

Italian Gold



43. Native **gold** in quartz. 25 x 15 cm.
Filone della Speranza, val Ayas, Aosta Tal. Italy.
Milano Museum of Natural History
(Museo Civico di Storia Naturale di Milano).

Eight Italian gold specimens were shown at the 2013 Munich Show. The largest, placed in a safe, belongs to Italian private collector Federico Morelli, three belong to Milano Museum of Natural History, two belong to collector Michael Wachtler of San Candido, Bolzano and one to collector Tiziano Bonisoli of Torino.

All these specimens, and smaller ones, were all found in the Brusson Mine on the slopes of Mount Rosa, Val d' Ayas, a valley on the left side of the Aosta Valley. Gold in this area is known and extracted since Roman times and before. This mine, started in the first years of last century, exploited a rich vein inclined at a high angle in the Monte Rosa gneiss. The vein consisted of native gold enclosed in massive quartz, very rarely showing geodes.

After the end of full scale industrial mining, the mine was worked in a small way by a senior local miner, Florindo Bitossi, who passed on to some mineral collectors at least part of his knowledge of the deposit. After Bitossi's death some of these collectors, and mainly Franco Chianale and Federico Morelli, kept mining for gold aided by sophisticated metal detectors. At that time the Bonisoli and the smaller Milano Museum specimens were found. Later, at the end of the '1990s, the most important finds ever were made by the collector twins Mario and Lino Pallaoro and by Federico Morelli, who still owns the largest specimen. All the other specimens exhibited in Munich were found at that time.

Of course this material required expert and complex preparation to bring out most of the gold from the quartz matrix, yielding some of the most impressive specimens of the precious metal – surprising not from Australia or America, but from a small corner of old Europe, in the Italian Alps.

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44. Italian **gold** specimens display. Specimens are from three collections: Milano Museum of Natural History, Michael Wachtler (San Candido, Bolzano), and Tiziano Bonisoli (Torino).





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45. **Gold with Rhodochrosite on Sphalerite.**
Brooklyn Mine, San Juan County, CO, USA.
7.6 x 5.0 x 3.6 cm. Specimen: *Mineral Classics*.
Photo Angela Kosnar.
46. **Quartz** from Inner Mongolia, China.
12 x 10 cm. Collection: Albert Russ.
47. **Dyscrasite.** 4.2 x 2.8 cm. St. Andreasberg, Harz
Mts, Niedersachsen, Germany.
Specimen and photo: Fabre Minerals.
48. **Amethyst** from Goboboseb, Namibia.
10 cm tall. Specimen: *Mineral Classics*.
- Photo 46, 48, 50: Albert Russ.**
49. **Helvite with Ilvaite and Hedenbergite**
Specimen size: 19 x 11 x 10 cm. Huanggang
Mine, Kēshikèténg QH, Chifeng, Inner Mongolia,
China. Specimen and photo: Fabre Minerals.
50. **Vivianite** from Bolivia. 18 cm across.
Collection: Alfred Schreitechner.



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