

enrich your spirit



CRYSTAL
CASTLE

& shambhala gardens

Welcome to the home of the biggest and most beautiful crystals in the world!



welcome to the crystal castle

These private botanical gardens filled with extraordinary crystals, sub-tropical plant life and daily experiences for all ages will provide you with a uniquely enriching experience.

"We stumbled across this wonderful place whilst driving through the region. It is THE most beautiful place ever. The serenity, the peace, the absolute beauty of the gardens, the crystals and amazing statues, it's indescribable. To top it off the staff were just lovely. It was the highlight of our trip. Just loved it..."

Trip Advisor

"It was beautiful, peaceful, a lovely, lovely experience....As it was my last visit to Australia, it was certainly a place that will stay with me in my soul forever. Thank you."

Trip Advisor

Jim Kellar of The Herald is also a fan: *"This private garden of peace and tranquility... featuring a sacred Stupa monument for world peace that has the blessing of the Dalai Lama....it's a place to unwind, contemplate, absorb the spirit of life at your own pace... the Lotus Café with panoramic views features the best vegetarian mezze plate I've ever enjoyed."*

"You don't have to be a hippie crystal lover to like it there," advises another reviewer, *"it's a place for anyone who likes nature and something a little different."*

"Wow!!! What an experience! I loved every second" writes another TripAdvisor visitor. *"The serene atmosphere, positivity and energy of this sacred place is worth every cent of the entrance fee. Leave yourself a LOT of time - you might lose track of it."*

It is our joy to offer the Crystal Castle experience to you.
We wish you love and light in your journey through life.

Sono & Naren King
Crystal Castle & Shambhala Gardens



Included in your visit:

- Rare and amazing, giant crystals & fossils throughout, dating back 500 million years
- The world’s largest amethyst geode, The Enchanted Cave, weighing over 20 tons and 5.5 metres wide and also the world’s tallest geode pair, The Crystal Guardians
- Botanical Shambhala Gardens and rainforest spread across 5 hectares (12 acres) of lush flora and fauna including walks, sculptures, deities, contemplation spaces, a sacred labyrinth, and the largest stone Blessing Buddha in Australia
- Kalachakra Stupa for World Peace. The Dalai Lama blessed this project and it is the only Buddhist Stupa of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere
- Daily Peace Experience for all from 3.10—4.00 pm with a relaxing sound healing followed by a sacred ‘Kora Walk’ around the World Peace Stupa
- More experiences: including Music of the Plants, The Crystal Experience and The Shambhala Gardens Tour, which rotate during the week. For the latest daily program visit our website: crystalcastle.com.au.
- Your own copy of this Crystal Castle Guidebook to take home
- A friendly, helpful, insightful team
- A children’s playground and, on the weekends and school holidays, free facepainting

To enhance your visit:

- Aura Photos with mini-interpretation
- Tarot card readings available by appointment from world renowned readers
- Lotus Café - on the terrace overlooking one of the best views in the Byron Shire, providing delicious food and drinks made on the premises from locally sourced ingredients and veggies from the on-site organic garden
- The Castle Jewels and Crystal Matrix showrooms offer an incredible selection of large and small crystals, crystal singing bowls, exquisite jewellery, books, music, prayer flags, gifts and more

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plan your visit



the peace experience

3.10—4.00pm Daily

The unique Crystal Castle offering to deepen your inner and outer sense of peace. Be brought to a place that invokes your compassionate loving self.

"I go to the Crystal Castle quite a lot and really love the blissfulness I feel when I'm there. But recently the Crystal Castle have upped the ante and added a free 'Peace Experience' which includes meditating with the crystal bowls and walking to various sites culminating with a connection with the peace stupa. Wow! It is offered at 3.10 pm - 4.00 pm, make sure you are there - this shouldn't be missed."

TripAdvisor review



shambhala gardens tour

see website & signs for times

The Shambhala Gardens Tour will lead you on a fascinating journey through the gardens, opening a mystical door into legend, history and spirit. Your guide will share detailed information about each of our sacred statues and the enormous crystals dotted throughout the gardens. You will experience a short guided meditation at the Blessing Buddha, and learn about the bamboo walk, the beautiful koi pond and the Peace Fountain.



music of the plants

see website & signs for times

The Music of the Plants from Damanhur is a profoundly moving and memorable experience, an expression of the innate intelligence of the plant kingdom. You will receive a fascinating introduction to the history and research involved and have an opportunity to sit in relaxation and listen to the plants play their music. You will never forget the first moment you hear a plant express its unique vibration through music and connect to the deep beauty of nature in a completely unimagined and often life-changing way.



the crystal experience

see website & signs for times

Since ancient times crystals have been used in many traditions and cultures not only as beautiful adornments, but also as charms and talismans, in healing, ceremony and divination. The Crystal Experience will give you a brief history of the Crystal Castle as well as an introduction to how crystals form and how and why they work. You will learn how to tune into and choose crystals for yourself and others, how to work consciously with them and set powerful intentions, and how to cleanse them. Start your own journey of exploration.



the great bell chant

on the hour, daily at the World Peace Stupa, a 7 min World Peace meditation

An opportunity to take in the experience of the stupa, while listening to The Great Bell Chant 'The end of suffering' with the words of Thich Nhat Hanh.

You may like to walk clockwise around the stupa, spinning the prayer wheels as you go, holding in your heart your intention for peace. Thich Nhat Hanh is a Vietnamese Buddhist monk, teacher, author, poet and peace activist.



aura photos & readings

book on-line or at the Crystal Matrix reception desk

To further enhance your visit to the Crystal Castle, we have tarot readings and aura photography available.

Discover the unique and beautiful colours of your energy field with a special aura photograph. Our trained staff will give you a mini-reading of your photo, providing insight and guidance into your particular life situation.

The experienced Crystal Castle Readers offer tarot card readings that can open a visual door into your personal world, highlighting your true potential.

Speak to one of our friendly team members in the Crystal Matrix for more information and bookings.

in the beginning



As 1985 was drawing to a close, Naren King was invited to a New Year's Eve party in a unique and magnificent building on a property near Mullumbimby, New South Wales. Eccentric architect Edwin Kingsbury had pioneered his concept of 'harmonious architecture', designing a round central building with four radiating wings, no 90° angles and a series of magical reflecting ponds. The building was positioned right on the point where the earth's energy lines, or ley lines, intersect. Owner Mal Cooper had demanded the very best materials from around the region for its construction in 1980, and had gone broke as a result.

Captivated by the extraordinary property, Naren set his sights on becoming its new owner. Five knockbacks from the banks didn't deter him and his persistence paid off when a Harley-Davidson-riding bank manager loved the adventurous nature of the crystal business Naren was envisioning. 'The Castle', as the locals jokingly called it, began operating as a crystal business : Crystalight. At that point in time the land was practically bare as much of the area had been cleared for grazing and banana growing.



Crystalight was Australia's first direct importer of quality natural crystals from around the world, supplying wholesale crystals from the hills of Mullumbimby. Local hippies got wind of something interesting going on and kept 'dropping in' to marvel at the crystals. The Byron Bay Visitor Centre started directing tourists to 'try to get in'. With all this activity the 'Crystal Castle', as it became known, was eventually open for limited trading to the public.

Naren has spent over 30 years travelling the world in search of extraordinary crystals. At one stage so much rose quartz was imported that it was used to line the pathways around the Castle and the gardens began to take shape. People loved to spend time surrounded by all this beauty and they started hanging around, so the Cafe was built to provide them with refreshments.

Naren, 1986

Over the years the further development of the Castle has been an ongoing project for Naren and his wife, Sono, who is the Creative Director of the Crystal Castle and has inspired the beauty and richness you see and feel here. The gardens have expanded dramatically and attractions such as the Labyrinth, the children's playground, the tranquil Buddha Walk, Damanhur Spiral, the Kalachakra Stupa for World Peace, and most recently, the amazing Enchanted Cave and Crystal Guardians, have been added as more and more visitors come to enjoy this beautiful property.

Each new addition has been inspired by the same passion that prompted that visionary purchase 30 years ago: a deep desire to create a place of peace and magic, of lasting beauty and wonder.

Early days at the Castle



journey to south America

The journey to bring the extraordinary crystals you see in the beautiful grounds of the Crystal Castle is at times a rough and unbelievable quest.

Early 2016, having heard whispers of some amazing new discoveries, Naren and his daughter Manya embarked on an epic journey to South America, inspired by Naren's 20 year dream of acquiring and sharing the largest crystals in the world. After five days, six flights and some really long drives, they arrived in the amethyst fields of Uruguay to visit some special crystal geode sites. After having procured the largest geodes in the world, they then discovered an amazing amethyst cave.

"We climbed inside and were completely surrounded by millions of tiny, sparkling lavender crystals. The feeling was indescribable, one of complete, silent wonderment."

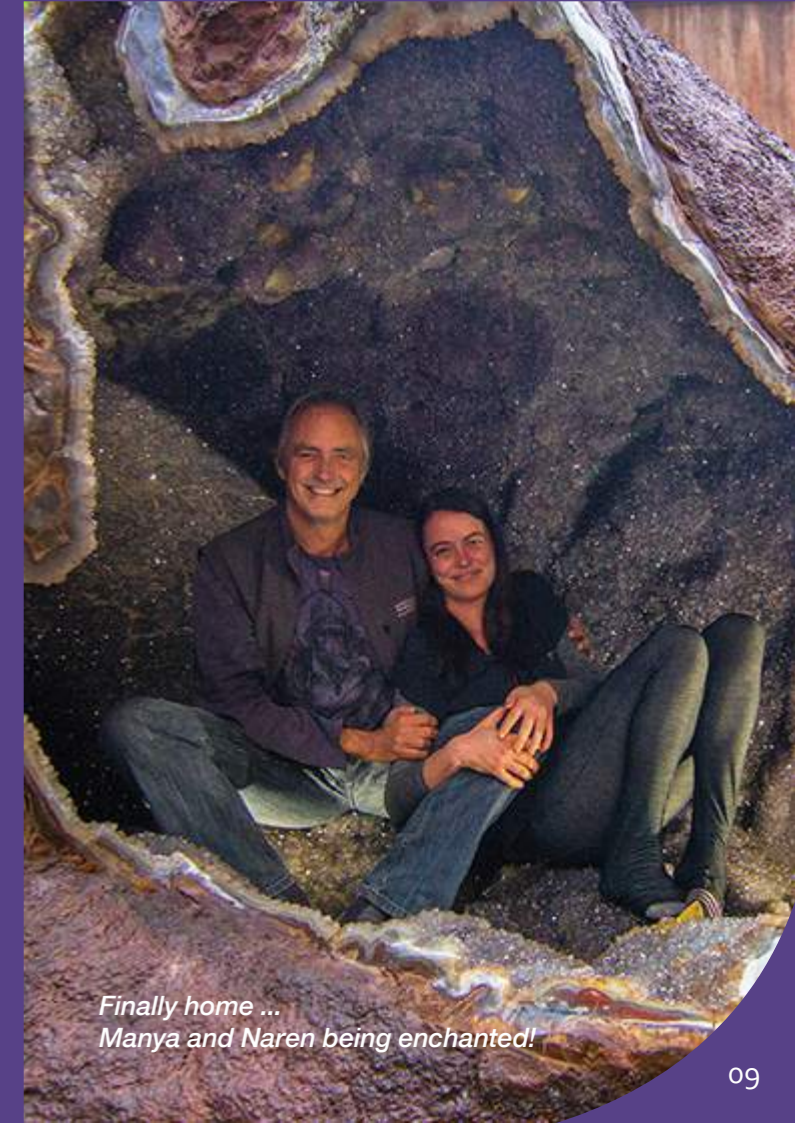
The journey continued north to Bahia and Ceara in Brazil, with gruelling 18-hour days travelling at high speeds along sandy goat tracks in 40 degree heat, following up leads on small mines the farmers were working on their dry lands. Sometimes they came to dead ends, other times finding such wonders as a rose quartz wall.

"This area is one of the poorest parts of Brazil and the small crystal discoveries support some economic growth for the subsistence farming villagers trying to live off land covered in rough quartz."

Dodging security issues and venomous snakes, they descended by a thin rope into a crystal mine with smoky "jacare" (crocodile shaped quartz) that we call Elestial Quartz and then later found farmer Pedro in a very poor area, who has found a rich vein of "dogtooth" or Chevron amethyst. "It's amazing to see this white and purple-banded stone, running in parts like a small river."

The result of this incredible journey is our two new additions, the Enchanted Cave and the Crystal Guardians. As at September 2016, Guinness World Records are reviewing our applications for these crystals as being the biggest in the world.

*Manya checking out how crystal geodes are formed within the rock.
Naren descending into a heart shaped opening on the crystal search. Notice the quartz wall on the left.*



*Finally home ...
Manya and Naren being enchanted!*

The world's tallest crystal geodes are now on display in the Shambhala Gardens. Standing at a breathtaking five and a half metres, the Crystal Guardians are an exquisite smoky quartz geode with delicate sprinklings of amethyst and calcite crystal flowers, as well as clear quartz and agate.

Not only are these natural monuments the world's tallest crystals, they are also unique due to their make up, says Naren King. "If they were the size of my hand they would still be among the rarest crystals ever seen. I've never seen anything like this in thirty years of collecting crystals."

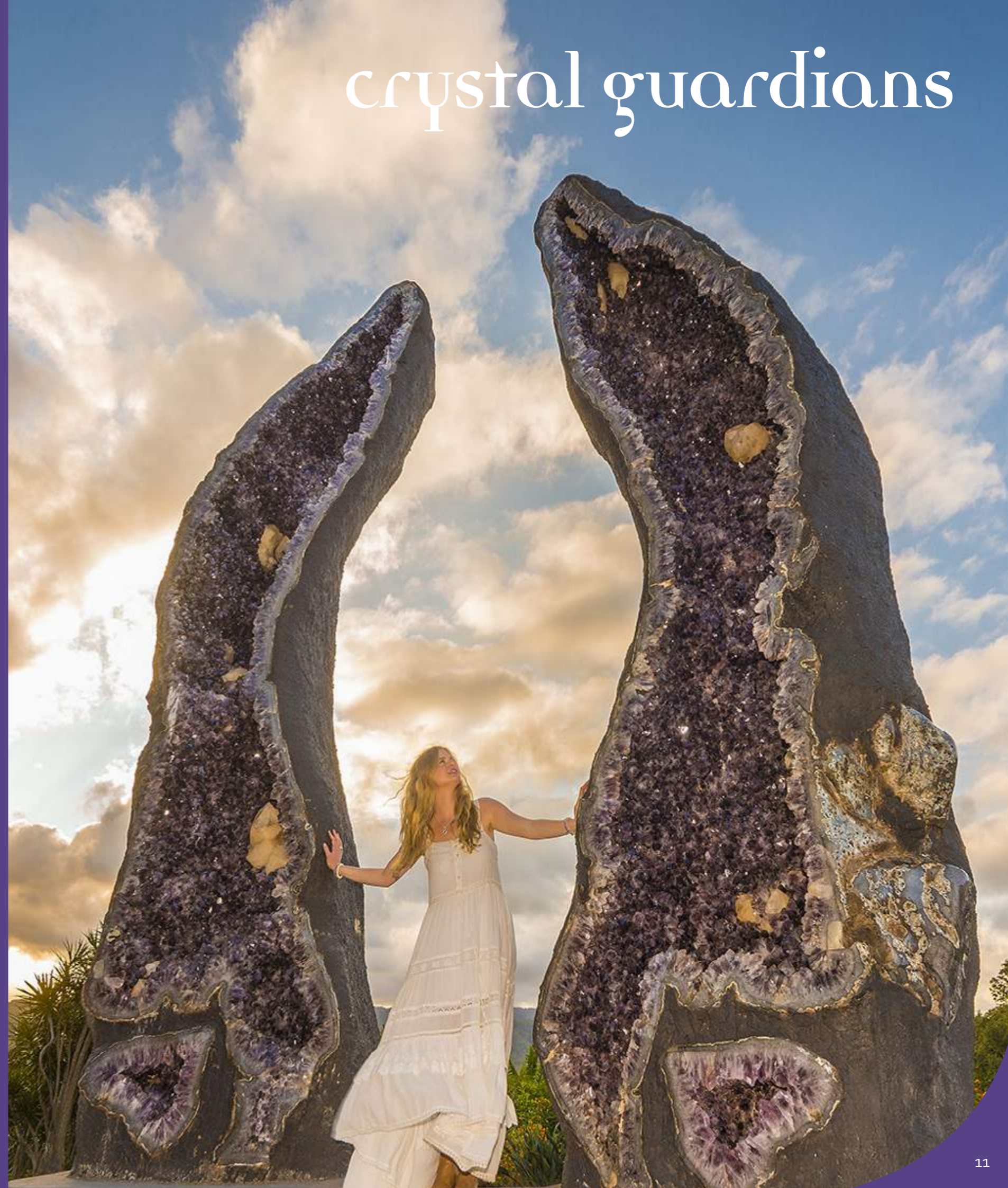
Travelling from a remote location in Uruguay, it took nothing short of a miracle, three very large trucks, two cranes and skilful engineering to bring these massive geodes, weighing a mammoth 19 tonnes, to their new home. The beautiful pair stand as silent sentinels watching over the green hinterland.

"We see them as beacons of hope," outlined Naren. "They are a human charging station with immensely powerful energies. Everybody is welcome to come and stand between them to be recharged."

*Manya & Naren inspecting the very top of the Guardians
Moving one of the Guardians into place in its new home.
Bringing the Crystal Guardians and the Enchanted Cave to the Castle.*



crystal guardians



the enchanted cave



This amazing geode was created around 120 million years ago when a giant bubble formed inside a molten lava flow.

Over time the lava cooled and hardened and mineral rich water seeped through the hard rock exterior. The water evaporated or leached out of the rock leaving behind tiny mineral deposits. As millions of years passed, these iron rich deposits grew really slowly forming beautiful lavender amethysts in a magical cave.

When a farmer discovered these massive geodes on his land in remote northern Uruguay, Crystal Castle founder, Naren, and his daughter, Manya, flew to the site to see it.

“It’s always been my dream to have the largest crystals in the world here at the Crystal Castle. I went to South America intending to acquire one giant crystal but having ‘closed the deal’ on the Crystal Guardians, I turned round and found Manya sitting in a giant amethyst cave, looking completely enchanted.

