

Dear Victoria,

Normally I like to keep my club inspirations hidden away until the big reveal when you open your fibre. I love surprises, and I know many of you do as well. Therefore I feel slightly cheeky by giving you a colour I'd hinted at on the sign up page. It was a colour I just couldn't manage to ignore, every time I tried to think about another option my brain kept veering back to it. In these situations I tend to find it best to let my brain have its say, and go with it.

Ancient Egypt has always been a period of history that fascinates me. Anyone who is a historian will probably have to humour me at times in these letters. I'll try to be as accurate as I can, but I'm a Scientist with a history interest. I'm sure at some point I will get stuff wrong!

Anyway, when I think of Ancient Egypt I think of the beautiful Blue and Gold jewelry. The blue in the jewels comes from Lapis Lazuli, this semi precious stone is found in just one place in Afghanistan, the Sar-i-Sang Mountains. To my mind that makes it far more precious than Diamonds, and it's certainly a more beautiful colour. It used to be used in art work as well, ground up it makes a pigment called Ultramarine, the word ultra means "beyond" and it's because the Lapis Lazuli used in the paint came from beyond the sea. The Egyptians had to transport the Lapis 3000 miles, hence it's value. By having Lapis Lazuli in your jewels you were displaying extreme amounts of wealth.

Our view of Ancient Egypt is definitely coloured by the exhibits in the worlds museums, and of course, it's so ancient that only certain things survive, jewelry being unlikely to rot, or decay. Of course, it does have to survive tomb robbers. As a result our view of Egypt from those times is also coloured, but oh what a colour.

So enjoy your shot of intense blue, with a sprinkle of gold to remind you of the stone's setting, and a hint of green papyrus to remind you where all the wealth came from original, The Nile River.

The Egyptians knew a thing or two about textile production, they would spin linen for clothing that wove in to a sheer cloth. Paintings depicting everyday life show textile workers weaving and spinning, and the fragments of surviving cloth show extreme skill.

If, like me, you find the history of colour fascinating then it's well worth reading any book by Victoria Finlay.

Happy Spinning,

Katie