on attitude: here in Tucson (I like to say), we have two seasons, “summer” and “other,” and the line between them somewhat annoyingly blurs at this time of year. Today’s high will be 97, a high of 75 is forecast for next Tuesday, and quite soon thereafter we’ll have triple digits. Oh well, out in the desert the cacti are blooming nicely…

For mineral shoppers, anyway, the Internet is as rich with colorful health as any spring garden. The lengthy report below bears news of some dealers’ replenishment of their stocks at—naturally—the recent Tucson Show, but even aside from that there’s plenty of action, both in the new-finds and recirculated-old-classics departments. See for yourselves:

**On the Web**

German collector/dealer Carsten Slotta, proprietor of *Carsten Slotta Mineralien* and a regular setter-upper at the Ste.-Marie-aux-Mines and Munich shows, has started a website, *Mintreasure.com*, where well-selected classics, especially from the Black Forest but from many other juicy places as well, may be ogled. On his April update there are three fine gold specimens from Hope’s Nose, Devon, England (all marked SOLD); an excellent, antique chalcopyllite from Cornwall ($1400); a fine linarite from the earliest days of mining at Tsumeb ($300)—and the two superb miniatures pictured here...
Azurite with arsentsumebite, 5.2 cm, from Tsumeb, Namibia.
*Mintreasure.com* specimen and photo.

...One of these (shown above) is another classic, which I could not resist showing you: a sumptuous Tsumeb azurite with arsentsumebite ($3400):
More to this report’s major purpose, Carsten Slotta also offers two very new specimens, both miniature-size, which show bright blue sprays and rosettes of the rare Cu-Zn phosphate veszelyite over cavity linings of drusy white hemimorphite, from a locality which he gives as the Laochang mine, Gejiu County, Yunnan Province, China. Some very similar-looking Chinese veszelyite specimens were brought to the most recent Munich and Tucson shows by the French dealership Cailloux, and a photo showing two of them appeared with my report on the 2017 Munich Show (in March-April 2018). The dealer in that case agreed that the specimens came from the Gejiu orefield, but gave “Dulong” as the mine name, gave “Laochang” as the name of a town and not of a mine, and put the whole thing in Hunan, not Yunnan, Province. Checking Mindat, I find that these past few years’ limited outputs of microcrystallized veszelyite on blue hemimorphite came from the “Laochang orefield, Gejiu Sn-polymetallic orefield, Gejiu County, Honghe Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province.” Thus, as with so many other Chinese locality designations, there is freedom of play in the relevant terms. But these veszelyite specimens of Carsten’s are, I’d say, better than those seen at Munich, and vastly better than the older specimens showing scattered veszelyite microcrystals on blue hemimorphite.
No, longtime mineral dealer John Betts of New York City and of *John Betts Fine Minerals* (johnbetts-fineminerals.com) is not retiring quite yet. A few online reports ago I passed on his assurance that he’d be out of the business soon, but his site is still up and running and being updated every Tuesday, and John says that, although he *intends* to retire, doing so takes more work and time than he had anticipated. Under “Newly Listed Minerals” on page 2 of his most recent update, John offers a hoard of 20 fine-looking thumbnails and miniatures of *bournonite* from the Yaogangxian mine, Chenzhou Prefecture, Hunan Province, China. Bournonite from the Yaogangxian mine has been known for a while now, but it has been getting much rarer around the market. John’s specimens were taken out around the year 2000, and, he writes that they “have not seen the light of day since they were collected.” The specimens all show lustrous, cogwheel-shaped, multiple bournonite twins with (to judge from the photos) little apparent damage, and many have quartz crystals in association. Priced at $85 to $375, these are highly desirable, smaller examples of what it seems safe to call a Contemporary Classic.
Fluorite, 2.8 cm, from the Vinheiros mine, Vale das Gatas mine group, Sabroda, Vila Real district, Norte Region, Portugal. Fabre Minerals specimen and photo.