“When she said it’s every crystal lover’s dream to sit in a crystal cave, I just had to get this too, as I knew she was right!”

This awe inspiring creation of nature is a gift to the Crystal Castle in her 30th year.

It was an epic journey to bring the Enchanted Cave from South America to Mullumbimby, where visitors now have the opportunity to see this wonder that is usually hidden deep beneath the earth’s surface.

The Enchanted Cave is approximately 5.5 metres wide and weighs over 20,000 kilograms, that’s 20 tonnes or the same as seven cars!

We hope you enjoy seeing what we believe to be the largest amethyst cave ever discovered in the world.

Every geode is a mystery until it’s opened, and then it’s a wonder!

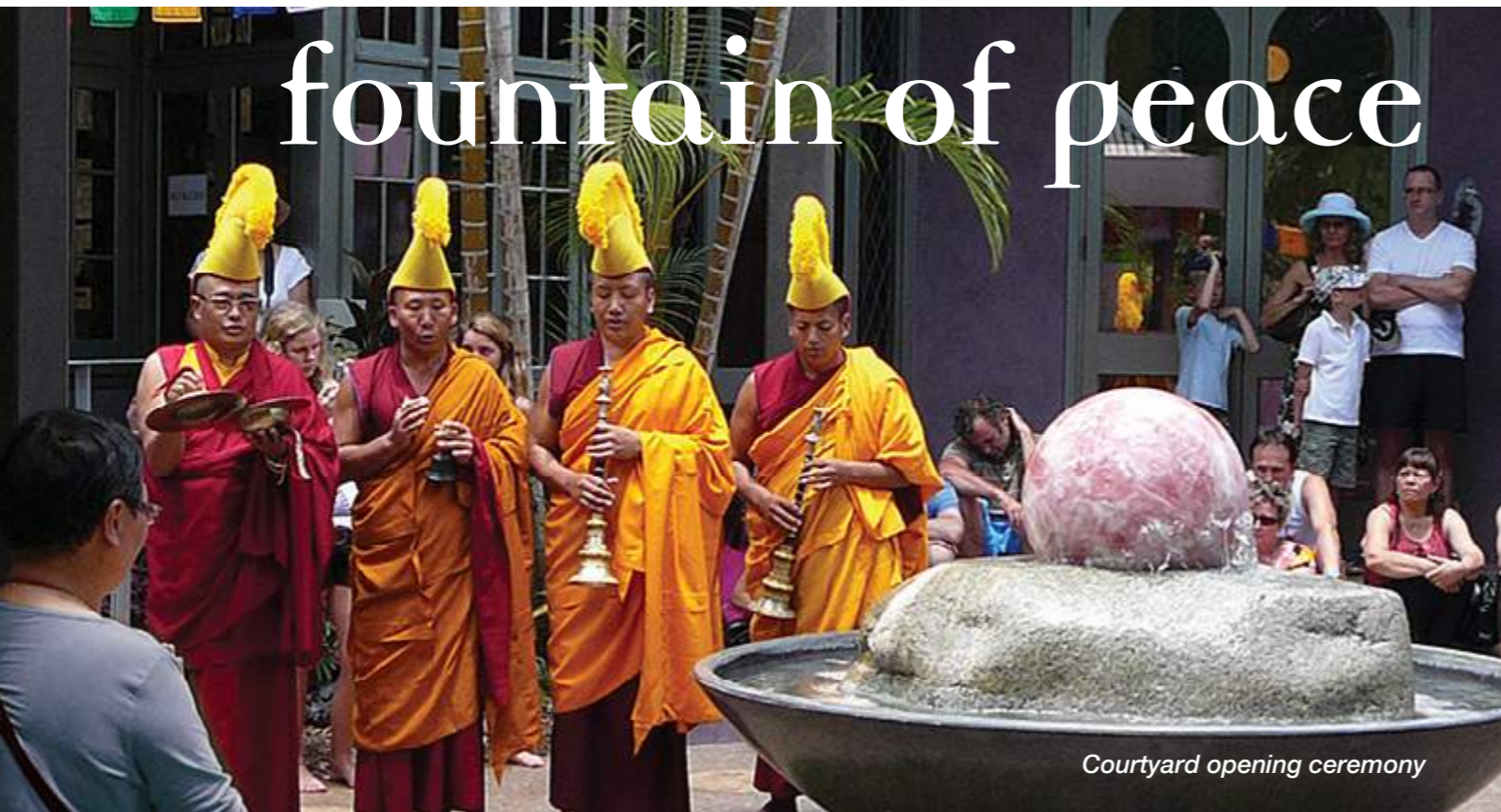
mural & geode

Journey To Shangri-La : This clever 'trompe l'oeil' mural, by local artist Peta Laurisen (assisted by Tiffany Calder Kingston), is painted in a specialty style giving an illusion of depth, tricking the eye into believing this is a real scene. The mural features a grand archway inspired by the famous Angkor Wat temple in Cambodia; the winding stairway to the Tiger's Nest Monastery (Taktsang) in Bhutan; a tiger standing guard, bringing awareness to the risk of extinction for this majestic animal; and symbols from twelve of the world's faiths etched in the stone of the archway to represent the oneness of humanity.



Around 10 million years old, standing a magnificent 3.4 metres tall in front of the archway, and weighing an incredible 1.12 tonne, this glorious amethyst geode was discovered in 2007 in the south of Brazil, by the family who source many of our crystals. Three generations of this family have been searching for crystals in the mountains for over 50 years and this was a large and rare find.

fountain of peace



Courtyard opening ceremony

The extraordinary water feature at the centre of the Castle's courtyard was crafted by highly skilled fountain makers in Germany using rose quartz from Brazil and granite from Switzerland. Polished into a perfect sphere, the 310 kilograms of semi-precious stone appear to defy logic and gravity by rotating on a mere 0.3 millimetres of water.

According to mystic lore, rose quartz emanates the qualities of love and compassion, making this masterpiece of engineering the spinning heart of the Crystal Castle.

labyrinth

The labyrinth is an archetypal symbol found in spiritual traditions throughout human history. It is a form of sacred geometry that has traditionally been located on sacred sites, power places or energy vortices on the Earth. Found as far apart as India, Arizona, Java, Peru, Iceland, Crete, Egypt and Europe, traced through early Minoan civilisations back to the Neolithic, each labyrinth is inherently designed for the same purpose: as a form of meditative inquiry, an entrance into sacred time and space to seek insight or inspiration.

The mysterious winding path that takes us to the centre is symbolic of entering the unknown. It becomes a metaphor for our journey of self-inquiry. Unlike the maze, which is a puzzle designed to be solved, there is only one way in to the centre of a labyrinth and one way out, no tricks and no dead ends. By walking the path towards the centre, it is believed that neurological pathways get activated between the left and right hemispheres in the brain and we literally begin to unravel our current viewpoint on reality.

In the Middle Ages an eleven-circuit labyrinth design divided into four quadrants became popular. It was often found in Gothic cathedrals but over time many of these eleven-circuit designs were destroyed or intentionally removed. The most famous labyrinth still in existence today was built around 1200 AD in Chartres Cathedral near Paris.

Created in 2000, the Crystal Castle labyrinth is based on the Chartres design. At the point of entering the labyrinth, you may like to pose a question or to set an intention and invite existence to reveal the answer. On the way to the centre there is an opportunity to let go of the details of your life. This is the act of shedding thoughts and distractions. A time to open the heart and quiet the mind. At the centre you will find a beautiful rose quartz flower of life. It is a place of prayer and contemplation, a place to simply stop, wait and receive. Walking back out along the same path is often calmer, more meditative and rejuvenating, and further insights into your current situation may be revealed. Each journey is unique, no response is the same and guidance or insight appears in many ways.

Labyrinths are being used as legitimate medical tools to help calm the agitated and to provide people with a quiet place to meditate. They are also being built in schools to be used by anxious students or for those with behavioural problems.



"In a maze we lose ourselves, but in a labyrinth we find ourselves."
Michael Stevens
Sydney Morning Herald

DAMANHUR SPIRAL

This crystal spiral is an energy link connected to the stone spirals and labyrinths that live in the Sacred Woods Temple of Damanhur, Federation of Communities in Northern Italy.

The link is created through a small crystal that has been charged with joy and positive thoughts. The spirals are in turn connected to the Temples of Humankind, dug under the mountain that hosts these stone circuits in the woods of the spiritual eco community. Together, they all form an extensive book of knowledge used to reawaken the divine essence present in each individual.

The spiral form invites us to always enter deeper into ourselves, to search for the inner room that holds the responses to our most spiritual questions.

To use the spiral:

- One person at a time walks slowly with awareness into the spiral
- Stop to sit and enjoy a few moments at the large central crystal and take in the energy of the spiral for inspiration, dreaming and insight
- While it is a beautiful spot to languish in, please be mindful of others waiting to enter the spiral and don't sit for too long
- When you are ready, walk back the way you came. In this moment, when one is leaving, a second person may now enter the spiral
- When two people meet inside the spiral, it is important that one stops and the other passes
- Please keep inside the stone lines of the spiral pathway while you enjoy the peaceful walk, as the spiral will be deactivated if you step across the lines
- If this happens, anyone on the path must leave the spiral and exit (only then may you walk directly across the lines of the stones)
- The spiral will reactivate automatically after 5 minutes and then one person may re-enter

We hope you enjoy your spiral experience!

For more info visit : damanhur.org

reflexology walk

Reflexology is an ancient healing art that has been known for thousands of years and was first practiced in early India, China and Egypt. It is based on the principle that there are specific reflex areas on the hands and feet that are linked to the internal organs and other parts of the body. Interesting fact: there are over 7,000 nerve endings in your feet!

Every morning in Asia, millions of people take off their shoes and walk reflexology paths to enhance their wellbeing and to reduce chronic pain.

It was recently confirmed in a study by scientists at the Oregon Research Institute that walking barefoot on cobblestone surfaces significantly reduces blood pressure and improves balance and overall physical performance.

You are circling "Rosie", a 4 tonne, mini-mountain of rose quartz, one of the largest ever found in the world with such a large "crystalised face". Check out the smooth area closely and you will notice the rare "striations", or lines on the surface. Rosie is one of the most favourite crystals amongst the team here at the Crystal Castle.

Please take off your shoes and enjoy walking barefoot.



the buddha walk



By the year 2000, more and more people were coming to visit the Crystal Castle. Owners Naren and Sono decided to open up the grounds, giving access to the amazing hinterland views, and to create a display within the gardens that would provide their visitors with a deeper and more profound experience.

‘We had the idea to put statues in the garden and we wanted to bring in some symbology from the Eastern spiritual traditions,’ explained Naren. ‘As a family we had visited the extraordinary ancient Buddhist temples at Borobudur in Java and we were struck by the deep sense of spiritual presence that we felt there. The idea for the Buddha Walk was conceived.’

In 2004 Naren and Sono went to Bali searching for statues, but although they scoured the island they found nothing of the stature that they were imagining. Finally they heard about a master carver in Java and this was where they found what they were looking for. Rather than the average garden statues they had been seeing in Bali, here were extraordinary works of art that would normally only be found in a temple.

Getting the statues back to Mullumbimby was quite an extraordinary journey. It took 30 Javanese men, equipped with 100 pieces of wood and two little red car jacks, a massive 30 non-stop hours to get the Blessing Buddha crated up and into the shipping container. Once there he filled the entire container with only 2 centimetres to spare on either side of his knees. The reverse procedure at Brisbane docks took precisely two minutes!

Naren recalls, ‘I was granted special permission to attend the unloading but I arrived at the docks ten minutes late. There in the middle of a huge warehouse I found the Buddha, already disembarked, with five black-coated customs officials gazing at him in complete silence. He also caused quite a stir with motorists when he travelled on the back of a truck down the highway to Mullumbimby!’

Tools for hand carving the statues from lava stone. Our Buddha statue was originally carved for a temple in Sumatra, but because of the mark on his cheek he was given to us. The mission to get the Buddha into the container, 2004.



Once back at the Crystal Castle the statues in the four containers had quite a wait before they were installed in the gardens. The entire budget destined for the Buddha Walk had been spent on buying the statues and getting them home and it took Naren and Sono another year and a half to raise enough money to complete the project.

There was plenty of design work to be done however. The amphitheatre was originally the site of a leaky dam and it lent itself perfectly to terraces and a space where people could gather. With that central element decided, the rest of the walk fell into place around it. But the Kings were struggling with where to put Ganesh. ‘We had designs mapped out on the back of envelopes and we had a place for everything other than the destroyer of obstacles himself,’ remembers Sono. ‘Toby, who was six years old at the time, came over and pointed at the centre of the welcome circle at the entrance to the walk. “Put him there,” he said. And that’s where he is – a highly appropriate place for a deity to whom people traditionally make offerings when about to embark upon a journey.’

The work on the ground finally began in 2005. Local landscaper Keith O’Brien was given the role of creating the Buddha Walk and over the following years the vision, section by section, took magnificent shape.

The result is a truly unique experience – a gentle half-kilometre walk offering spectacular views of Byron’s hinterland, taking you through glorious gardens, across terraced lawns and down a magical bamboo staircase. Huge monolithic crystals line the path: fuchsite, sodalite and aventurine, the spectacular amethyst geode pair that forms the gateway, and giant rose quartz and clear quartz crystals from Brazil weighing between half and one tonne each. Along the walk there are shady spots in which to sit and reflect on the amazing hand-carved deities, to read their stories and, if you wish, to contemplate the aspects of existence that they represent and the ways that these manifest in your life.

*The leaky dam 2005
Sono, creative director & Keith, the landscaper, planning
The Buddha pond takes shape, August 2005
The Blessing Buddha ready to be placed on his lotus base*



'The Shambhala Gardens has become a place of ceremony and celebration, a place of marriage and a place of farewell, a place of peaceful contemplation and a place to play music and party. And the vision is for more and more things to happen there,' said Naren.

Sono, in summing up her experience, adds, 'Over the years since the walk was created I have felt the energy of the Castle deepen. Maybe it's the power of all the crystals and statues or the collective presence created by people slowing down and being with nature - whatever the source, the shift is tangible to me and a joy to witness. This is so often reflected in the comments in our visitors book.'

Landscaping team 2005



The Buddha flying in by crane



ganesh

Ganesh (also known as Ganesha) is the Lord of Success and destroyer of evil and obstacles. He is also worshipped as the god of education and literature, knowledge, wisdom and wealth. According to the Hindu religion, Ganesh, when honoured before a new undertaking, will bestow riches and assure success.

The story goes that one day, while bathing, the goddess Parvati created a boy from the dew of her body mingled with dust and assigned him the task of guarding the entrance to her bathroom. When Shiva her husband returned, he was surprised to find a stranger denying him access, and struck off the boy's head in rage. Parvati broke down in grief and to soothe her Shiva promised to replace Ganesh's head. He restored the boy's life using the head of the first being that walked by. This happened to be an elephant. Shiva made him the leader of his troops and made a promise that people would worship him and invoke his name before undertaking any venture.

The legend continues that one day after eating a great deal, Ganesh decided to take a ride on his rat to stir up his digestion. He was ambling along in the moonlight when a huge snake barred his way. The rat was frightened and leapt to one side and Ganesh bounced extremely hard on the earth. Ganesh had a big tummy because he loved eating sweets, and when he fell his tummy burst open and sweets fell all around. He grabbed the snake and rolled him round his burst stomach. The moon, who was watching, thought this was very funny and started to laugh. Ganesh, in his embarrassment and rage, broke off one of his tusks and threw it at the moon's face with a curse that periodically deprived the moon of its light. This lasts to this day in the waxing and waning of the moon.

Another version suggests that Ganesh lost his tusk to Rama for forbidding him entry to his sleeping father Shiva. In yet another version, legend tells that Ganesh tore out his tusk in a burst of enthusiasm to write down the Mahabharata as dictated by Vasya the wise.

However he acquired it, Ganesh's broken tusk is a symbol of sacrifice. The rosary in his hand suggests that the pursuit of knowledge should be continuous. The laddoo (Indian sweet) he holds in his trunk indicates that one must discover the sweetness of Brahman (the Absolute or ultimate reality). His trunk leaning to his left means success in the world. His fan-like ears convey that he is 'all ears' to our prayers. The snake that runs around his waist represents energy in all forms. Ganesh's vehicle is usually a mouse or rat, showing his humility.

Our statue of Ganesh has a particularly interesting story. When we purchased him he had been carved with two tusks. After his long journey over the sea, we unpacked him from his crate to find one of his tusks had broken off! In a shipment of dozens of stone statues this, amazingly enough, was the only breakage on their way to the Crystal Castle.



Lakshmi

Lakshmi is the Hindu goddess of fortune and prosperity, wisdom and fertility, generosity and courage. She is the embodiment of beauty, grace and charm.

She is always shown with the lotus. Rooted in the mud, but blossoming above the water, completely untainted by the mud, the lotus represents purity and spiritual perfection that rises above worldly contamination. Lakshmi's four hands symbolise dharma (the path of right living, the root of which is compassion), kama (desires), artha (wealth) and moksha (liberation from the cycle of birth and death).

Lakshmi is the household goddess of most Hindu families and a favourite of women. In Hindu tradition, Diwali, the festival of lights, is a particular time to honour Lakshmi. People will put small oil lamps outside their homes in the hope that Lakshmi will come to bless them.

In Bengal, Lakshmi is worshipped during the brightest night of the year, a night in Autumn when the moon is full. It is believed that she showers wealth on this night. She descends to earth on her mount, the great white owl, and takes away the darkness of poverty, stagnation, anger and laziness from our lives.

The story of Lakshmi's birth begins when the minor gods were racing the demons to find the nectar of immortality (amrit). They decided to churn the oceans for the amrit. In the midst of the waves a sublimely beautiful goddess appeared. Lakshmi emerged standing on a fully blossomed lotus, wearing a lotus garland and holding a lotus in her hand. She was smiling and all who looked upon her were astounded by her radiance. The sages began reciting hymns in praise of her. The elephants sprinkled sacred holy Ganga water on the goddess and bathed her. As soon as the gods saw Lakshmi, they all fell in love with her beauty and grace. Lakshmi chose Vishnu as her consort, adorning him with her lotus garland.

Lakshmi embodies all the beautiful and bountiful aspects of nature and serves to remind us of the abundance of life's blessings.



