

G&G Data Depository

Additional photos to accompany: M. Mauthner, "Recent Finds of Kunzite in Pala, California," Summer 2010 *G&G*, p. 149. All photos by M. Mauthner, December 2009 and July 2010.

In mid-2010, miners at the Oceanview mine in the Pala pegmatite district, San Diego County, California, encountered a zone of massive lepidolite and pink tourmaline and several interconnected pockets. The pockets contained smoky quartz with green, pink, and bicolor tourmaline, and limpid spodumene. The latter typically exhibits strong pleochroism, appearing pale green in the a-axis direction and blue to deep purple along the c-axis. The main pocket, named the Big Kahuna, produced an estimated 1,000 pounds (455 kg) of spodumene, 10% of it gem- or specimen-quality. Among these are several world-class examples of spodumene, some weighing over 1 kg, but even more important is the fact that the crystals have escaped the post-growth etching typical of Pala kunzite and are unusually complete.

The photos below show mining and specimens from gem pockets at the Oceanview mine in December 2009 and July 2010.



Figure DD-1. Daron Fisler inspects a new spodumene zone along the footwall of the pegmatite.



Figure DD-2. Daron Fisler drills near the December 2009 pocket.



Figure DD-3. This is the largest kunzite crystal (11.2 cm long) from the December 2009 pocket.



Figure DD-4. Shown here is an array of kunzite from the December 2009 pocket (up to 11.2 cm long). Courtesy of Oceanview Mines, LLC.



Figure DD-5. This 7.0 ct kunzite (cut by Phil Osborn) is resting on a matrix specimen of kunzite, albite, and lepidolite (3.6 cm across) from the December 2009 pocket. From a private collection.



Figure DD-6. This kunzite, from the December 2009 pocket is 4.5 cm long Mark Baker collection.



Figure DD-7. Spodumene is exposed in the Big Kahuna pocket.



Figure DD-8. This kunzite crystal in the Big Kahuna pocket is over 15 cm long.



Figure DD-9. Daron Fisler holds a large spodumene crystal just extracted from Big Kahuna.



Figure DD-10. This large spodumene crystal was extracted from the Big Kahuna pocket in two pieces.



Figure DD-11. These kunzites, up to 11 cm, are from the Big Kahuna zone.



Figure DD-12. This kunzite, approximately 3 cm tall, is also from the Big Kahuna zone.



Figure DD-13. GIA Museum curator Terri Ottaway holds a spodumene crystal just after its extraction from the Big Kahuna pocket.



Figure DD-14. The longest of these green elbaites from the Big Kahuna zone is 4.9 cm. Courtesy of Oceanview Mines, LLC.



Figure DD-15. This 9.5-cm-tall green-to-blue elbaite is from the Big Kahuna zone. Two additional pieces fitting onto the bottom and extending the crystal to more than 15 cm were found days later. Courtesy of Oceanview Mines, LLC.



Figure DD-16. These pink elbaite crystals were mined from the Big Kahuna pocket. Courtesy of the John Lindell collection (left) and a private collection (right, 1.95 cm tall).



Figure DD-17. Terri Ottaway holds two fine bicolored elbaite crystals from the Big Kahuna zone.



Figure DD-18. Some of the gemmy bicolored elbaite recovered from the Big Kahuna pocket are shown here (up to 2.6 cm long). Courtesy of Oceanview Mines, LLC.