On a “post-Tucson” website update of Fabre Minerals (fabreminerals.com), Jordi Fabre comes through with some new and beautiful fluorite from Portugal—not from Panasqueira (although he has that, too), but from several mines in the Vale das Gatas mine group, Sabrosa, Vila Real district, Norte Region. These seven fluorite specimens are of varying styles, but all show lustrous, transparent, blue to purple (and color-zoned blue-purple-colorless) cubic crystals, some beveled by dodecahedral faces. Quartz and feldspar appear in supporting roles. The Vale das Gatas district is the subject of an article by Pedro Alves in *Mineral Up* 2017/#1, and Jordi’s specimens make a good argument for consulting it to learn something about this little-known locality.
Jordi’s site also boasts a feature called “Callén’s Gallery,” with beautiful specimen photos by Spanish master photographer Joaquim Callén, the stated intention being to show how Joaquim “in his talented way has captured with his camera the ‘soul’ of each specimen.” The most soulful of them, I’d say, are two examples of the new-ish—still very
scarce-on-the-market—**mimetite** specimens from the Gowd mine, Anarak district, Isfahan Province, Iran. There are also two Callén renderings of the very odd, burr-like pseudomorphs of **willemite after desclozite** (with mimetite) which have lately been coming from the Chah Milleh mine, Anarak, Isfahan. The mimetites and the willemite pseudomorphs are all available from Jordi.

In an April 2 update on his *IC Minerals* website (icminerals.com), my fellow Tucsonan Isaias Casanova is running a “Spring Sale” on miscellaneous fine specimens old and new. One of the most notable of the oldies is a matrix miniature from Mt. Mica, Paris, Maine, showing sharp, complete, short-prismatic, colorless and transparent crystals of **fluorapatite** sticking out everywhichway from a brown cookeite pseudomorph after spodumene. This New England classic has been reduced in price from $300 to $240.
Olmiite, 3.3 cm, from the N’Chwaning II mine, Kalahari manganese field, Northern Cape Province, South Africa. IC Minerals specimen and photo.

Also, Isaias has three gorgeous miniatures of olmiite from the massive find of 2001-2002 in the N’Chwaning II mine, Kalahari manganese field, Northern Cape Province, South Africa. Even Isaias’s reduced prices serve to remind us that this material could once—15 or so years ago—be obtained for much less money than it can now, as market supplies shrink apace while the distinctive beauty of olmiite remains a constant. The most beautiful of the several specimen styles from the big 2001-2002 find (and from a few later, much smaller finds) features flaring parallel aggregates of bright pink or orange-red, partially transparent olmiite crystals with black manganese oxides, as in the IC Minerals example shown here.
Chalcanthite, 5.3 cm, from the Planet mine, Buckskin Mountains, La Paz County, Arizona. Boren and King Minerals specimen and photo.

The polymetallic deposit worked by the Planet mine, in the Buckskin Mountains of La Paz County, Arizona was discovered in 1863, and active mining ceased in 1937, leaving the site to field collectors who have occasionally dug specimens showing bent, brushy, tortured-looking aggregates of fibrous, neon-blue chalcanthite crystals. Currently, Boren & King Minerals (borenandkingminerals.com) (a dealership which has never before been mentioned in this space) offers 12 good miniature-size specimens of chalcanthite recently taken from the mine’s 350-foot level, with chalcanthite aggregates in plenty rising from matrix of brown, clayey breccia. We are warned against “minor shedding of fibers or clay during shipping,” but you could hardly do better than this for natural specimens of the water-soluble copper sulfate.
In a late-April update, Rob Lavinsky’s *The Arkenstone* (irocks.com) features seven loose specimens, thumbnail to small-cabinet size, from a recent find of **purple-capped elbaite** crystals at Paprok, Kamdesh district, Nuristan, Afghanistan. These are lustrous, translucent, thick prisms which for the most part are “watermelon”-style tourmalines, i.e. having pink cores and green rims, but the color-banding near their terminations gets pretty intense, with thin medium-green and magenta bands, and then a thicker band of deep purple at the very top.
Fluorite, 9.6 cm, from the Cäcilia mine, Wölsendorf fluorite mining district, Bavaria, Germany. Ex Kay Robertson collection. The Arkenstone specimen and photo.

Also, in a March 15 update, Rob Lavinsky put up nine new pages of specimens from the collection of Kay Robertson of Los Angeles, now in her 90s, who recently sold her whole life’s-work hoard of fine, worldwide pieces to Rob (for my “Collector Profile” article on Kay and her collection, see the March-April 2007 Mineralogical Record). On the update on The Arkenstone there are many highly desirable classics, some little-known, e.g. some examples of the peculiar yellow-orange, transparent fluorite found between 1961 and 1963 on the 210-meter level of the Cäcilia mine, Wölsendorf fluorite mining district, Bavaria, Germany. Cäcilia mine fluorite crystals are complexly twinned and elongated, and at first glance they look much like distorted scalenohedrons of calcite; commonly they have filaments of cinnabar for inclusions. Kay had many specimens of the material, and she even traded a thumbnail-size one of them to me once. The piece shown here was her largest, 9.6 cm across, with one focal-point crystal sticking out near the middle; Rob asks $1,750 for it. Finding another such specimen on the market elsewhere would be highly unlikely, as Kay got, as far as is known, almost all of the “good ones.”
If I show you just two more old classics from Kay’s collection now on offer from *The Arkenstone* you will get the idea that these nine pages deserve careful browsing—for how frequently will you have a chance to pick up an excellent hessite like this one from the
old—for hessite, the *only* important—locality in Romania, or such a fresh-looking, rubious
thumbnail of **proustite** from the Marienberg district in the Saxon Erzgebirge of Germany
(Kay purchased this one in the 1970s from New Jersey dealer John Albanese).