Buddha

Siddhartha Gautama was the son of a Nepalese rajah and became the spiritual teacher who founded Buddhism. Siddhartha was born in Lumbini and raised in the small kingdom or principality of Kapilvastu. His father wished to make his son a great king. He provided him with everything he could want or need and shielded him from religious teachings or any knowledge of human suffering.

At the age of 29, Siddhartha left his palace in order to meet his subjects. Despite his father's efforts to remove the sick, aged and suffering from the public view, Siddhartha was said to have seen an old man. Disturbed by this he inquired further and was told by his charioteer, Channa, that all people would eventually grow old. The prince went on further trips where he encountered, variously, a diseased man, a decaying corpse and an ascetic. Deeply depressed by these sights, he determined to overcome old age, illness and death by living the life of an ascetic. He left a life of luxury and devoted himself to years of contemplation, finally reaching enlightenment while sitting beneath a Bodhi tree.

Thereafter known as Buddha, 'the awakened one', he chose to spend his life teaching others how to achieve a state of liberation and freedom from suffering – nirvana. Believing that neither the extremes of abstinence nor of hedonism lead to enlightenment, Buddha taught his followers to pursue a 'Middle Way' of moderation and meditation.

Buddhism is a path of spiritual development and practice believed to lead the inquirer to insight into the true nature of life. The basic principles are straightforward and practical: nothing is seen as fixed or permanent; actions have consequences; change is possible. Buddhism offers practical methods such as meditation that enable people to transform their experience, to be fully responsible for their lives and to develop the qualities of wisdom, kindness and compassion.

'Buddhism has the characteristics of what would be expected in a cosmic religion for the future: it transcends a personal God, avoids dogmas and theology; it covers both the natural and spiritual, and it is based on a religious sense aspiring from the experience of all things, natural and spiritual, as a meaningful unity.' Albert Einstein

This Blessing Buddha and his lotus base weigh almost 14 tonnes. He has been hand carved from volcanic rock from a mountain in Java called 'Gunung Merapi' (Mountain of Fire). His raised hand is in Abhaya Mudra, the position of giving forth a blessing. Abhaya in Sanskrit means fearlessness. This mudra invokes protection and peace and dispels fear.

Avalokiteshvara

Avalokiteshvara (said avalo-kitesh-vara) is the embodiment of compassion and may be the most popular of all Buddhas, after the historical Buddha himself. This merciful being appears in different forms and is known by different names, Quan-yin in China, Kannon in Japan, Chenrezig in Tibet.

One day, Amitabha, the Buddha of Infinite Light who reigns in the Land of Bliss, decided that a deity in the form of a young man should be manifested in order to help beings overcome their struggles. His right eye emitted a beam of white light that took the form of Avalokiteshvara who made a vow to not rest until he had liberated all beings from suffering and led them to the bliss of nirvana. 'And if I break this promise, may my head and body split into a thousand pieces!' he proclaimed.

After working diligently at this task for a very long time, he looked around and realised the immense number of miserable beings yet to be saved. Seeing this, he became disheartened and thought, 'I do not have the capability to help beings; it is better that I rest in nirvana.'

As his thought contradicted his promise he burst into a thousand pieces and felt intense suffering. Amitabha Buddha put the pieces back together, giving Avalokiteshvara a new form, one with eleven heads and a thousand arms fanned out around him, each with an eye of wisdom in the palm, enabling Avalokiteshvara to work with a myriad of beings all at the same time.

Amitabha entreated Avalokiteshvara to fulfil his promise with even more vigour than before and transmitted to him the mantra: *Om mani padme hum*.

As a fully enlightened being, Avalokiteshvara sees everything and everyone in all corners of the universe, and exists only to help others. He can assume any form, and there are descriptions of him appearing as Buddhas, Brahmanic gods, humans and animals. In all these forms he does wonderful things to help alleviate the suffering of beings and bring them towards enlightenment. He rescues people from fires, from drowning, from bandits, from murder, from prisons. He gives children to women who want children. And, like all Buddhas, he helps release beings from the three mental poisons of attachment, hatred and ignorance.

In Tibetan, Avalokiteshvara is translated as Chenrezig, 'compassionate-eyed one'. The Dalai Lama is considered by many Tibetan Buddhists to be Chenrezig's primary earthly manifestation. White Tara is said to have come into existence from the outpouring of Chenrezig's compassion. The story goes that he shed a single tear which, when it fell to the ground, created a lake. A beautiful lotus opening in the lake revealed the Goddess Tara.



shambhala gardens



The glorious gardens which surround the Crystal Castle and provide so much enjoyment for visitors today were little more than bare weed-infested paddocks two decades ago. Tree planting began when the Kings took over the property in 1986 and the magnificent large trees that you see today in the Castle grounds are all the work of Naren's ex-partner Dhira King, who spent years tirelessly planting and nurturing these trees in their infancy. Work in the Shambhala Gardens did not begin in earnest until 2005, when Sono and Naren bought the entire contents of a local nursery and employed nursery owner Pyari Cau to plant out the enormous array.

'When I first began working in the gardens it was like working on a blank canvas. There was some framework and lots of empty space,' Pyari told us. 'The soil was quite heavy so we had to attend to it before we began planting. Over the years we have added hundreds and hundreds of cubic metres of mulch to the gardens to help control the weeds and provide a stress-free environment for the plants while they are becoming established. Our work with the soil has completely transformed it and now we have a really rich top layer to which we continually add organic matter. This feeds the soil and helps to manage the heavy clay found in this area.

'A fleet of trucks was needed to deliver all the many different plants that were brought in from the nursery: perennials, bulbs, trees, shrubs and tropical plants as well as the unusual and exotic plants I had collected over the years. It was important to get them into the ground quickly so I gathered a team to help with the planting. It was a huge task to fill all that empty space.

'Because we live in such a lush, green area I felt it was important to add colour to the gardens to create a real journey of discovery and to show people the abundance of plants we enjoy in this subtropical region. I love heleconias, which are magical, beautiful flowering gingers, so we have lots of those and plenty of my favourites, the kangaroo paws. There are also many natives whose beauty is really brought out in combination with the subtropical plants.





'I have enjoyed watching the gardens flourish and transform; we are continually adding new areas and there are many more ideas to unfold. The gardens are always growing and changing and each one has its cycle. Plants mature and flourish and sometimes become too big; then the garden needs to be changed again, so it really is a constant cycle of transformation.'

'It is an incredible privilege to work in such a beautiful environment. I feel that my role is to decorate with plants and I love being able to incorporate the amazing sculptures and crystals. It is such a joy to bring these gardens to their full potential and a real honour to be able to look after Mother Earth and all her treasures. The gardens have become rich with wildlife, with many bird species taking up residence and koalas and other native creatures calling the gardens home.'

'The Crystal Castle gardens are definitely a fusion and even though I have dedicated certain areas to specific varieties, like the succulent or the native gardens, much of the garden is woven together with different species. I wanted to incorporate fragrant plants because they add another dimension to people's experience. And I make sure that something interesting is happening all year round so it doesn't matter when you visit, there will always be something amazing in flower.'



Many people visiting the Crystal Castle comment on the magical quality of the gardens and it is Pyari's passion and love that has gone a long way in creating this. We asked her if she has any tips for gardening success.

'I have always used the moon calendar as my guide. This means we do things at the optimal moment, which saves time. I guess this is my trade secret. As a passionate plant grower I don't often go to nurseries and buy plants; I still raise them myself. However, I do browse the fantastic markets held around here, keeping my eye out for unusual specimens. I treat all my plants as if they are my babies and I go the extra mile to ensure they are happy and thriving. I see my job as creating beauty and bringing nature in all its glory to people.'

After her work establishing the gardens Pyari became the Castle's head gardener and has been in that position ever since. We asked her how things have changed over the years.

Head gardener, Pyari Cau

Dewi Sri



In Bali, Dewi Sri is the Goddess of Rice.

Rice is considered a sacred food given to humankind by the deities to sustain us in a way no other food can. Rice is said to have a soul and to have been created from the merging of Dewi Sri's body and the earth.

Formally known as Betari Sri Dewi, the Rice Goddess is often accompanied by her consort Batara Sedana. This divine couple is the focus of a great deal of Balinese ritual, extending from the rice fields to the most sacred temple in the land, Pura Besakih. There, an annual 'wedding' is held for this revered couple, to seek their blessings for an ample rice harvest and a bounty of material wealth. Their union thus symbolises sufficiency and completeness of the material requirements needed to sustain a long and healthy life.

rainforest walk



The Crystal Castle Rainforest Walk is a wonderful example of a project where we have been able to work together with members of the community and another local organisation to support something we are firmly committed to – the wellbeing of our natural ecosystems. In partnership with Rainforest Rescue, over 7000 trees have been planted in the Crystal Castle grounds since 2006 and almost that number again have naturally established as a result. The outcome is a beautiful 1 kilometre trail through regenerated rainforest, a place where visitors can be at one with nature and enjoy the abundant birdlife, beautiful water-sculpted feature rocks and rare species of wildlife.

The Big Scrub was once the largest expanse of subtropical rainforest in Australia, covering over 75,000 hectares between Byron Bay, Ballina and Lismore. Although less than 1 per cent remains it is the most diverse ecosystem in New South Wales. The regeneration of this glorious rainforest is vital to the survival of over 100 threatened species of flora and fauna.

Rainforest Rescue is a not-for-profit organisation that has been helping to protect and restore rainforest in Australia and internationally since 1998. Kelvin Davies, one of the organisation's founders, explained how the Rainforest Walk project came about. 'There is a special consciousness about the Crystal Castle and we felt that it would be a wonderful location, and they might be open to the idea of growing a rainforest. Through a mutual friend I met with Naren King and he immediately took up the idea and we both excitedly stepped forward with the Rainforest Walk project. We look at it as a community business partnership and together we can offer a real chance for people to experience the local wildlife and rainforest species that are home to this area.'

Kelvin recalled the start of the project in May 2006. 'When we first arrived at the site it was a wall of weeds; the lantana was impenetrable, 5 or 6 metres high, so initially we really couldn't see what the potential was. We employed local bush regenerators Dave Rawlins and Mandy Lisson to drive the design process in order to showcase all the native plants found in a big scrub – not just trees but also interesting plants like lamandras, sedges and palm trees, ferns, etc.' Mandy and Dave's passion and hard work has been one of the vital forces that has made the Rainforest Walk so successful.

plant a rainforest



Popular Australian cartoonist and philosopher Michael Leunig created the cartoon character in this logo especially for the Crystal Castle Rainforest Walk project.

'plant a rainforest' cards available at Crystal Castle

Once the bulk of the weeds were cleared and you could walk on the paddock the Castle hosted a series of community tree-planting days. The team prepared the site, digging holes and adding water crystals to ensure the new trees had enough water in those vital early days. We sourced most of the plants from the Mullumbimby Creek Native Nursery, a specialist nursery who grow all their plants from seeds collected from the local area. And the community turned up in force to plant, water and mulch the young trees. It was a fabulous feeling to have so many like-minded people come together to work on such a valuable project.

Each rainforest tree takes two years of care to become successfully established and during that crucial time the Tree Planting Team visited the Crystal Castle site regularly to remove weeds, ensure there was enough water and to protect the trees against grazing animals like rabbits and

wallabies. Now that the trees are fully established their care has been handed over to the Castle gardening team.

And what a joyful sight it is – a botanical landscaped 1 kilometre walk with a myriad of native rainforest plants to be admired. The trees have flourished and some are already over 10 metres tall, creating a thick, cool band of shade along the walk. The vegetation is providing habitat for many of the local birds and animals and it is very fulfilling to see so many people enjoying a relaxing time in nature and experiencing the plants and wildlife natural to this region. It is also very rewarding to know that some of these beautiful natural miracles will live hundreds and even thousands of years and that every tree planted will absorb around one tonne of carbon in its lifetime, making an important contribution to the reduction of global warming.





who you may see

The Shambhala Gardens have become rich with wildlife over the past few years. All the native habitat planted during our rainforest regeneration program along with the many nesting boxes that we have installed means that a wide range of bird species and other little creatures are calling the gardens home. The raucous laughter of the kookaburras often seems to come at the perfect moment when we need to see the joke. If it's been wet you'll hear the frogs before you see them but look carefully in shady, moist spots and these beautiful native animals may surprise you. And high in the trees is a place to check. You may be lucky and spot a sleepy koala or a wise and wonderful tawny frogmouth.



Satin Bowerbird (*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*) have a variety of sounds, including whistles, buzzing and hissing, as well as mimicry. The male also gives a loud 'weeoo'. The male only develops his wonderful satiny sheen after seven years, previously possessing the same plumage and colouring as the female which is olive-green with bright blue eyes. Each year a male builds a bower to entice females into mating with him, creating a gateway of sticks and twigs adorned with whatever blue things he can find. When the female arrives he does a dance. If the female likes what she sees she goes into the bower where they mate.

Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) is an arboreal marsupial. The Koala gets its name from an ancient Aboriginal word meaning 'no drink' because it receives over 90% of its hydration from the Eucalyptus leaves it eats. Their favourite leaves in this area are: Forest Red Gum, Tallowwood and Swamp Mahogany.

Laughing Kookaburra (*Dacelo novaeguineae*) is a common bird in Australia. It is the largest kingfisher in the world. Laughing Kookaburras are monogamous, territorial birds that nest in tree holes. Females lay one to five eggs, which are tended by a collective of parents and elder siblings. Its call is 'koo-koo-koo-koo-koo-kaa-kaa-kaa'.

Green Tree Frog (*Litoria caerulea*) is a fairly large frog, reaching 10cm in length. Frogs have been around for at least 180 million years and are a valuable nutrient in the food chain as well as an indicator as to water quality. Its call is a low 'crawk...crawk...crawk'.

Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) behaviour is quite comical, especially at mating time, when the male tries to impress the female with a display of bobbing, bowing and prancing.

Swamp Wallaby (*Wallabia bicolor*) might look a bit like a small kangaroo, but it actually has its own genus and differs in chromosome number from other macropods. In fact, it is the only true living wallaby.

Yellow-Tailed Black Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus funereus*) are large birds often seen flying in pairs or trios. They have particularly big wings which flap deeply, very slowly, and with a peculiar heavy, fluid motion. Their loud, eerie wailing calls carry for long distances, and the combination of sound and silhouette is unmistakable. The contact call is a drawn-out 'kee-ow'.

Echidna (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*) is a mammal that lays eggs and produces milk for its young. The tiny echidna baby is called a 'puggle' and is smaller than a jellybean when it hatches. They have been known to live for 45 years.



Bundjalung Gulgan

bush Tucker track

The Bushtucker Track (Bundjalung Gulgan) will take you on a fascinating journey through time. Plants played a crucial role in the daily life of indigenous Australians. The landscape was their larder and plants were also invaluable as medicine and used to make a range of everyday objects.

Bundjalung Gulgan was inspired by a visit from Uncle Bob Randall, Yankunytjatjara Aboriginal elder and traditional owner of Uluru. We asked him how we might honour the indigenous culture of our land at the Crystal Castle and he suggested creating a bush Tucker track.

With some initial help from a local Aboriginal group, Madhima Gulgan, we chose an area in the middle of the rainforest regeneration section of the Castle grounds. Mandy Lisson, local regeneration expert and landscape designer, devised a planting plan for the track that includes both foods and healing plants from many of the nineteen groups that make up the Bundjalung nation.

Depending on the season there will be different berries and blooms on display as you wander the track. You may see the fragrant and spectacular native ginger blooms, or finger limes, native mulberries and raspberries or the vivid showy blossoms of the *Melastoma affine*.

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Alocasia brisbanensis</i>	Cunjevoi
<i>Alpinia caerulea</i>	Native Ginger
<i>Anetholea anisata</i>	Anise Myrtle
<i>Archontophoenix cunninghamiana</i>	Bangalow Palm
<i>Argyrodendron trifoliolatum</i>	White Booyong
<i>Austromyrtus dulcis</i>	Midyum
<i>Backhousia myrtifolia</i>	Grey Myrtle
<i>Castanaspermum australe</i>	Blackbean
<i>Citrus australasica</i>	Finger Lime
<i>Cyathea cooperi</i>	Straw Treefern
<i>Davidsonia johnsonii</i>	Davidson's Plum
<i>Decaspermum humile</i>	Silky Myrtle
<i>Diosporus australis</i>	Black Plum
<i>Eupomatia laurina</i>	Bolwarra
<i>Ficus coronata</i>	Creek Sandpaper Fig
<i>Ficus watkinsiana</i>	Strangler Fig
<i>Gossia hillii</i>	Scaly Myrtle
<i>Lepidozamia peroffskyana</i>	Burrawang
<i>Linospadix monostachyus</i>	Walking Stick Palm
<i>Lomandara longifolia</i>	Spiny-headed Mat-rush
<i>Melastoma affine</i>	Blue Tongue
<i>Pipturus argenteus</i>	Native Mulberry
<i>Planchonella australis</i>	Black Apple
<i>Podocarpus elatus</i>	Plum Pine
<i>Rubus rosifolius</i>	Native Raspberry
<i>Sambucus australasica</i>	Native Elderberry
<i>Sterculia quadrafida</i>	Peanut Tree
<i>Syzygium moorei</i>	Coolamon
<i>Syzygium leuhmannii</i>	Riberry



rainbow serpent mural

The Bundjalung Gulgan mural was specially created for the Crystal Castle's Bushtucker Track by Aboriginal artist Jeremy 'Mudjai' Devitt. Mudjai is a descendant of the Nganyaywana, Dhaingutti, Gumbainga, English, Irish and Scottish nations and has been painting since he was a small boy. He describes his style as 'spiritway' painting which he was taught by Uncle Joseph Baird Wallace of Ramingining in Arnhem Land.

The mural depicts the Rainbow Serpent, a powerful creation ancestor traditionally associated with the Wollumbin area. The Rainbow Serpent brings positive energy and creativity to all living things as well as assisting us to access old knowledge and bringing it forward to apply today.

The serpent is a traveller and the designs inside his body signify respect for country, respect for where you are from and where you travel to, for the people you meet and the lessons you learn along the way. Down the length of his body he also has crocodile scales, for respect, and waves, which remind us to enjoy life and have fun as we do when playing in the ocean.

The handprints all around the serpent represent family. The most important motivation for Mudjai in his artwork is that it benefits family, passing on knowledge to the next generations.

The concentric circles of white dots symbolise the meeting place that is the Crystal Castle. The Rainbow Serpent is bringing power and respect to the meeting place and the colourful U shapes represent the people seated there. The U shapes are bare, without spears or money, showing that the people are not bringing with them any hidden agendas. They are simply meeting for the benefit of nature and all living things.

Arising out of that meeting, the multicoloured leaf shapes represent new growth, the 'good medicine', knowledge and understanding that is being shared and is spreading out into the rest of the world.

WARNING!

This bush Tucker garden is a display garden only. Many bush Tucker plants require preparation before they are edible. Also not all parts of plants are edible, so **please do not eat**.

the crystals





how crystals are formed

Crystals have always fascinated human beings, their clarity and nearly perfect symmetry captivating our attention since the earliest times. The word crystal is derived from the Ancient Greek word *krystallos*, from *kruos* meaning 'ice cold'. It was originally thought that crystals were a type of ice that was so cold it would never melt. In fact, crystals are minerals in which the atoms are arranged in regular geometrical patterns. Just as our DNA determines the colour of our hair and our growth patterns, the shape of a crystal is the expression of its internal atomic structure.

Most of the Earth's crystals were formed millions of years ago as the molten rock cooled and hardened to form the Earth's crust. By volume and weight the largest concentrations of crystals in the Earth are part of the Earth's solid bedrock. Other crystals have been created as the lava from volcanic eruptions cools down. The slower the molten rock cools, the larger the crystals that are formed. Other types of crystal are created slowly over time as liquids underground find their way into cracks and deposit minerals. Temperature, pressure, chemical conditions and the amount of space available are some of the factors that affect a crystal's growth. Sometimes crystals develop in confined spaces and in this case they form crystalline masses but may not grow into their typical crystal shape.

Crystals are mainly formed from silicon and oxygen, silicon being a most prolific element in the Earth's core. When silicon and oxygen combine, they form silicon dioxide, which is also known as quartz. The other elements which are present during this process are what create the myriad of different types of crystals and contribute to their properties. There are several other major crystal components, including carbon from which diamonds are formed.

The shape (or lattice) of a crystal falls into one of seven basic structures. Cubic crystals, for instance, are based on a square inner structure; examples include fluorite, garnet and pyrite. The shapes of tetragonal crystals are all based on a rectangular inner structure, and include four-sided prisms and pyramids, trapezohedrons and eight-sided and double pyramids. Stunning natural crystal forms include clusters, points and crystal caves; however, crystals are also often cut and polished into specific shapes such as spheres, hearts or figurines.

One of the most striking features of crystals is their colour. When we see colour we are actually seeing the wavelengths of light that are reflected rather than absorbed by an object. Clear crystals such as clear quartz take in and then reflect out light without changing it, hence they are colourless. Other crystals, such as peridot, are nearly always the same colour because certain light-absorbing atoms are an essential element of the mineral's atomic structure. Yet other crystals, such as amethyst, can come in a range of different colours. In this case it is light-absorbing impurities in the atomic structure that produce the colour. These may be present in greater or smaller quantities creating, for instance, the different shades of amethyst.

Crystals are actually all around us, an essential component of many modern items that we take for granted. Computers, cigarette lighters, radios and clocks, traffic lights and even space shuttles all rely on the capacity of certain crystals to generate electrical impulses when mechanically stressed or to resonate when an electrical charge is applied. But the beauty and energy of crystals have delighted and inspired us for millennia. When we pick up a crystal that we are drawn to we are connecting with one of the Earth's ancient treasures. Little wonder that we often feel it is a storehouse of wisdom and a potent source of energy.

amethyst

Amethyst crystal is a variety of quartz, well known throughout the ages as a healing stone. It comes in the most beautiful shades of purple with colours ranging from a soft, pinkish lavender to the darkest and richest of violets and purple, reminiscent of plump, ripe, heady grapes and sparkling burgundy wine. If you look carefully some amethyst can also contain surprise flashes of red and blue.

Some of the earliest specimens of amethyst were excavated from the ancient Egyptian tomb of King Djer, who reigned in the First Dynasty, approximately 3000 BCE. The ancient Egyptians knew amethyst as hemag and used it to guard against guilty and fearful feelings. Egyptian soldiers wore amethyst in battle in order to retain their courage.

The modern name comes from the Greek 'amethóstos', which means 'not to be drunk'. In Greek mythology, Dionysus, the god of wine, was pursuing a maiden named Amethystos, who refused his affections. Amethystos prayed to the gods to remain chaste, a prayer which the goddess Artemis answered, transforming her into a white stone. Humbled by Amethystos's desire to remain chaste, Dionysus poured wine over the stone as an offering. This wine dyed the crystal purple.

The wealthy ancient Greeks and Romans drank from goblets of amethyst, as they believed it guarded against drunkenness. They thought they could drink as much as they liked without suffering from any ill effects! Such goblets also gave them added protection against potential

assassins, as amethyst was thought to lose its brightness in the presence of poison.

Known as the 'Stone of Spirit' or the 'Stone of Integrity', amethyst has long been associated with purity and piety. It is the stone of the Buddha and in Tibet it is widely used in the making of prayer beads which form part of the practice of meditation. In Christian traditions amethyst is also known as the Bishop's Stone and is still part of the official garb worn by Catholic bishops.

In modern times, amethyst is associated with the astrological sign of Aquarius and with the planet Jupiter. Its element is air, and it is considered to be the stone of faithful lovers.

Amethyst is a quartz crystal, composed of silicon dioxide with traces of ferric iron. The colouring is due to the presence of colour centres that are created where silicon ions in the crystal lattice of the quartz have been substituted by ions of iron.

Amethyst is considered to be a master healing stone. Extremely calming, yet deep, this most dynamic and persuasive crystal is reputed to bring a wonderful sense of serenity and peace. People use this crystal to dispel intoxication as it is said to soothe and clear the mind, allowing one to move out of the heavy and denser 'intoxicating' earthbound realm into the higher frequencies of Spirit. Little wonder that out of all the amazing crystals here at the Crystal Castle, amethyst is our favourite stone.

crystals in your life

speaking metaphysically : an interview with madonna

Madonna is a treasured member of the Crystal Castle team, affectionately known as the 'The Crystal Oracle'.

She trained with the famous crystal healer and pioneer, Melody, and also delights in learning directly from the crystals themselves. We asked her to share some of her knowledge of crystals and their special qualities.

Please enjoy the following revised and expanded section of the guide. We are deeply grateful to Madonna for her wisdom and insights into the magical world of crystals.



history & mystic lore

Many people's first thought about crystal healing is that it is just a 'New Age' phenomenon. However, when you delve further into the modality, it is possible to see that humanity has long admired crystals for their natural beauty and their associated healing and protective qualities.

Throughout the history of the world, many diverse cultures sensed that stones had 'magical' powers and considered them to be gifts from the heavens. The Babylonians, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Aztecs, the Tibetans, the Africans and the many peoples across the Americas recognised the healing powers of crystals and gems.

One of the earliest written records concerning the use of crystals for their healing properties comes from an Ancient Egyptian papyrus dated around 1600 BCE. It noted the use of lapis lazuli, malachite and red jasper beads worn around the neck for therapeutic effect.

Our own Australian Aboriginal Dreamtime myths speak of a mystical substance — the Maban

(believed to be quartz crystal) — from which the wise men (called karadjis) obtained their magical powers.

These and many more cultures have valued gems as a key to attain enhanced levels of vitality, wellbeing and spiritual attunement, much as we do today.

Even the legendary civilisations of Avalon, Atlantis and Lemuria (Mu) whisper down the corridors of time about the mystical powers of crystals. It is often said that many souls who were healers in those times have returned to Earth now to assist in the evolution of the consciousness of the planet and all her inhabitants.

Today, crystals are recognised by the modern world as energy conductors and they are used in computer chips and high precision equipment.

Crystals generate, store, regulate, transmit and transform energy.



the healing powers of crystals

To begin, I would define the process of healing as the journey of bringing the body, emotions, mind and/or spirit back into harmony. I believe crystals can support and assist us to heal ourselves and others. They can show us a way, creating a bridge from one level of awareness to the next. They have the potential to be powerful allies on our path to growth, and emotional, mental and spiritual evolution. If you want to change something in your life, you will often need to go to a higher vibrational level to attract that something else!

Crystals act as a transmitter and amplifier of healing energy. Quite wonderfully, they may help you tap into your own inherent wisdom, self-healing abilities and intuition. Remember, the more you consciously 'tune in', the more they can assist. Everyone can connect with the healing powers of crystals!

how to use crystals in your life and for healing

There are many ways to use crystals for healing. Several possibilities are listed below.

- Wearing crystals: pendant, bracelets, earring or rings.
- Carrying crystals: a small tumble stone, flat stone or in a pouch.
- Placing crystals on the body: simply hold a crystal up to a particular area on the body that needs revitalising, activation or clearing.
- Placing crystals in your house: they brighten up any room or entrance.
- Placing crystals under your pillow: for sweet dreams.
- Meditating with crystals — either sitting or lying quietly with your crystals and allowing them to reveal themselves to you.
- Creating crystal essences and elixirs.

how to select the right crystal for you

So, you are captivated by the healing possibilities of crystals but are unsure how to choose the right one for you? Amazed by the vast choice of colour, shapes and metaphysical healing properties?

Well, I have compiled the suggestions below to hopefully assist you in finding the most beneficial crystals for your healing, learning and awakening journey.

All crystals vibrate on a particular frequency, just as human beings do. You will often find that the crystals you are most drawn to will be those that vibrate on a similar or higher frequency to your own. These are often the most beneficial to you at your particular stage in your evolution or life.

There are two main ways to choose a crystal: either in a rational or an intuitive way:

The rational method involves you taking a moment to research either in a crystal book or by reading our helpful mystic lore cards to find a crystal that corresponds to a particular quality or property you are searching for. It can be fun to explore what crystal healers and other people say! Nearly all of us start learning about crystals this way.

For example, say I am yearning for more peace of mind at the moment. I'm feeling really stressed out by relationships or situations in my life. I see that amethyst is considered the stone of peace. From there, I may find myself being drawn to a luscious purple amethyst pendant or small pocket stone or maybe even a raw cluster for my desk. In doing so, I am helping to set the intent that this is the frequency I wish to call into my world. It is as if I am creating a crystal bridge from me to that level of frequency/emotion and the crystal is a component of that bridge.

Another popular way to start is by choosing a new crystal based on your traditional birthstone or zodiac stone. (see table on the next page)

AMETHYST

Peace

The mystic lore of this stone is:
 sweetness of life
 tranquility
 divine connection
 protection
 purification
 intuition & common sense
 motivation

"I am tranquil
 & at peace with life"



CRYSTAL CASTLE
 & shambhala gardens

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Now let's talk about the intuitive way of selecting a crystal :

This path encourages you to take a moment to breathe and open your heart to the crystal you seek. It's all about using your heart, not your mind, to select the perfect piece. Some people follow their eyes, others use a pendulum to dowse, and some use their hands to 'scan' the energy, while others simply like to pick up a crystal and get a 'feel' for it.

The trick is not to spend too long on the process otherwise the logical side of your brain is likely to jump in. The intuitive method is all about allowing your eyes, hands, heart and/or soul to guide you towards transformation, growth and healing!

Many people also enjoy using crystal oracle cards. These intuitive tools can be incredibly useful and accurate in guiding you to your next perfect crystal piece.

For some people, the next step is to actually connect to a crystal's particular vibration or frequency. In this process you may even experience a tingle, an energetic pulse or a temperature sensation. Others may even hear a crystal's spirit (or Deva) sing or speak to them.



Phantom quartz



Amethyst, Agate & Chlorite

crystals in astrology

AQUARIUS (air)

January 21st – February 20th

- Amethyst
- Chrysoprase
- Labradorite
- Hematite
- Aquamarine

ARIES (fire)

March 21st – April 20th

- Citrine
- Carnelian
- Aventurine
- Jade
- Kyanite

GEMINI (air)

May 21st – June 20th

- Chrysoprase
- Agate
- Tiger eye
- Amethyst
- Howlite

PISCES (water)

February 21st – March 20th

- Moonstone
- Selenite
- Aquamarine
- Fluorite
- Blood stone

TAURUS (earth)

April 21st – May 20th

- Jade
- Lapis lazuli
- Clear quartz
- Rose quartz
- Red jasper

CANCER (water)

June 21st – July 22nd

- Moonstone
- Rhodonite
- Calcite
- Hematite
- Sodalite

LEO (fire)

July 23rd – August 22nd

- Tiger eye
- Carnelian
- Citrine
- Agate
- Clear quartz

VIRGO (earth)

August 23rd – September 22nd

- Amethyst
- Amazonite
- Jade
- Rose quartz
- Fluorite

LIBRA (air)

September 23rd – October 22nd

- Aventurine
- Kyanite
- Lapis lazuli
- Moonstone
- Aquamarine

SCORPIO (water)

October 23rd – November 22nd

- Labradorite
- Onyx
- Smoky quartz
- Tektite
- Unakite

SAGITTARIUS (fire)

November 23rd – December 21st

- Aquamarine
- Sodalite
- Clear quartz
- Red Jasper
- Amethyst

CAPRICORN (earth)

December 22nd – January 20th

- Fluorite
- Carnelian
- Smoky quartz
- Hematite
- Clear quartz

We have special zodiac pouches already made up if you're interested. They make fabulous and easy gifts!

the magic of crystals in your life

crystals in your home

Many people find it beneficial to create an area in their home that they dedicate to fostering sacred space and a stronger connection to their spiritual side. This is a place where you can set an intent for the day ahead. It is almost like a little crystal altar — an area with a selection of your favourite crystals, fresh flowers, some inspirational pictures or words and maybe a candle or vessel for burning incense or oils.

This sacred space is where you can take a moment out of your busy day to relax and connect with the wisdom inside. This is a great way to start if you haven't meditated before or even if you're a practised yogi!

Creating this space can be a powerful tool for transformation in your life. It's as simple as dedicating a small table, or corner in a room, to the enrichment of your spirit.

A good idea is to also create a central crystal focus such as a geode, a crystal angel or a quartz generator. This can help to integrate and transform energies for you.

A geode or altar piece can radiate very powerfully and is often used to change the frequency of a room.

Selenite assists us in creating a peaceful atmosphere, and a lovely large wand or 'log' of selenite is a welcome addition to any room. Selenite attracts and holds spiritual energies to create a safe sacred space. Perfectly positioned in any area of the home where you feel stagnant energies exist, she lifts both you and the room to higher planes of awareness.

Many healers and therapists, including counsellors, naturopaths and body-workers, often enjoy the calming, clearing benefits of having a large piece of selenite under their table or desk.

Others simply enjoy having a bowl of small tumble stones sitting on their coffee table, so that they can dip into them at leisure when spirit calls them to.

Some people enjoy placing stones in strategic spots around the home. One idea is to place two pieces of black tourmaline at the front door to protect the home and discourage any 'negative' energies from entering. Another idea is to set protective crystals in all four corners of your house, room or healing space.

I find rose quartz is brilliant for this. We have some lovely raw chunks of rose quartz which I use to grid in the four corners of my cabin and healing room. I also have had the honour of creating a huge rose quartz medicine wheel in my garden — the most magical place to meditate!

increasing your intuitive & psychic gifts

My suggestions for assisting you to open up to your intuitive and spiritual wisdom include the following:

Amethyst: this is one of our favourites here at the Crystal Castle, as you may have guessed! It is extremely beneficial at calming the mind, allowing your intuitive and psychic gifts to shine through the mental chatter. It is considered an extremely protective stone, transmuting 'lower' energies to positive ones. Traditionally, it was used to heal addiction. Today, I see it as an excellent 'stress buster' and for fostering one's connection to the divine. 'I am tranquil and at peace with life.'

Sodalite: this blue and white stone assists us to create a bridge of understanding between our conscious and subconscious mind. It helps clear our inner vision and release feelings of guilt or self-limitation. 'I intuitively understand the nature of things.'

Clear quartz is one of the master healers. This crystal is great for accessing a new level of clarity with your psychic abilities and is very good for filtering out any distractions when meditating! If you wish, quartz can be attuned to very specific spiritual work. 'I am clear and focused.'

Phantom quartz facilitates us to access past/parallel lives and to see how they may be affecting us now. It also assists us in finding the still point in meditation, while at the same time expanding our focus beyond our current expectations. It's for breaking through to the next level! 'I connect to universal awareness.'

Other enlightening possibilities include: selenite, pietersite, lapis lazuli, azurite, apophyllite, kyanite, celestite, charoite, calcite, fluorite, iolite, herkimer diamond and the wonderful rutilated quartz.



Amethyst geode

Sodalite



Clear quartz





Rose quartz

Dioptase: this brilliant green stone is not always easy to source, but sometimes we have a good selection of stunning raw pieces. This crystal reminds us of the healing riches that come with forgiveness and letting go. It is a premier healer for the heart and for the 'inner child'.
'My heart is open.'



Dioptase

There are many other crystals that are renowned to help open/heal the heart centre or encourage passion. Some of these include green calcite, aventurine, sugilite, amazonite, emerald, garnet, ruby, jade, green fluorite, green quartz, peridot, rhodonite, malachite, unakite and pink/green tourmaline.

A profound heart replenisher that is actually black, with rainbow colours hiding within it, is rainbow obsidian. It is brilliant at cutting the cords and eliminating any lingering pain from old relationships, both in past lives and this one. It assists in enabling us to break free from any stagnant energy.

'My energy is constantly replenished.'

crystals for love & relationship

Whether we wish to draw a soul mate relationship into our lives, heal our wounded hearts, nurture ourselves more or expand our capacity to be a loving, compassionate being, most pink or green crystals will assist.

My suggestions:

Rose quartz: the gentle flowing energies of unconditional love are expressed by this beautiful pale pink stone. Its soothing frequency nurtures, releasing and easing anxiety and fear. It cultivates self-worth.

'I feel loved and loving.'

Rhodochrosite is considered the stone of self-love, balance and self-healing. It may be a beneficial support for those ending a relationship or beginning a new one. Good for those who need comfort from all forms of abuse. It really helps us listen to our true heart's desires.

'I embrace joy and self-love.'