The Spanish dealership **Rosell Minerals** has an April 24 update on its site
(rosellminerals.com) which highlights six specimens of **metatorbernite** from Calo,
Vimianzo, A Coruña, Galicia, Spain. The only other occasion on which I have seen a
dealer’s lot of this very good metatorbernite from the northwestern corner of Spain is the
2004 Tucson Show, when Luis Miguel Burillo had specimens which I described in the
show report (in May-June 2004); Luis told me then, and dutifully I reported, that this was
“a brand-new locality for torbernite.” Well, the Rosell Minerals specimens were collected
in 2008, and even *that* was ten years ago, and no further stocks have appeared (that I know
of) more recently. The Rosell text goes on to describe the site as consisting of “Large open-
cast mines and small prospects of kaolinite with some quartz veins in which torbernite
crystals have been found.” The tabular to blocky crystals, measuring between 3 and 5 mm,
are very sharp, and the cloudiness of their greenness probably means that they are indeed
metatorbernite, having dehydrated from original torbernite. The crystals are sprinkled
densely on white quartz matrix pieces from 3.8 to 7.8 cm across.

![Metatorbernite, 7 cm, from Calo, Vimianzo, A Coruña, Galicia, Spain. Rosell
Minerals specimen and photo.](image)
Variscite, 4.5 cm, from Palazuelo de las Cuevas, Zamora, Castilla y León, Spain. Rosell Minerals specimen and photo.

Rosell Minerals also offers four miniatures of variscite from Palazuelo de las Cuevas, Zamora, Castilla y León, Spain, commenting “Since its discovery in 1970, the Palazuelo de las Cuevas deposit became the ‘source’ of variscite for the NW of the Iberian peninsula.” Milky pale green variscite forms spherical nodules with concentric structure, and these in turn are held together in clumpy masses by limonite:
Silver, 5.5 cm, from the Balcoll mine, Tarragona, Caralonia, Spain. Ex Jordi Povill collection. Weinrich Minerals specimen and photo.

Villamaninite, 10 cm, from the Providencia mine, Villanueva de Pontedo, Cármenes, Castilla y León, Spain. Weinrich Minerals specimen and photo.

Speaking of minerals from Spain, Dan Weinrich now has a great many of these from the Jordi Povill collection, which he has recently acquired. Consequently the Weinrich Minerals site (weinrichmineralsinc.com) is now offering some outstanding examples of
seldom-seen Spanish classics—not all of them beautiful but the best commanding serious interest if one cares about quality wedded to rarity. For example, there is the matrix specimen (seen below) of silver from the Balcoll mine, Tarragona, Catalonia, all lavishly decked out in silver wires and dendrites, for $500. And there is a 10-cm matrix plate from the Providencia mine, Villanueva de Pontelo, Cármenes district, Castile and León, endowed generously with equant metallic black crystals of the rare sulfide villamaninite to 1 cm. For villamaninite these are very large crystals, and this is the type locality for the species, so—who needs beauty?

Ah, but the offerings on the Weinrich Minerals website are quite bounteous. Most notably, in the nine long pages of “Latest Additions” there is a diversity of specimens large and small, old and new, and, actually, in a quality range from “study grade” to what we might be tempted to call “holy grail.” The occasional items of the latter type hide out amid swarms of much lesser items, such that the casual browser is in for some shocks of pleasant surprise. For example, among the “Latest Additions” we find a magnificent, cabinet-size Ilfeld, Germany manganite; and, even more shocking, we come on a smallish but well composed, beautifully royal-purple thumbnail of fluorapatite from the Pulsifer mine, Maine (price: $850), which Dan obtained from the Marcus Origlieri collection.