Rhodochrosite

crystals for grief & loss

The cycle of life and death, whether in our relationships with other human beings or with animals, has the potential to provide us with both wonderful joy and also feelings of great loss and sorrow.

Crystals can offer our heart and soul so much wonderful support and comfort. They can guide us through these sometimes challenging and difficult times and they can help restore our emotional equilibrium.

Mangano calcite: this pale pink stone offers soothing energies for a grieving soul. It is particularly helpful when parents have lost a child. It is also the stone of forgiveness; it encourages the release of grief and brings a sense of unconditional love and angelic support.

Apache tears: these natural water-worn obsidian pebbles may console a grieving or traumatised being.

Other supportive crystals include celestite, smoky quartz, sugilite, rhodochrosite and red jasper.



Mangano calcite



Apache tears

crystals for happiness

My suggestions to help lift depression, numbness, anxiety and fear:

Labradorite: this wonderful stone teaches us that no matter how dark and challenging times may seem, it is possible to rise above them. There really is an abundant universe of magical opportunity awaiting us. Plus, for sensitive souls, it is a brilliant tool for keeping the aura clear and protected. This crystal helps us connect to our higher self, our spirit guides, and it aides us in self-mastery.

'I manifest magic in my life.'

Rutilated quartz: a very powerful healer! Use this crystal to enhance your belief in yourself when feeling down or negative. It facilitates inspiration and helps one get to the root of a problem and move onwards and upwards.

'I expand my awareness.'

Others crystals to uplift include agate, sunstone, aqua aura, blue lace agate, citrine, carnelian, dalmatian jasper, peacock ore, tiger eye and orange calcite, to name a few.

Crystals to ease anxiety include celestite/angelite, aventurine, aquamarine, amethyst, moonstone, desert rose, green calcite, kunzite and charoite.



Labradorite



Rutilated quartz

calming the mind & soul

Amethyst: this purple stone promotes inner peace, serenity and divine connection. Great for encouraging relaxed sleep and healing dreams.

'I am tranquil and at peace with life.'

Larimar: light blue larimar soothes, uplifts and reminds us to nurture ourselves. Also known as dolphin stone, it helps you swim effortlessly through rough waters and go with the flow!

'I am tranquil, calm and clear.'

Other calming stones include ametrine, fluorite, rose quartz, chalcedony, blue lace agate, lepidolite, sugillite, selenite, calcite and celestite.



Larimar

crystals to support study & learning

Fluorite: one of my all-time favourites! Fluorite is a fabulous tool to help you focus on the task at hand. It can assist you with learning and retaining new concepts and ideas, and with maintaining objectivity. It's great at psychic protection too. Plus, it helps you to organise your life effectively for your soul's purpose. What could be better than that!

'My heart and head are aligned in making important life decisions.'

Hematite is amazing for mental attunement. It stimulates your power to focus and concentrate fast! Great for technical subjects. Also, it helps you to act on your intuitive guidance.

'I am grounded and connected to the earth.'

Other useful crystals include agate, dumortierite, carnelian, black onyx, jasper, moss agate and pyrite.



Fluorite

work, creativity & new projects

Aventurine assists you with confidence, self-discipline, prosperity and growth. This green crystal will help you to tackle new projects. As it opens doors to new opportunities, I love having a large raw chunk right at my front door — 'Bring it on,' I say! It is also extremely beneficial to either carry a piece or have it close to you in your workspace. It is also considered to be great at protecting against ill-wishes from any colleagues.

'I move forward in life with confidence and humour.'

Carnelian is the orange crystal of motivation and creativity, encouraging you to do all those things you have been putting off doing! It helps you to take the first step and allow things to flow from there.

'I am confident and motivated.'

Blue calcite is one of the stones of inspiration. Its soothing and positive energies are known to deter workplace rivalries.

'I am inspired and creative.'

Aventurine



Carnelian



Blue calcite



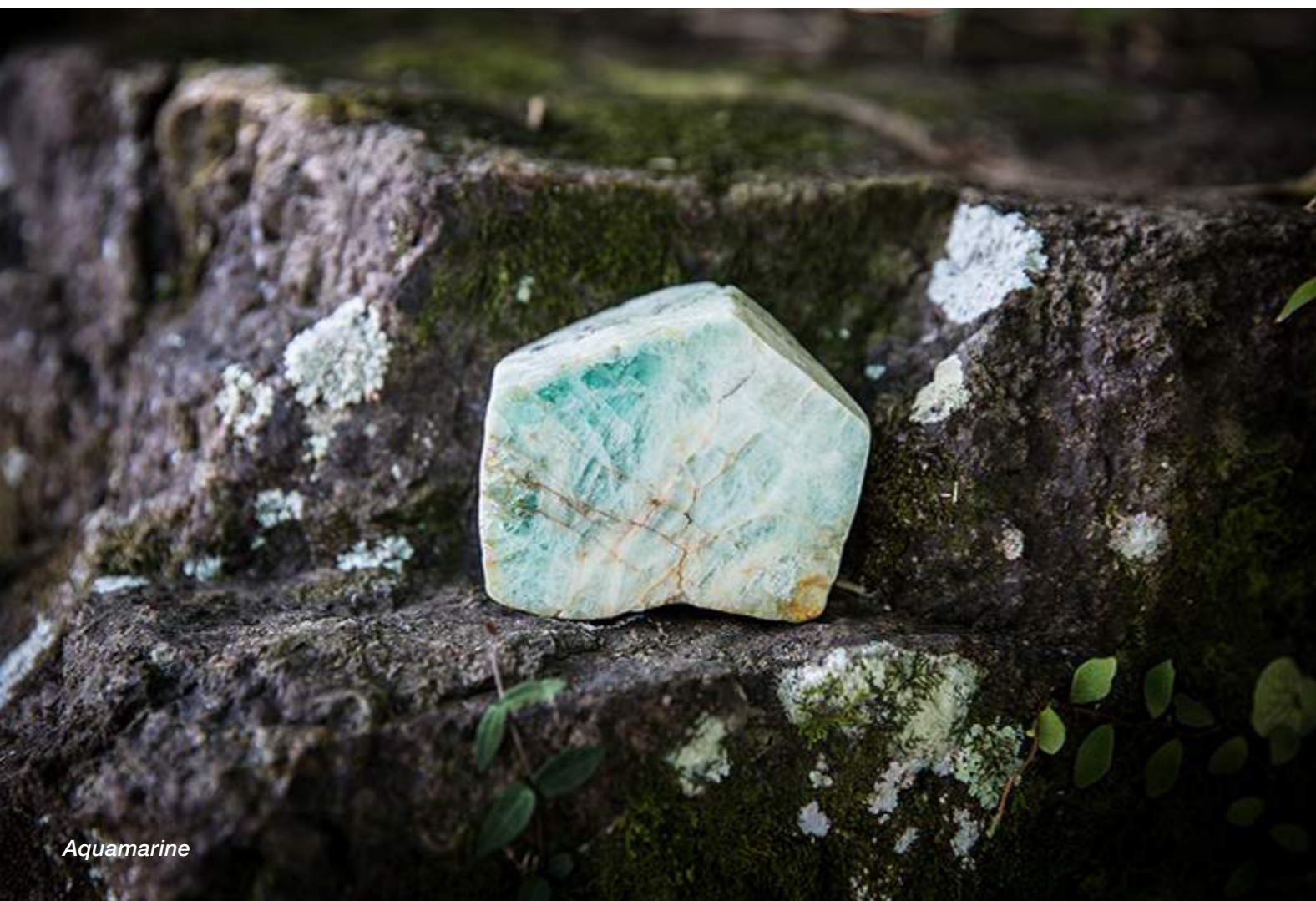
Amazonite aids in encouraging fair practices and draws new customers to a business. This green stone helps you to stand up for yourself, when necessary.

'I speak my truth with love.'

Tiger eye. This is the stone to assist you with decision making, vitality, balance and action.

'I am balanced and see all aspects clearly.'

Other crystals that may resonate with you include agate, calcite, pyrite, lapis lazuli, hematite, tiger iron, red tiger eye, tourmalinated quartz and vanadinite.



Aquamarine

crystals for wellbeing & overall healing

I believe that a holistic approach is a beneficial component in the search for wellness. By applying the resonance of a particular crystal with the 'intent' to heal the body, we can encourage ourselves to reach out to wholeness and stabilise any imbalance in our physical and energetic field.

The following crystals assist us in changing the way we see our life, which invites our life to change!

Agate. These stones are master healers, steady and reliable. When you need strength and the ability to dissolve inner tension these crystals will come to your aid. Agates come in a wide variety of colours and patterns, and they contribute to physical balance. They help you break through to new perceptions and possibilities for yourself.

'I am healing.'

Red jasper, the stone of vitality and physical strength, has a long history as a powerful protection stone. It is good for those who need to be a warrior in some way in their life. A strong, nurturing stone, it is excellent at transmuting pain and aiding in recovery from illness.

'I am full of vitality, endurance and stamina.'

Other brilliant crystals suitable for healing are carnelian, turquoise, jade, bloodstone, unakite and any other jasper that speaks to you.



Agate

crystals for travel

Jasper (all the different varieties): this is a very strong, grounding and protective stone and is wonderful at helping you feel stabilised, safe and nurtured, even if things around you are changing at a rapid pace.

Mookaite is perfect if you are travelling outside Australia, as this beautiful jasper is unique to this country. It is considered a very sacred earth mother healing stone. Mookaite keeps you calm and flexible, and following the wisest path.

'I make the right choices.'

Aquamarine is traditionally used as the perfect protective stone for journeys by sea.

'I courageously release the past.'

Carnelian is a valuable crystal to have when making journeys by car. I have my car keys on a key ring with a carnelian stone!



Citrine

good luck, abundance & prosperity

Citrine. To attract abundance, place this crystal in your wallet or purse. A comforting, warming and energising stone, it helps you to be open to receive all the blessings life has to offer.

'I am abundant.'

Red goldstone. Quite simply, this is the lucky stone.

'I am blessed by good fortune.'

Jade is considered by many to be the 'wealth' stone. Carry a piece of jade if you're embarking on a new chapter in your journey. It promotes a long and prosperous life.

'I enjoy the abundance in my life.'

Other crystals for good fortune include aventurine, topaz and garnet.

crystals for supporting fertility

Moonstone. For centuries, this beautiful stone has been used by women to connect with the power and cycles of the moon. It helps us to understand each stage in the process of creation and to nurture ourselves all the while. 'I celebrate the cycles of my life.'

Small black **tektites** (meteorites) have been traditionally recognised as talismans for fertility on all levels, especially for men. 'I feel powerful and expanded.'

Shiva lingams are sacred stones from India. They are symbolic of the divine creative process of union and they balance the male and female energies. Shiva lingams can transform any self-limiting habits or beliefs. 'I am at one with creation.'

Also, any beautiful crystals that are carved into an egg shape are wonderful gifts to those wishing to create and receive on all levels.

Additionally, we have beautiful charm pouches already made up for you with a collection of the most popular tumble stones associated with fertility. These include rose quartz, unakite, jade, ruby zoisite and moonstone. You can pop these in your pocket, or use them for gridding or meditating with.



crystals for children

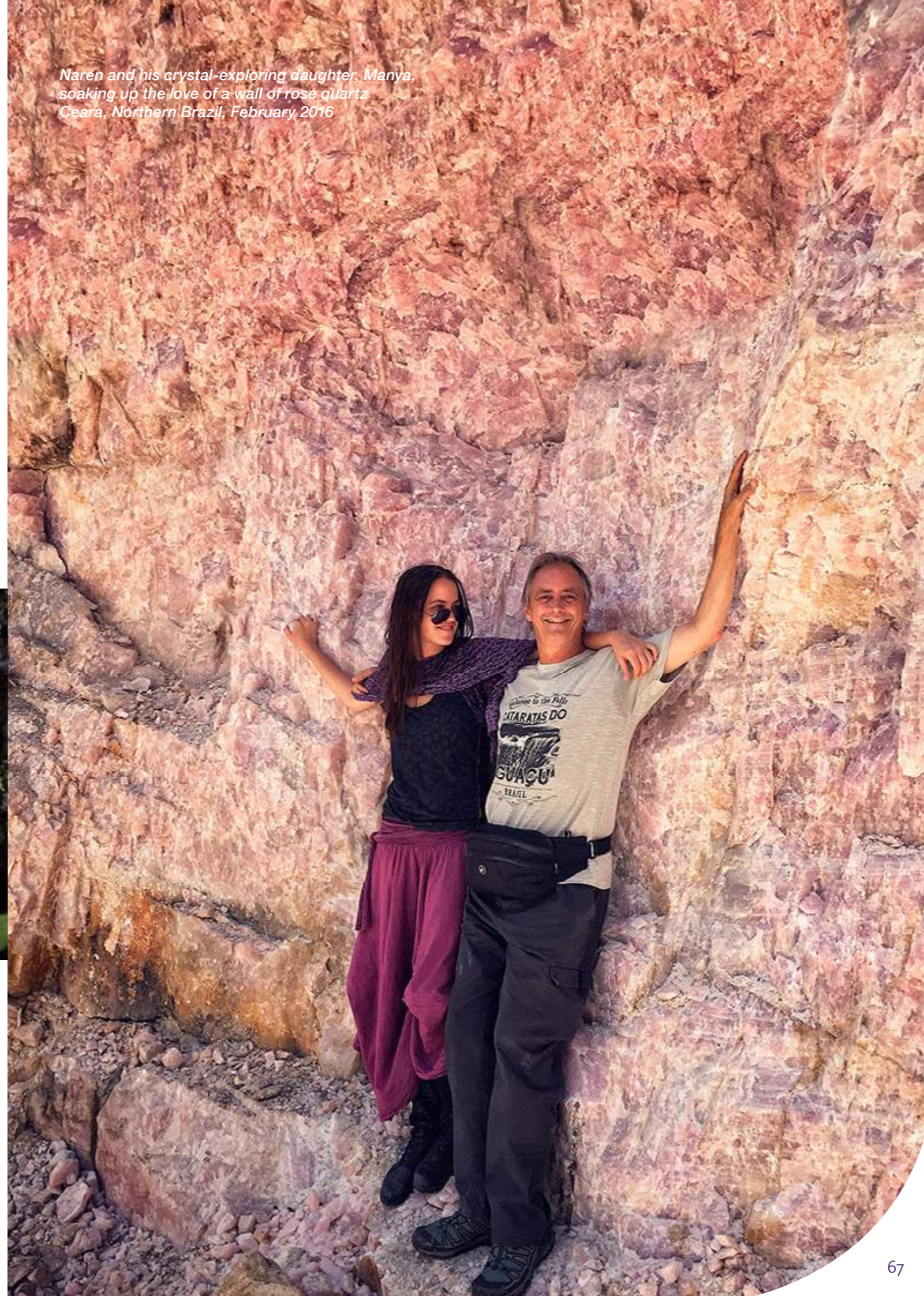
Children are often drawn naturally and intuitively to the right crystal for them. Their rational mind is less likely to get in the way! Starting a small crystal collection can ignite a lifelong passion. It will also encourage children to connect with the wonder of the natural world around them!

A popular choice is agate. As it enhances love, light and harmony, agate is sometimes seen as the 'protector of children'.

Rose quartz and amethyst's soothing unconditional love energy helps calm children who have trouble sleeping.

Our children's pouches contain clear quartz, carnelian, tiger iron, labradorite and fluorite.

Naren and his crystal-exploring daughter, Manya, soaking up the love of a wall of rose quartz Ceara, Northern Brazil, February 2016



my top 5 psychic protection stones

Do you ever feel drained or tired by your interactions with others? Do you sometimes walk into a room and feel that it contains a dense or negative energy? Do you ever feel as if someone is sending you negative thoughts or ill-wishing you? Or do you just feel a little bit vulnerable and need a buffer from the busy energy of the world?

Following are some of the crystals I use and recommend for protection from all forms of negativity and electromagnetic smog (computers, TVs, mobile phones etc.). They are great to either wear or have close by your electronics.

Until we are strong enough to stand completely in our own power of divine love, these beautiful crystals can be valuable allies on our human journeys.



Black tourmaline

Black tourmaline is well loved for its ability to dispel all types of negativity and fear. It is excellent for those who are highly sensitive or who live or work in challenging situations. I would highly recommend that all healers and therapists have at least one piece of black tourmaline and a selenite in their working space.

Jet: Naren was lucky enough to find a small collection of amazing top grade Siberian jet on his last trip. But when it's gone, we may not see the likes of it for a while! Jet has been used as a protective amulet since prehistoric times. It is said to neutralise negativity and guards against illness, violence and other negative energies.

Fluorite: this is a very effective cleanser of the auric field and particularly protective on the psychic level. This means it can shield you from psychic attack, discarnate entities, astral interference and other people's thought forms/static. It protects and aligns you.

Smoky quartz: this wonderfully protective crystal is like a bulldozer, clearing your path of any fears, anger, resentment, blocks or tendency to self-sabotage. It is helpful to direct the point of a smoky quartz at any areas of tightness in the body as it facilitates the release of tension. It protects and grounds your spirit in the body.

Amethyst: considered to be like a psychic vacuum cleaner, this crystal cleanses and transforms any negative energy into positive energy. It is often used to cleanse other crystals and healing wands.

I also believe that one of the best defences against negativity is to keep a positive mind yourself!



Smoky quartz



Fluorite

my top 5 transformational & high vibration stones

So, you're ready for the super high frequency stuff? These crystals have the potential to blow your socks off, so to speak. If you want to take your meditation to the next level, then it may be worth checking out these stones of transformation! On a purely visual level, some of these special crystals look completely unremarkable, but they have the ability to really open up your inner sight and increase your consciousness in ways you never dreamt of. Just remember, it's really important to ground yourself after working with them, using earthing stones like hematite, smoky quartz or petrified wood.

Moldavite is a form of gem quality tektite. It empowers you for inter-planetary travel! Personally, I use it for channelling and communication with inter-dimensional beings. This beloved green stone encourages rapid transformation. It is a rare and expensive stone, only found in Czechoslovakia.

'I transform my limitations into gifts.'



Moldavite on Selenite

Also, the more general form of tektite can be used in its place to expand your spiritual growth. And if you're fortunate enough to find a star rose quartz ball (we sometimes have a few in stock) to work with your moldavite, it can really transform you on the cosmic heart level.

Petalite is also a very high frequency ally; it is sometimes called angel stone, as it assists communication with angelic spirit guides. It may also aid in releasing any negative karma and entities from the aura.

'My higher awareness guides me.'

Charoite is only found in one place in the world - Siberia. This purple 'lightworker' stone helps you to awaken, acknowledge and receive your spiritual gifts, encouraging one to walk the path of service to humanity.

'I am aware of life's gifts.'



Charoite

Danburite holds a delightful pure vibration. It is a fabulous tool for releasing the past, dispersing miasms and lifting your consciousness to serene and heavenly realms.

'I am open to my higher consciousness.'

Selenite is regarded as the stone of activation, assisting one to attune with the higher planes. It is considered to be one of the crystals closest to being spirit in matter (and it never needs cleansing!). It is a brilliant healer's tool, used in wand form to clear imbalances in auric fields, and great for gridding a sacred space too.

'I live my life through my inner knowing.'

Other delightful stones include merlinite, fulgarite, brookite, phenacite and even fossils.

the symbolic meaning of particular crystal shapes

You may have noticed that many crystals are carved into particular shapes, such as an egg or wand, and wondered why this is done. Other crystals, especially quartz, naturally grow in a particular formation. So, to help you choose the right one for you I have described below the significance of some of the most common shapes you will see on your visit.

Pyramids are a favourite shape to use as a focus for meditation or to ground a room/new project for success, as the energy is channelled to the apex. They are a statement of perfection and balance.

Spheres or balls, especially clear quartz ones, are sought after as instruments to accelerate and enhance one's visionary and psychic gifts. Some believe that a sphere is the optimum shape for a crystal, as it allows energy to radiate out in all directions equally.

Hearts are perfect for gift giving, as a sign of personal or universal love. Or they may be utilised to help open/heal your heart in meditation.

Eggs are the symbol of new beginnings, fertility and life. Sometimes they can be used as massage tools.



Eggs

Angels or a particular deity (eg, Quan Yin or Laughing Buddha) are carved crystals that assist in calling in the frequency, wisdom and support of a divine messenger.

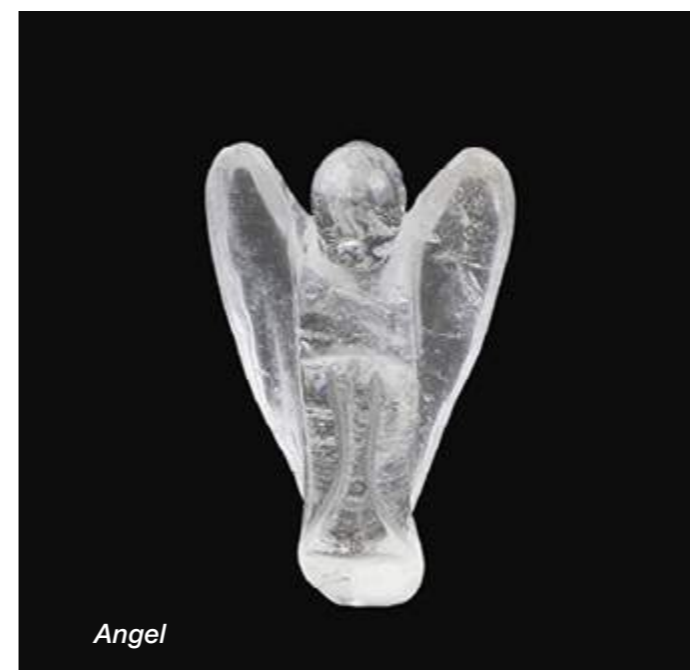
Hand carved animal sculptures, such as a bird, horse or cat, also help you identify with a totem or power animal.

A **merkaba** consists of two interlocking three-sided pyramids. The word merkaba apparently comes from ancient Egyptian times. 'Mer' means rotating fields of light, 'ka' means spirit and 'ba' means body. A merkaba is said to represent the rotating light field around the body. I love holding one in meditation. I imagine the two pyramids rotating in opposite directions around my physical body. Holding a merkaba gives me a sense of deep peace and acts like a chariot for soul travel.

Crystal skulls are powerful tools to align body, mind and soul on a personal and multi-dimensional cosmic level. Much mystery surrounds a number of crystal skulls — the most famous being the Mitchell-Hedges crystal skull, believed to be from an ancient Mayan temple. For those called to work with them, it is possible to create massive transformation, healing, and an increase in consciousness for all of humanity.

Slices are mainly seen in the form of agate slices. They are the perfect aid for visual meditation and colour healing.

Caves or geodes radiate magical healing properties and can transform a room's atmosphere. A geode is a crystal with a hollow cavity lined with crystals. These unique and beautiful forms hold and amplify the



Angel



Merkabah



Skull

energy, which is then diffused and softened. They are excellent as altar focal points. We have lovely small white crystal geodes or larger amethyst, citrine and celestite ones.

Wands are crystal power in a focused beam. They are predominantly used by healers or as a specialised crystal practitioner tool. They are powerful conductors and transmitters of energy and can be utilised to clear energy fields and remove unwanted attachments/cords/entities/'less than love' energies. Some may also be used as massage or reflexology tools.

Clusters are crystals that have grown together on a matrix, most often seen in clear quartz or amethyst. They are great when you are working with a group of people, in a larger space or with a number of issues at once.

A **generator** is a broad term I use to define a crystal that forms a point, most often pointing directly upwards. Many are hand carved so that a particular crystal energy is channelled, magnified and generated from base to tip. Generators are very valuable for meditation, gridding, creating a force field, aura and chakra clearing and amplifying a specific healing quality.

Additionally, within the quartz family there are some natural and often quite rare formations, which have been identified as being exceptional master or teacher crystals. These special pieces will often magically appear when the student is ready! They express their formations in different ways, some with specific geometry, shapes or markings, others with inner worlds/mineral deposits ... They are known by many names, including channelling, transmitter, window, isis, tantric twin, temple dow, manifestation, devic temple, seed or rainbow crystals.

And not to forget...

Empathic crystals (warriors). These are crystals that have somehow become damaged or scratched on their journey. They have survived a few hard knocks, so to speak. These crystals help us to rise above our own perceived wounds, faults and damage. They teach us empathy and compassion for the pain of others. They show us that true beauty comes from within — a powerful and significant message in today's modern world. If you look closely, you may be lucky enough to find some wonderful examples of empathic crystals in our Treasure Room.

crystals and the chakras

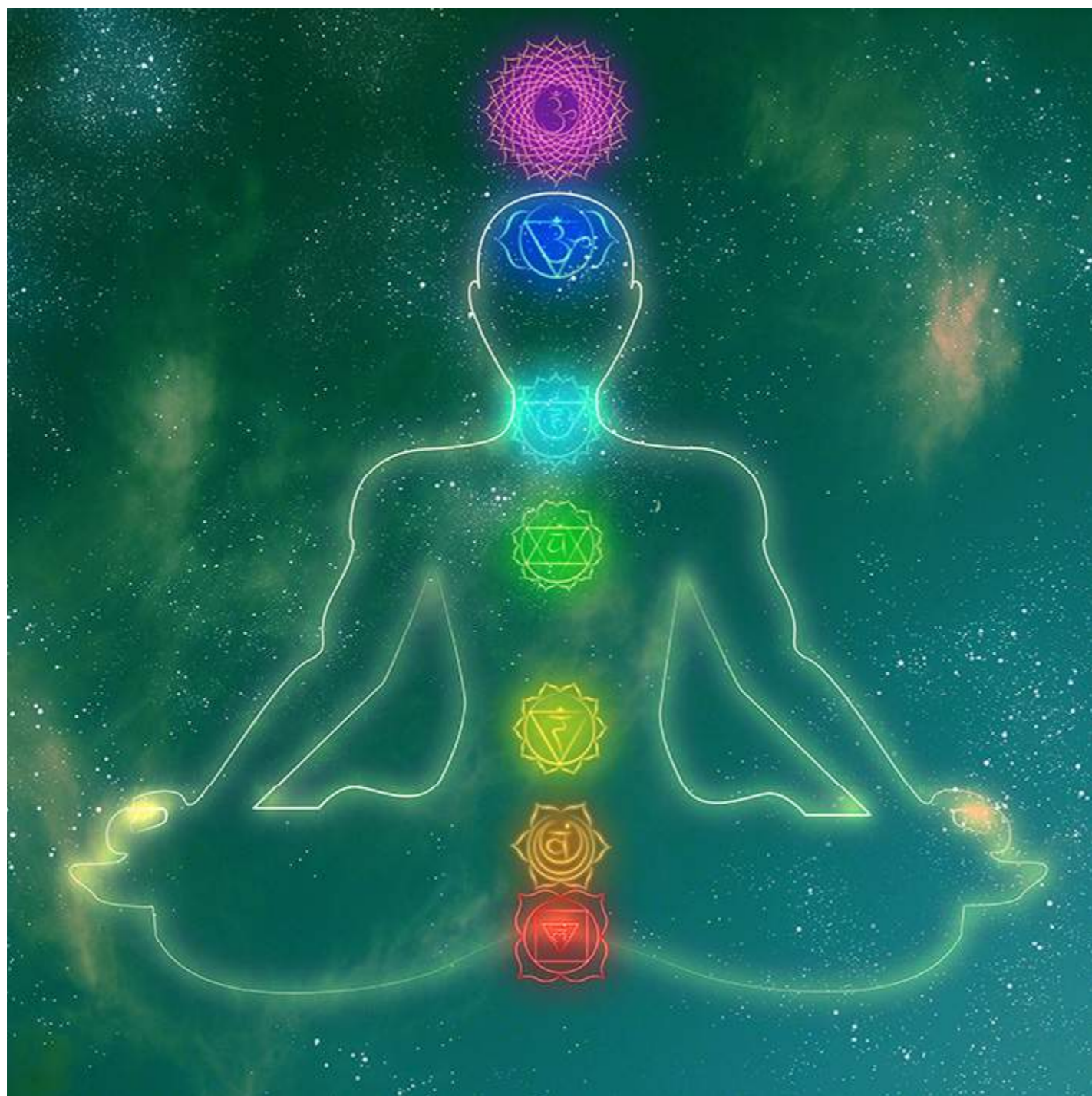
A wonderful starting point, if you are curious to learn more about spiritual growth and energy medicine, is to explore the chakras.

Chakra is an ancient Sanskrit word meaning spinning wheel or vortex. The chakras are connecting points between the aura and the physical body. The aura is an energy field or bio-magnetic sheath that surrounds each of us.

It is generally considered by many different traditions that there are numerous chakras in our energy field. I highly recommend starting with the solid foundation of the seven major chakras, for those of you who are new to energy medicine, crystals and the chakras.

These are the base, sacral, solar plexus, heart, throat, third eye and crown chakras (charted in bold).

Plus, if you wish to be adventurous, feel free to also include two extra chakras — the earth and soul stars — which are being increasingly recognised by healers and esoteric practitioners.



The chakras are considered either open or closed, spinning one way or another, depending on our state of being and our experiences. They resonate at different frequencies and have colours, sounds and crystals that correspond to them.

The chakras also relate to certain physical conditions, specific organs and the endocrine system. So, for example, if you had a health issue with a particular organ, such as the stomach, you could explore which chakra is associated with it (in this case, the solar plexus) and work with a crystal related to that particular chakra. Any blockage or imbalance in these energy centres may lead to dis-ease or imbalance in the physical body.

The chakras need to be kept balanced and the energy flowing freely. This allows us to function to our fullest potential and to embrace wellbeing on all levels.

Crystals are wonderful healing tools to assist us to balance (clear, infuse or activate) the chakras.

We can explore the use of crystals to heal and balance our chakras in a number of ways.

My suggestions include:

- Hold a corresponding crystal up to a particular chakra you perceive as being unbalanced or weak for a period of time and simply breathe, relax or meditate.
- Lie down and place a set of crystals on all the main chakras. You can do this for yourself or another — a mini crystal healing!
- Use a gem elixir - create or buy a chakra balance essence.
- Create a divination set (a pouch or bowl with an assortment of chakra crystals). Ask a question, choose a crystal, see which chakra it connects to, and follow your intuition to receive a clear answer.

We also have a crystal chakra pouch already made up that can be used for healings or divination. Or maybe you may choose to create your own special one?

Some crystals are fabulous for aligning and activating all the chakras ...

and are great additions to any crystal healing collection. These include: Aragonite, clear calcite, celestial quartz, fluorite, fulgurite, rainforest jasper, unakite, jet, kyanite, labradorite, lepidolite, moldavite, clear quartz, rutilated quartz, tourmalined quartz, seraphinite, shiva lingam, spinel and tektite.

Clear quartz and kyanite are particularly useful for aligning the chakras.

Clear quartz



Aragonite










Seraphinite



Kyanite



Chakra	Colour	Related organs	Balanced attributes	Examples of possible chakra deficiency or excess	Suggested healing crystals
Earth star	Brown		Standing firmly and harmoniously on Earth, expressing your soul gifts	Fear, powerlessness	Black tourmaline, hematite, charoite, smoky quartz
BASE 	Red	Adrenals, kidneys	Stamina, vitality, physical health, patience, ability to manifest dreams, inner security	Lack of energy, little enthusiasm, obsessive worrying, impatience, hyperactivity	Agate, carnelian, garnet, hematite, jasper, obsidian, ruby, smoky quartz, sunstone, black tourmaline, bloodstone, red calcite, jet, petrified wood, rhodonite, tiger eye/iron, ruby zoisite
SACRAL 	Orange	Reproductive system, kidneys, spleen	Creative, adaptable, flexible, delight in pleasure and life's gifts	Feeling of separation, creative blocks, compulsive behaviour, arrogance	Carnelian, citrine, moonstone, jade, turquoise, orange calcite, sunstone, tiger eye/iron, vanadinite
SOLAR PLEXUS 	Yellow	Pancreas, diaphragm, digestive system	Self-worth, confidence, learn from mistakes, healthy boundaries, personal power, divine will	Feeling overwhelmed and at mercy of fate, loneliness, ego centred, digestive disorders	Citrine, carnelian, malachite, pyrite, amber, cacoxenite, honey calcite, golden labradorite, ocean jasper, peridot, pietersite, prehnite, rhodochrosite, rhodonite, sunstone, tiger eye/iron, yellow jasper
HEART 	Green or pink	Thymus gland, heart	Unconditional love, compassion, self-love, unity	Sentimentality, selfishness, anxiety, jealousy	Rose quartz, jade, aventurine, bloodstone, chrysoprase, emerald, pink and green tourmaline, rhodochrosite, amazonite, green calcite, chrysocolla, diopase, hiddenite, kunzite, malachite, moldavite, morganite, rainbow obsidian, peridot, prehnite, ruby zoisite

Chakra	Colour	Related organs	Balanced attributes	Examples of possible chakra deficiency or excess	Suggested healing crystals
THROAT 	Blue	Thyroid, parathyroid	Speak our truth with kindness, good listener, clear communication, creativity and self-expression	Unable to express our needs clearly, shyness, compulsive talking, sore throat	Turquoise, blue lace agate, blue topaz, amazonite, aqua aura quartz, aquamarine, blue calcite, chrysocolla, lapis lazuli, larimar
THIRD EYE 	Indigo	Pineal gland	Intuition, clairvoyance, imagination, trust in life, discernment	Absent-mindedness, mental confusion, inability to cope with day-to-day life, self-hatred, nightmares, headaches	Apophyllite, amethyst, lapis lazuli, sodalite, blue apatite, blue calcite, blue topaz, celestite, blue chalcedony, charoite, dumortierite, herkimer diamond, lolite, mookaite, merlinitite, moonstone, snowflake obsidian, petrified wood, pietersite, blue sapphire, selenite, ulexite, phantom quartz
CROWN 	Violet	Pituitary gland	Pure knowing, wisdom, grace, integration, oneness with all that is	Fanatical religious beliefs, forgetfulness, dark night of the soul, schizophrenia	Amethyst, angel aura, apophyllite, azurite, celestite, charoite, danburite, purple jade, moonstone, petalite, prasiolite, selenite, sugilite, phantom quartz, smoky quartz
Soul star	White or gold		Ultimate soul connection/illumination	Rescuers, not empowerers	Herkimer diamond, moldavite, amethyst, celestite, danburite, petalite, selenite, sugilite



caring for crystals

Recently, many people have felt drawn to 'energetically' cleanse their precious crystals on a regular basis and when they first acquire them.

It is believed that as well as emitting energy, crystals also absorb energies from their surroundings and from those who touch them. So from time to time they need a little 'recharge' or cleanse. This can be done by giving them a gentle energetic cleansing and then dedicating them to the 'highest good'.

Here are a few suggested methods for the GENTLE energetic cleansing of your crystals, pendulums and jewellery:

- **Intention &/or visualisation:** take a few relaxing breaths, hold your crystal to your heart and visualise divine light clearing your piece. Ask that all 'less than love' energies are cleared and transmuted.
- **Using another crystal:** place your crystal on another crystal (amethyst clusters, geodes and selenite are especially favoured for this).
- **Sound:** chant or sound a bell, drum or Tibetan singing bowl over them.
- **Smudging:** allow the smoke from incense or white sage (the Native American way) to purify your pieces.
- **Moonlight:** lay them out to catch the rays of the full moon.
- **Sunlight:** place them in sunshine. However, we only recommend using this method for a short period of time when the sun is at its most soothing (like dawn or sunset) so as not to fade or damage your gems.
- **Crystal Castle clearing essence:** combining a number of the above in one beautiful essence spray.

Whichever approach you choose, it's important that it feels right to you. And it's also important to remember it doesn't need to be a difficult process! So have fun and do it with grace and ease.

Some traditional methods you may be familiar with include placing your crystal in water, salt water or direct sunlight. These methods, however, can in fact damage the structure or colour of your precious gems.

Generally, we have found most crystals prefer the gentler methods suggested above.



crystal castle clearing essence



We have created our very own Crystal Clearing Essence, to assist you in cleansing your own crystals.

This potent essence was birthed on the Winter Solstice when 10 Crystal Castle goddesses came together in a full moon sacred ceremony in the gardens. The essence is infused with crystal energies, pure essential oils, flower essences, blessings and prayers, sacred tones and chants, made with love and pure intention.

You can use this beautiful essence to assist in cleansing and uplifting your energy and aura, crystals, your home or work space.

attuning and dedicating your crystals

After giving crystals a lovely energetic cleanse, many people enjoy attuning and dedicating them.