Manganite, 8.5 cm, from Ilfeld, Harz Mountains, Thuringia, Germany. Weinrich Minerals specimen and photo.
Todor and Nadya of *Quebul Fine Minerals* (quebulfineminerals.com) often come up with new items, usually with top aesthetics which are brought out all the more by the high quality of the photographs on their website. In a late April update, all of these boxes are checked in the case of a few new specimens of *salammoniac* (ammonium chloride: NH₄Cl), a mineral heretofore known only as small gray, gray-white or colorless crystals formed by decomposition or burning of organic matter (e.g. on dumps of coal mines) in Saxony, Bohemia and (the world’s best occurrence) Ravat, Tajikistan....
Salammoniac on lecontite, 6.5 cm, from outside the Coronel Manuel Rodriguez mine, Mejiliones, Antofagasta Province, Chile. Quebul Fine Minerals specimen and photo.

Salammoniac has never been pretty: the best that one can say of the Tajikistan specimens, which suggest 3-D versions of the branching frost on your window, is that they are “interesting.” However, the salammoniac specimens offered by Todor and Nadya show druses of translucent sea-green to bluish green crystals (think vanadium-rich apophyllite from India, though in this case the chromophore is probably copper) blanketing most surfaces of sharp, snow-white, doubly terminated crystals of lecontite—(NH₄,K)Na(SO₄)·2H₂O. Let us note that lecontite is rare, and these crystals, quite aside from the generous helpings of salammoniac on them, are excellent for the species. The salammoniac/lecontite specimens come from “a new superb find,” as Todor and Nadya write, late in 2017, just outside the Coronel Manuel Rodriguez mine, Mejiliones Peninsula, Antofagasta Province, Chile. The writers add that the occurrence already is “collected out.”
A chemically-reducing “bog iron ore” environment in the Amazon Basin, deep in the Brazilian interior, first yielded good, sometimes very large, specimens of **ludlamite on siderite** in 2015. The locality goes by the name of Cabeça do Cachorro, Floresta Amazonica, in the state of Amazonas. Specimens from this occurrence show sharp, transparent greenish blue ludlamite crystals on dark brown siderite. Such specimens haven’t been seen for a while, but a small batch is now appearing on the “Special Update” page of Ian Bruce’s *Crystal Classics* (crystalclassics.co.uk). The ludlamite crystals reach 1.4 cm, and most of the siderite matrix plates are small-cabinet size, but, as they all look much alike, I show you here, just for fun, what is by far the biggest of them all—26 cm across.
Strontianite, 3.2 cm, from Oberdorf an der Laming, Styria, Austria.  
*Saphira Minerals* specimen and photo.

Herewith begins this report’s *Alpine Section*—and where better to start than with former Strahler and present high-end mineral dealer Rudolf Watzl of *Saphira Minerals* (saphiraminerals.com)? This website has a 3-page update of April 27 with many splendid, well photographed, Alpine items to show. One of these is a shining 3.2-cm spherical aggregate of strontianite crystals from the place in the Central Eastern Austrian Alps which is without question the world’s best locality for strontianite: Oberdorf an der Laming, near Bruck an der Mur, Styria (German: Steiermark), Austria. The three little magnesite mines outside the village of Oberdorf have yielded good specimens of strontianite (and of dolomite, magnesite and pyrite) since mining began in 1906, but in 2004 the largest of the three mines closed down, and from now on it will be harder than ever to score a fine Oberdorf strontianite.

The rest of Rudolf’s stock is heavy in Alpine quartz of several (beautiful) sorts. You can derive a real feel for Alpine-cleft mineralogy just from ogling these specimens and reading Rudolf’s exceedingly commendatory descriptions of them. My favorite of the quartz specimens is this stunning, dark-flashing *smoky quartz* miniature from the Zinggenstock, Haslital, Berner Oberland, Switzerland:

![Smoky Quartz, 5.7 cm, from Zinggenstock, Haslital, Berner Oberland, Switzerland. *Saphira Minerals* specimen and photo.](image)