Attunement means 'harmony'. So when you attune to a stone, you are inviting the resonating frequency of the crystal and yourself to come together in harmony. This simply involves aligning the crystal to a common intent. This greatly enhances the effectiveness of the crystal and need only take a minute.

It can be as simple as holding the crystal in both hands and saying clearly 'I dedicate this crystal to the highest good of all' or it can be quite a specific intent such as 'I dedicate this crystal to empowering myself to find the perfect new job ASAP!'

Crystals are magical gifts from Mother Earth.

Please remember, they deserve to be treated with respect and gratitude.



the mystic lore of crystals

"By sharing my love of crystals here with you, my hope is that your journey will be supported with ever increasing joy, peace, wisdom and illumination."

Madonna

Stone	Meanings
Agate	Healing
Blue Lace Agate	Communication
Moss Agate	Stability
Amazonite	Truth
Amber	Cleansing
Amethyst	Peace
Green Amethyst / Prasiolite	Interconnection
Apatite - Blue	Inspiration
Aqua Aura	Illumination
Aquamarine	Release
Apophyllite - White	Light
Aragonite	Centering
Aventurine	Confidence
Azurite	Insight
Black Obsidian	Reflection
Black Onyx	Discipline
Bloodstone (Heliotrope)	Renewal
Blue Topaz	Expression
Bronzite	Discernment
Calcite	Awareness
Carnelian	Motivation
Chalcedony - Blue	Soothing
Charoite	Receptivity
Chialstolite	Rebirth
Chlorite Phantom Crystals	Regeneration
Chrysocolla	Expression
Chrysoprase	Grace
Citrine	Abundance
Clear Quartz	Clarity
Danburite	Higher Consciousness
Dendritic Opal (Andean Opal)	Equality
Dumortierite	Inner Guidance
Elestials	Alignment
Emerald	Harmony
Fluorite	Alignment

Stone	Meanings
Fossil	Transformation
Garnet	Prosperity
Goldstone - Black	Uplifting
Goldstone - Red	Good Luck
Hematite	Mental Attunement
Herkimer Diamond	Attunement
Howlite - White	Inner Strength
Iolite	Inner Vision
Jade	Wealth
Lavender Jade	Compassion
Jasper	Supreme Nurturer
Jasper - Dalmation	Playfulness
Jasper - Leopard Skin	Spiritual Discovery
Jasper - Orbicular	Re-programming
Jasper - Picture	Earth Connection
Jasper - Red	Vitality
Kunzite	Divine Love
Kyanite	Intuition
Labradorite	Magic
Lapis Lazuli	Wisdom
Larimar	Tranquillity
Lepidolite	Serenity
Malachite	Strength
Moldavite	Transformation
Mookaite	Ancient Knowledge
Moonstone	Cycles
Morganite	Belonging
Mystic Topaz	Wonder
Opal	Centering
Peacock Ore	Joy
Pearl	Purity
Peridot	Growth
Petalite	Higher Awareness
Petrified Wood	Beginnings
Pietersite	Recognition

Stone	Meanings
Prehnite	Inner Knowing
Pyrite	Willpower
Rainbow Obsidian	Replenishing
Snowflake Obsidian	Awakening
Quartz - Phantom	Universal Awareness
Quartz - Rose	Love
Quartz - Rutilated	Expansion
Rhodochrosite	Self Love
Rhodonite	Awareness
Rhyolite	Growth
Ruby	Life Force
Ruby Zoisite	Individuality
Sapphire	Psychic Activation
Selenite	Activation
Seraphinite	Evolution
Shiva Lingham	Creation
Smoky Quartz	Grounding
Snowflake Obsidian	Awakening
Sodalite	Understanding
Sugilite	Higher Purpose
Sunstone	Self-empowerment
Tektite	Expansion
Tiger Eye	Balance
Tourmaline - Black	Purification
Tourmaline - Green	Heart Healer
Tourmaline - Pink	Unconditional Love
Tourmaline - Red (Rubellite)	Nurturer
Tourmalined Quartz	Purification
Turquoise	Wholeness
Green Turquoise	Heart Healer
Unakite	Courage
Vanadinite	Inspiration
Tiger Iron	Creativity

my top 6 stones

So, if by chance you're still not sure how to start your very own crystal collection, these are my top 6 for beginners!

1. Amethyst
2. Rose quartz
3. Black tourmaline or smoky quartz
4. Carnelian
5. Fluorite, and
6. A blue stone of your choice.

Well then, off you go! Go have some crystal fun!

still want to know more?

I can recommend the following books:

- Judy Hall : The Crystal Bible (Vols 1, 2, 3)
- Robert Simmons & Naisha Ahsian : The Book of Stones
- Rachele Charman : Crystal

And for the science minds out there:

- Ronald Bonewitz : Rock and Gem



castle jewels



Beautiful crystal gems in a wonderful array of colours, shapes and sizes provide a fantastic palette of inspiration for our jewellery designers, both local and international. Our crystal jewellery selection is diverse, ranging from simple but stunning strings of crystal beads, delicate drop earrings and dainty crystal bracelets to magnificent, elaborate pendants and individually created statement jewellery pieces – unique, one-off designer creations that heighten both your inner and outer beauty.

Objects worn next to the skin become part of the wearer's identity, an outer expression of an inner glow. Sono hand selects precious and semi-precious stones from around the world, combining them with sterling silver and crystal beads to create the Castle's in-house jewellery range. Silver has its own unique vibration. It works in total harmony with the crystals, imparting a gentle feminine energy and creating a beautiful bed for the crystals to nestle in.

When you choose crystals to wear you may find yourself drawn to stones that not only suit your colouring and style but also intensify and support specific energies that heal, empower or otherwise serve you. An ideal combination of all these elements provides you with exquisite jewellery that not only enhances your radiance but also nourishes your being. The team in the Castle Jewels showroom are always available to help you find the perfect piece that will delight you each time you wear it. And now you can also enjoy the convenience of online shopping at our secure website. Browse our online jewellery collection and view the divine concoctions of feminine elegance created from precious stones, vibrant gems and gleaming crystals, all reflecting the beauty and magnificence of the Earth's natural bounty.

more to see & do



wisdom & inspiration around the castle

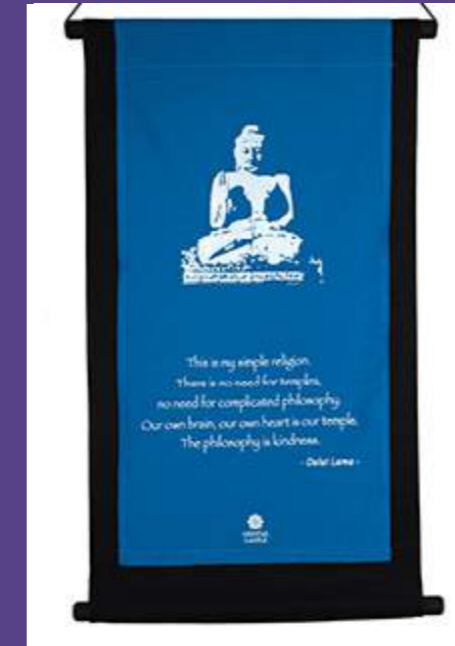
As you wander and enjoy the lush beauty of the Shambhala Gardens, keep your eye out for inspiration from some of the world's greatest teachers. Painted and carved on rocks, or displayed on decorative signs, are sacred mantras and words of wisdom from people such as the Dalai Lama, Nelson Mandela, Eckhart Tolle, Oriah Mountain Dreamer, Byron Katie, Osho and Mark Whitwell.

We are often told that a phrase from these inscriptions has given someone the insight they were seeking at the ideal moment.

inspirational scrolls

Take some inspiration home with you - we have a beautiful collection of inspirational quotes on elegant hanging scrolls in a range of colours for you to choose from.

You will find these in Wisdom Alley.



prayer flags

Prayer flags date back thousands of years to healing ceremonies of the Bon tradition of pre-Buddhist Tibet. They are found strung along mountain ridges and peaks high in the Himalayas, at Buddhist stupas and temples, and nowadays adorn and bless homes around the world.

Prayer flags come in sets of five : blue, white, red, green, and yellow in colour representing the five elements and are woodblock printed with sutras, mantras, prayers and sacred symbols. One of the most common symbols at the centre of prayer flags is the Wind Horse (Lung-ta), other central images include Buddha and Tara. At each corner are images or the names of four powerful creatures : dragon, garuda, tiger and snow lion.

Tibetans believe that, as the flags flutter, the wind catches the prayers spreading good will and compassion into all pervading space. By hanging flags in high places, the Wind Horse carries the blessings depicted on the flags to all beings. There is perhaps no simpler way to create good merit in this troubled world than to put prayer flags up for the benefit of all other living beings.

Silent prayers whispered on the breath of nature...



books

In the Book Lair we have everything from Astrology to Zen!

In keeping with our desire to offer experiences and information from many different paths and sources, our bookshop is filled to the brim with fascinating works to inspire and educate on a wide range of topics. You will find books by many of the great teachers. There's a lot of great information on crystals, of course, as well as guides to a huge range of healing and self-help modalities.

But don't expect just books. You'll also find relaxation and meditation music and an eclectic range of world and ambient music. There is also an extensive selection of DVDs, as well as beautiful greeting cards and life guidance cards by local and international artists.



amazing auras

Have you ever been curious to see your aura? In the Crystal Matrix showroom we have a state of the art aura camera that creates the most amazing images of your auric field in vibrant colours.

The aura is an electromagnetic field that exists around every living thing. The first aura photograph was taken by Nikola Tesla in 1891 and as technology has advanced so has the capacity to create these incredible images.

Our aura 'throne' has a special biofeedback device built into the arms that measures the electromagnetic pulses from the meridian points on your hands. These pulses are then converted into their equivalent colour vibration and mapped to the area of the body to which they correspond. This is projected onto the film to give you an extraordinary colour map of your life force.

Included in each Aura Photo package is a mini interpretation from our experienced team. Each colour has special significance, reflecting both physical and emotional states. It is a brilliant tool for exploring your personal energy field.



inspiring readings

A Tarot reading can be an inspiring, enlightening and empowering journey as the cards tell your personal story through colour, imagery, signs and symbols. Tarot cards offer a visual door into your inner world, bringing light to your highest potential and revealing any obstacles that may be in the way. They reflect your own deeper awareness back to the conscious mind.

The Tarot affirms, illuminates, surprises, gives you the bigger picture and offers guidance. A Tarot reading is especially powerful during periods of confusion or transition. Any life issue or sincere question can be illuminated with the assistance of the cards, which simply reveal the hidden knowledge of your unconscious to the intuition of the reader.

At the Crystal Castle our team of experienced practitioners offer Tarot readings, often supported by other modalities such as Astrology and palm readings.



Tibetan singing bowls



Singing bowls are thought to date back to the 10th-12th century AD in the Himalayas. In traditional Buddhist practices, a singing bowl may signal the beginning and end of silent meditation, accompany chanting, or indicate a change in activity eg. changing from sitting to walking meditation. Bowls often feature spiritual motifs such as the mantra Om Mani Padme Hum or the Ashtamangala, the eight auspicious Buddhist symbols.

Today they are found on altars and in meditation rooms worldwide and have many purposes: they are used for relaxation and meditation, to harmonise the chakras and aura, to intensify concentration and consciousness, to purify water, food and ritual objects. They are also used to assist in connecting with spiritual guides and to send prayers and amplify rituals.

Hand beaten from an alloy of seven sacred metals, Tibetan Singing bowls emit a powerful and ancient healing sound. The subtle yet complex multiple harmonic tones are a special quality caused by variations in the shape, thickness and weight of the hand hammered singing bowls with each bowl having its own unique sound.

Singing bowls are played by striking the rim of the bowl with a wooden stick or 'mallet' and by running the mallet around the rim for a continuous 'singing' sound which takes you on a magical journey into peace, harmony and balance.



crystal singing bowls

The haunting sound of crystal bowls seems to awaken an ancient remembering, touching the essence of the soul and bringing about a positive shift in our consciousness. Made from the highest quality quartz crystal, these beautiful instruments certainly create a magical and powerful effect of sound and vibration. The tones produced by crystal bowls are not just heard by the ear, they are felt in the body, with different tones resonating with particular energy centres and organs.

Quartz oscillates at a very high frequency, amplifying and transmitting tone and energy. This is why pure quartz crystal is used in all the world's most advanced telecommunications systems.

Like a powerful radio transmitter, the crystal singing bowls transmit potent vibrational energy. These pure crystal tones affect brain wave activity and can support the creation of an altered state of consciousness. As different parts of the brain are affected, it is considered likely that hormones and neuro-chemicals are released that can suppress pain, overcome addictions, strengthen willpower and foster creativity. The resonance and purity of the sound has a profoundly peaceful effect.

Crystal singing bowls are made from 99.992 per cent pure crushed quartz heated to about 4000oC in a centrifugal mould. The process makes each bowl unique and although the larger bowls are more reverberant, the size of the bowl does not necessarily determine its note. By playing a bowl in different ways or by adding water you can alter the frequency. Some bowls harmonise with other bowls, and when both are played simultaneously, the effect is exquisite and synergistic.

Anyone can create a beautiful sound from the crystal singing bowls with no lessons. Simply circle the rim with a special suede mallet. You can play them at any time for just a few minutes and create a sacred space that restores and revitalises, nurtures insight and intuition and quiets the mental chatter. Most of us have only a small amount of pure, clear, healing sound in our lives. Our ears no longer get a daily exposure to running streams, bird songs, and the rustling leaves in the forest. The pure sonic waves that ring from the singing quartz crystal bowls wake up our ability to listen and to hear.

Singing bowls are wonderful for personal use and for holistic practitioners to support their healing modality. They can be used for sound therapy, musical performances, group meditation, and workshop processes. Crystal bowls are even finding their way into traditional settings such as churches and business offices, bringing balance and harmony to every place they are used.

Kalachakra world peace stupa

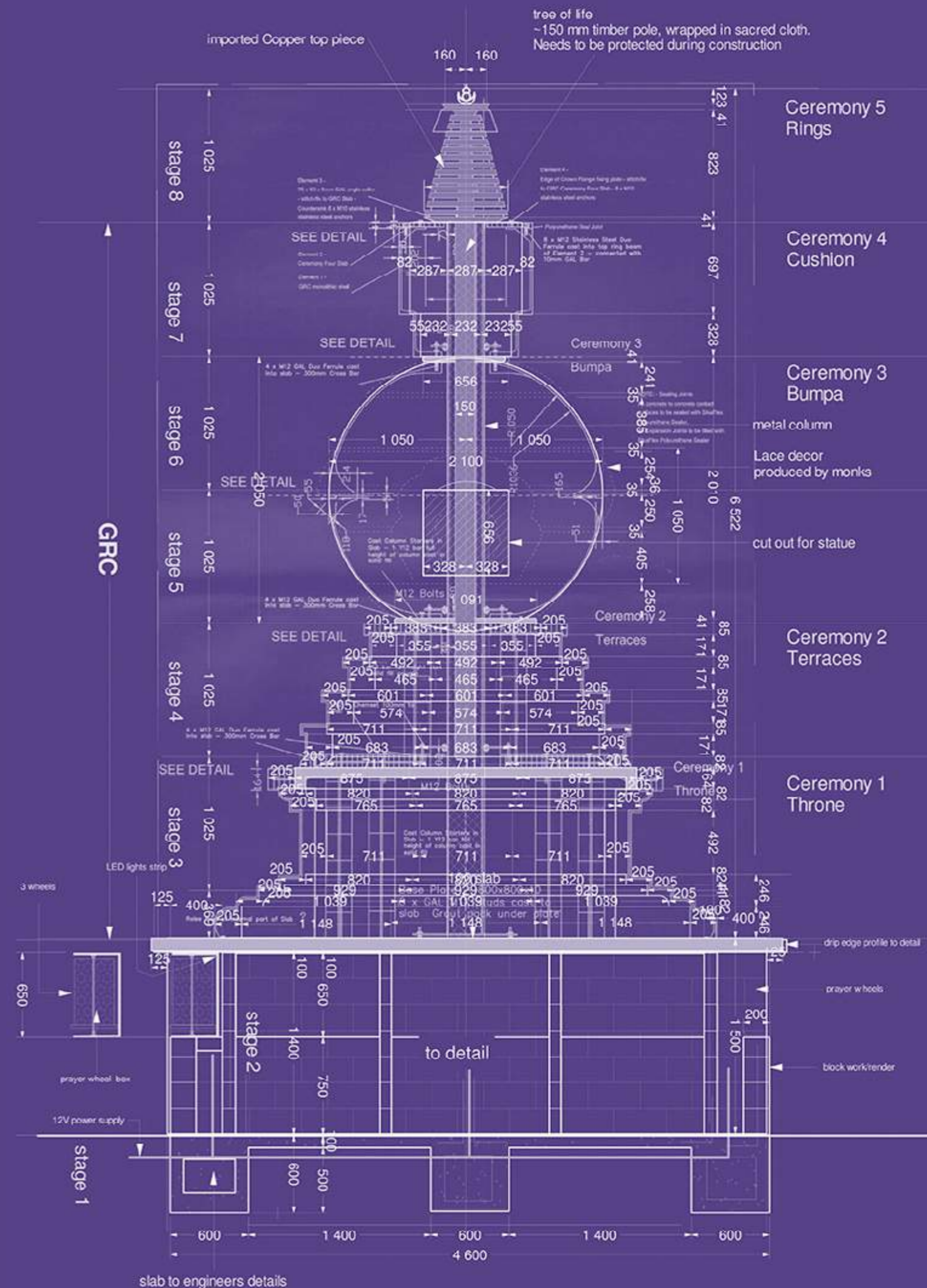
Byron's World Peace Stupa is an extraordinary construction both architecturally and spiritually. A stupa is a sacred monument built by the Tibetan Buddhists to represent universal divinity. These intricate structures are assembled under the precise guidance of a Tibetan Lama and every part of the design is endowed with special significance. Inside is a treasury filled with sacred objects and at the heart of the structure is the Tree of Life, a wooden pole covered with thousands of mantras written in gold.

Symbolic of community strength and interdependence, Tibetans believe that great benefit can be gained from walking clockwise around a stupa. Indeed, the mere sight of a stupa is said to put one in touch with one's own innate goodness, inspiring compassion, kindness and thus ultimately good karma.