More Alpine goodies can be found on the website of *Via Mineralia* (viamineralia.com), an enterprise run by Robert Kunze and Martin Gruell which I’ve mentioned a number of times before in this space. Like their compatriot Rudolf Watzl, these two gentlemen have a “Latest Updates” page with fine and distinctive Alpine quartz specimens: witness the
colorless, fat, upstanding quartz gwindel shown here. And like Rudolf as well, they mix into their Alpine selections some things which are less familiar and rarer than good old quartz, hematite, adularia and pink fluorite—such as this bright orange thumbnail of scheelite from the Rauristal (Rauris Valley), Salzburg, Austria.
The Alpine Section wraps up with a look at the website of Mineralium (mineralium.de), with text all in German, with a small, miscellaneous offering of nice international minerals, and with four extremely good matrix emerald specimens from the old Leckbachrinne emerald mine, Habachtal, Salzburg, Austria. These specimens were collected in 2005 by Andreas Steiner, a local “Steinsucher” whose family holds a lease on the mine, and he has prepared his finds expertly for the market, i.e. made the emerald crystals stand out very well from the chlorite schist in which they had been encased. In three of the specimens, sharp, partially gemmy, medium-green crystals of emerald lie flat in the schist, while in the fourth specimen (shown below), a shapely 2-cm emerald crystal lies flat and another, 1.8-cm crystal sticks almost straight up, and glows nicely green when backlit. This fourth piece, priced at 2,800 Euros (about $3,300 these days), is one of the most impressive Habachtal emerald specimens I’ve ever seen.
Stellerite, 8.5 cm, from Aurangabad, Maharashtra, India. Marin Mineral Company specimen and photo.

An April 22 update on the website of Mike Keim’s Marin Mineral Company (marinmineral.com) shows five large-miniature to small-cabinet specimens of some very attractive Indian stellerite which Mike picked up at the 2018 Tucson Show (“I only saw five specimens of this style with one dealer”). This stellerite, from the “Aurangabad quarry” (perhaps this means one of the many basalt quarries in the Aurangabad district), Maharashtra state, shows stellerite as creamy pale yellow, lustrous crystals aggregated in spheres, hemispheres and fans, both loose and on matrix.
Since the mid-1990s, specimens showing very sharp, lustrous, bright brown-red to orange-red crystals of zircon have been intermittently making it to Western markets from vaguely defined localities in the Astor Valley of Gilgit-Baltistan (formerly Northern Areas), Pakistan—particular terms for zircon localities in the Astor Valley have included “Bulbin,” “Harchoo” and “Goricourt.” Seven good miniature matrix specimens from what Ray McDougall calls a “relatively large new find…from [the] Astor Valley” are appearing now on the McDougall Minerals website (mcdougallminerals.com). These show sharp, equant, bipyramidal zircon crystals to about 1 cm in a coarse-grained, black-and-white igneous rock composed mostly of feldspar, biotite and pyroxene: the general resemblance is to matrix zircon specimens from Seiland Island, Norway. As the zircon crystals are fully embedded in the chowdery igneous matrix, it’s interesting and happy-making that they manage to show smooth, lustrous faces, as though they were pocket crystals, and their lush red-brown color is snazzy too.
Rhodochrosite, 3.5 cm, from Silverton, San Juan County, Colorado. Ex W.S. Logan collection. Geokrazy Minerals specimen and photo.

The former rhodochrosite collection of Dr. W.S. Logan has now been bought up by Geoff Krasnov of Geokrazy Minerals (geokrazy.com). Geoff writes that “the highest-end pieces went to The Arkenstone and we are now preparing the other 500-plus specimens for the Denver shows.” Meanwhile, 52 miniature-size specimens went up on the Geokrazy website on April 4. They are from just about every locality for rhodochrosite you ever heard of (and a few are from places that you—at least I—have never heard of), and many are very fine. As a sample, here are just three:
Wulfenite and Cerussite, 4.3 cm, from the Rialto mine, Hull mine group, Castle Dome district, Yuma County, Arizona. Ex Kay Robertson collection. Exceptional Minerals specimen and photo.

Pyromorphite, 6.5 cm, from the Zvesdel mine, East Rhodope Mountains, Madan district, Bulgaria. Exceptional Minerals specimen and photo.

I like to conclude these online reports by passing on images of one or two spectacular one-of-a-kinders—just for the sake of conveying good mineralogical cheer—and to find such images I have frequently gone to the website of Kevin Ward’s aptly named Exceptional Minerals (exceptionalminerals.com). Kevin now is showing four pages of updates (March 8 through April 18) of specimens that he latched onto at Tucson in February, including wonderful silvers from Freiberg, Batopilas, Uchucchaqua, etc.; fine acanthites, including a surprising old-timer from Banská Štiavnica, Slovakia; here and there a superb proustite (Kevin really likes silver minerals)...and so on. But for the concluding two image-treats here I’ll show you a luscious matrix wulfenite/cerussite specimen from a rare Arizona locality, and a gorgeous brown pyromorphite which is not from Bad Ems but from the polymetallic mining district of Madan, in southern Bulgaria. This latter piece, from the former John Schneider pyromorphite collection, is surely among the finest Madan pyromorphites ever to reach the collector market.

To all who see this, happy Beltane (in Celtic myth, the time of a mystical spring-summer meeting)...Oh yes, and good luck with that summer too.