The stupa at the Crystal Castle is a Kalachakra Stupa, a rare type of stupa with an unusual spherical body that symbolises the energy cycle and the essential structure of the cosmos. It is created to protect against negative energies using symbolism from the Kalachakra Tantra and is known as the World Peace Stupa. It is specifically for restoring balance to the Earth in times of war, conflict and environmental destruction.

Unique in the Southern Hemisphere and only the seventh in the world, this amazing structure has been engineered to last 1000 years. The contents of its treasury, items of value to the giver and symbolic of community wellbeing, will travel into the future like a spiritual time capsule – a potent prayer for peace and prosperity.

'This stupa is very important for Byron Bay, the whole of Australia and for world peace,' said Gen Lama Thupten Phuntsok, Gyuto Monk elder who is guiding the construction.



from dream to reality



The dream of building a stupa began in 2003 when Crystal Castle owners, Naren and Sono, were visiting the Buddhist sacred sites in Borobudur, Java. 'We were so touched by the beauty and the energy of the monuments that we determined to build one in the Crystal Castle grounds.'

'In early 2010, we travelled to Dharamsala in India for a private audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We had a meeting with a High Lama, Woser Rinpoche, to discuss the project and, using a Tibetan form of divination called the 'mo', he requested us to build the rare Kalachakra Stupa. Then during our audience with the Dalai Lama, we were privileged to receive His Holiness' blessings for the project,' explained Naren.



Borobudur, Java, Indonesia

The extraordinary 8 metre structure is filled with sacred objects, scriptures and relics. A monastery in Kathmandu gifted the project with a complete collection of the Buddha's teachings, 108 volumes of sacred scrolls, as well as the teachings of the first Dalai Lama.



Meeting His Holiness the Dalai Lama at his residence in Northern India, February 2010

'When we were in Dharamsala,' said Sono, 'a monk came to our guesthouse one evening and very carefully handed us one of his monastery's most sacred objects: the ceremonial yellow hat of his late teacher, Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche, one of the Dalai Lama's teachers. It was a very moving moment. The generosity of spirit the Tibetans possess makes being in their presence such a privilege. It seemed like the stupa had begun a life of its own and we are along for the extraordinary ride.'

spiritual guidance

Byron's World Peace Stupa was created under the guidance of the Gyuto Monks of Tibet. They carried out all the rituals and ceremonies required at each stage of its construction and supervised the contributions of the local community and the many other items that are sealed inside. The monks also created all the intricate sculpture and artwork that adorn the monument. Other monks from the Gyuto Monastery in India have contributed an incredible half a tonne of hand-rolled prayers.

According to tradition, Buddha taught the Kalachakra Tantra more than 2800 years ago in present-day Andhra Pradesh, southern India. The king of Shambhala and his entourage of 96 minor rulers were the main audience and preserved these teachings in their country.

The word 'kalachakra' means cycles of time, and the Kalachakra system presents three such cycles – external, internal and alternative. The external and internal cycles deal with time as we normally know it, on a macro- and microcosmic level. Normally the passage of time exercises a debilitating effect but the teachings of the alternative cycles consist of a graded series of meditative practices that serve as a way to gain liberation from the cycle of death and rebirth.

Kalachakra is associated with world peace and there is a historical tradition of conferring the Kalachakra initiation to large crowds of people. In time, the descendants of the original rulers conferred it upon the entire population of Shambhala in order to unite them against the threat of a possible invasion and avert annihilation.

According to the Kalachakra presentation of historical cycles, barbaric hordes periodically invade the civilised world and try to eliminate all possibilities for spiritual practice. A future invasion is predicted for the year 2424 of this common era, when it is said there will be another brutal world war. At that time help will come from Shambhala to defeat the barbarians. A new golden age will dawn, when everything will be conducive for spiritual practice, particularly of Kalachakra. All those who have previously received the Kalachakra initiation will be reborn at that time on the victorious side.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has given over 30 initiations into the practice of the Buddha Kalachakra to hundreds of thousands of people worldwide.

Kalachakra's mantra is *Om ham ksam alawa raha ya soha*.

Gen Lama Thupten Phuntsok, spiritual guide for the stupa

*Opposite:
Toby King, representing the future hope of humanity, makes the first cut
Tashi painting the hundreds of prayers onto the Tree of Life in gold paint*



the land blessing

The stupa project officially began in December 2010 when the Gyuto Monks and local Arakwal indigenous women blessed the site, removed obstacles and sought permission from the local spirits to proceed with the construction of this highly significant monument.

Traditional indigenous blessings for the land.

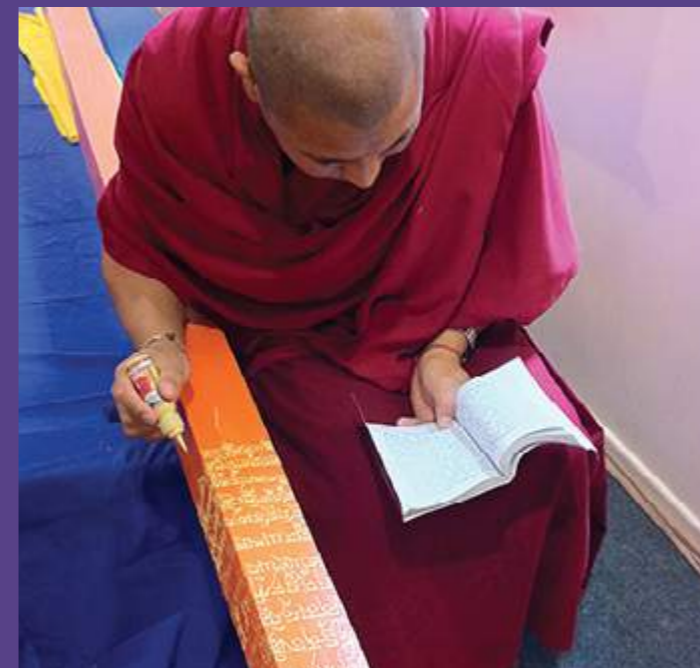


the tree of life

In May 2011 the tree to be used for the stupa's Tree of Life was found, blessed and felled in a glorious dawn ceremony in the Castle grounds. An extremely important element in every stupa, the Tree of Life is a special wooden pole that forms the central core of the stupa's structure.

The search for the tree always takes place in the immediate local area. It must be straight, non-toxic and long-lasting. For our stupa, we required a tree that was at least 6.5 metres high and about 16 centimetres in diameter. Traditionally the tree might be sandalwood, juniper, olive or camphor. Once found, blessed and felled, the tree trunk is planed and sealed before it is painted and covered with thousands of mantras in gold paint.

The camphor laurel, prolific in the Byron Shire, is often regarded as undesirable as it tends to overtake native rainforest species. However, the camphor tree is not bad in and of itself. Camphor has been used for cooking, in incense and in religious ceremonies for centuries. Camphor chests are used for storing precious fabrics, especially in Asia, and are common in many households around the globe. And for the Tree of Life at the centre of our Kalachakra World Peace Stupa, the much-maligned camphor laurel tree comes into its own. The wood's long-lasting protective scent means that the tree is ideal for contributing positively to its community and the world.



constructing the stupa

In July 2011 ground was broken on the stupa site. A winding path was also created to take visitors around the monument and across to the Rainforest Walk, facilitating the circumambulation (circling clockwise) that is considered such an auspicious activity by the Tibetan Buddhists.



Project managed by local architect Alok Eggenberger of EXPANDesign, and constructed by local company Domeshells Australia, headed by Chris Brown, the stupa's structure has been engineered by Azhar Nasir of Safe Oz Consulting Engineers, to last a millennium.

In a delightful marriage of modern materials and ancient techniques, this is the first stupa in the world to be made in glass reinforced concrete (GRC), extremely strong and at the same time very light in weight. The construction has been in sections using moulds crafted to precise specifications from Buddhist texts, which were then sprayed with GRC and craned into place. The beautiful, intricate sculptures created by the monks all around the outside of the structure are also made out of GRC. The stupa moulds are being kept for possible use in other parts of the world.

*Sculpting the Kalachakra symbol onto the stupa
Gyuto monk Lungri Tenpa painting the stupa
Project manager, architect Alok Eggenberger*



*Nepalese craftsmen beating the prayers onto the brass mani wheels
Each wheel contains around 130,000 prayers*

The blessing and consecration ceremony, December 2011





Sono and Tashi making the clay Buddhas (tsa tsas) which are then painted

bringing community together

Involvement of the community is an essential part of creating a stupa. Gen Lama described this stupa as significant in creating goodwill not only for the local area but for the whole world. 'The stupa is as much a metaphysical structure as it is a physical construct that holds sacred objects. Getting the protocol right from the beginning is as important as getting the physical structure right, for it is to bring the community together for the common good. This approach is essential to align the wheel.'

Dhiraj Couldry and three other Byron Shire residents undertook a gruelling 21 day pilgrimage to Mt Kailash in Tibet and collected sacred waters for inclusion in the stupa's treasury. Mt Kailash is the most revered mountain for a number of faiths including Tibetan Buddhism and it is considered highly auspicious to include water from its snows among the stupa contents.

During the Gyuto Monks' visits locals and visitors, mostly the children, created over 2000 tsa tsas. Tsa tsa is a Tibetan term used to describe Buddha statues and other images of holy beings that are created as part of a meditation practice. Traditionally in Tibet, tsa tsas were made with clay from the earth, left to harden, and placed on altars, shrines or in other holy places. The making of tsa tsas is considered to be a powerful method to purify negativities and accumulate positive potential.

The 54 brass prayer or 'mani' wheels that surround the stupa each contain over 130,000 *Om mani padme hum* mantras. The Tibetans believe that when a mani wheel is turned, all the prayers that it contains are sent out into the universe. The wheels for the stupa were hand beaten by a family of Nepalese craftsmen whose family name translates as 'metal beater'; they have been making prayer wheels for over 300 years. It took them one and a half years to hand beat the prayers into the brass. Finding a way to then transport the wheels created an interesting logistic challenge. Two dedicated trips to Nepal were required in order to figure out how to move a 20 foot shipping container full of prayer wheels through the Himalayas, across India, out of Kolkata on a ship and across the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean to Brisbane. Miraculously they are now installed on the prayer wheel base constructed by another local company, Econstruct.



the blessing & consecration ceremony

In early December 2011 more than 800 people gathered at the Crystal Castle over one auspicious weekend to participate in two significant rituals of the stupa construction. On the Saturday, under the serene gaze of the Blessing Buddha, the myriad of items to be placed in the stupa's treasury were blessed and empowered in an elaborate tantric ceremony. There were grandparents and children, priests and surfies, Buddhists, Hindus and members of the International Rainbow Group, a multicultural group of women from around the world, many in magnificent traditional costumes, all bringing their own special offerings to the stupa from their home country, their particular spiritual path and their hearts.



The monks had been diligently preparing for days, grinding juniper, wrapping mantras and packing the 'bumpas' – treasure vases – with incense, spices and precious stones. The offerings from the community were many and varied. Objects of significance and value to the giver, these envoys to a future world included: a baby's bracelet, sacred sands from other stupas around the world, a Bible, a rosary, a Shiva statue from the high priests of the oldest temple in India, family pots and pans, agricultural implements, items of jewellery, gold coins, earth from Cape York, rocks from Kenya, water from the Ganges River, paintings, silk, herbs, Buddhist scriptures from Tibet and Korea and personal messages. Hundreds of obsidian arrowheads representing disarmament and huge numbers of rose quartz crystals spoke of our heartfelt longing for a loving and compassionate humanity.

The day was deliciously warm and the amphitheatre ablaze with colour. Hundreds of shade umbrellas created a glorious rainbow tapestry punctuated by the rich maroon and gold of the Gyuto Monks' robes and the familiar Crystal Castle purple of the star-shaped canopy erected over the main ceremonial area. The community was gathered en masse to witness this unique and powerful moment. Trestle tables, piled high with an amazing collection of items destined to be blessed, were physically connected via a rainbow cord to the Tree of Life at the centre of the stupa itself. Strands of coloured wool wove in and out through the blessing items, up into the trees and across the road, over 200 metres, to the core of the stupa construction. Naren and Sono introduced the ceremony, thanking the many people involved, and for an extraordinary three hours the monks' rich overtone harmonics resonated through the terraces of the amphitheatre.

*Thousands of hand rolled prayers to fill the stupa
The sacred texts of Buddha's teachings*



community filling the treasury

On the next day, 4th December 2011, another crowd gathered at the stupa itself to help create the first tangible layer of the monument. Each item from the previous day's ceremony was passed up into the stupa. Then the thousands of tsa tsas (clay Buddha statues) travelled in a spiral human chain of 108 people all chanting 'Om mani padme hum' up into the stupa and were ceremoniously laid into their final resting place. These blessed objects are now sealed into the 'throne' base section of the stupa, carrying the intentions of those who offered them on their journey into the future.



grand opening

'Build it and they will come' had been our motto during the many years of planning and preparation, and come they did as almost 1500 people filled the stupa amphitheatre for the grand opening. The date, determined especially auspicious by the project's spiritual guide, Gen Lama, was 27th October 2012.

The opening ceremony, directed by our wonderful MC, Elyjah McCloud, honoured the amazing input from so many different people who supported and co-created this wonderful project. The Gyuto Monks of Tibet completed the rituals required with their joyful peace and depth of spirit, not to mention their extraordinary harmonic chanting, and Crystal Castle's own Ayla King moved many to tears with her beautiful a cappella rendition of John Lennon's 'Imagine'.

Mr Sonam Dago, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's representative in Australia, officially opened the World Peace Stupa. 'The Kalachakra Stupa is very significant — wherever we build or construct them, these stupas will bring peace, help in avoiding natural disasters and bring harmony and peace among the people,' he said. 'For Buddhist believers this is a place of pilgrimage, but for the non-believers this is a piece of Buddhist architecture to look around and a very good place to have inspiration, peace, and happiness.'

Once the ceremonies were complete people waited patiently in lines to take their turn to walk around the stupa and lend wings to their prayers of peace by spinning the beautiful brass prayer wheels.

Watch the short video link on Crystal Castle website.





lotus cafe

The Lotus Cafe with its panoramic outlook offers one of the Shire's most breathtaking views of the Byron hinterland.

Al fresco dining from the cafe terrace, with its handy location just above the playground, also allows parents to enjoy a relaxed meal whilst keeping an eye on their children's adventures.

Blessed by abundant supplies of great local produce, our cafe has long been a favoured watering hole for locals and visitors alike. And now another Castle dream has become manifest as we are growing more and more of our food in the Castle grounds. Our signature garnish is made from fresh herbs and edible flowers from the Shambhala Gardens and our fruit trees provide an abundant harvest.



We use fully compostable crockery and cutlery. This translates to an increase in efficiency of service as well as allowing us to use this compostable material to greatly expand our vegetable gardens and new orchard. We are committed to steadily growing the percentage of '0' miles ingredients of our cafe dishes.

All your food is homemade in our kitchen with a selection of daily specials, an exquisite range of cakes and scones, and choices for the kids too. Gluten-free, vegetarian, and vegan dishes are always available. Whether it is a fine cup of coffee, a mouthwatering homemade dessert, or a delicious lunch, we have something to tempt you.



kids



face painting

Face painting is always a hit with children and parents alike, transforming our younger visitors into pirates and princesses, clowns and cats, ghoulish ghosts and fabulous fairies. Throughout the holidays and every weekend, our team of local face artists offer this service, free for children, creating beautiful designs in non-toxic paints to bring out colourful inner characters.

Ask at the Crystal Matrix to buy the Crystal Castle's own wonderful Ganesh colouring book!



the amazing team

The Crystal Castle has been conceived and created step by step, plant by plant and crystal by crystal, on a magical journey that has spanned 30 years. The breathtaking wonder of the place that you visit today has only been possible due to the amazing skill and pure hard work of more than a thousand people.

Byron Shire is home to an amazing collection of creative individuals. The wonderful tribe who have been instrumental here include landscapers, designers, builders, crystal fanatics, accounts experts, stock handling experts, cooks, waiters, waitresses and gardeners.

We are deeply grateful for their inspiration & their passion. There are over 60 people on the team now, in addition to the many who have contributed over the years.

We thank all of these wonderful individuals and feel very blessed to be working with such a magnificent team!



supporting community

The Crystal Castle has always been very active within the local community and is committed to supporting a multitude of local and international causes in order to make the world a better place. Some of the main ones are listed below.:

environmental sustainability

We are deeply committed to supporting and sustaining our natural environment and since 2005 we have worked closely with local non-profit environmental group Rainforest Rescue. The mission of this group is to inspire, engage and build community for the protection, preservation and restoration of rainforest. Our involvement with Rainforest Rescue has resulted in the creation of our Rainforest Walk and the regular community tree-planting days that held over the years on the Castle land.

We also provide backing to environmental organisations Greenpeace and the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society. Led by Captain Paul Watson, Sea Shepherd is on permanent patrol to help protect our precious marine eco-system, and whales, dolphins, turtles and sharks in particular.

support for a spiritual life

In Tso Pema, Northern India, over 200 refugee Tibetan nuns live in caves. The Crystal Castle has been sponsoring four nuns since 1999 with donations that provide for all their food and living needs.

The Holy Caves. The nuns live here, looking after the cave where Padmasambhava meditated. He is said to have brought Buddhism to Bhutan and Tibet and neighbouring countries in the 8th century

Sono and Toby (pictured left) with Ani Tamdin Dolma and Ani Kunchok Dolma. Both nuns were born in Derge, Kham, Eastern Tibet and escaped from Tibet in 1998

We also sponsor Nyima Rigdzin (pictured right), a young Buddhist monk in Bhutan. He was born in 1991 and lives in Tamshing Monastery, Bhutan – a monastery built by Pema Lingpa in 1501.



the wellbeing of children

We support and have supported several projects focused on the wellbeing of children. Since the creation of the Labyrinth, money has been raised to help build orphanages in East Timor, Kenya and South Africa. Over \$50,000 has been donated, making a significant impact on the efforts of non-government organisations such as Hope In East Timor, WYI – World Youth International, Kenya, and Baphumelele in Khayelitsha, South Africa.

Baphumelele Children's Home was created as a place of safety for abandoned, abused, neglected or orphaned children, most of whom are either infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS. Baphumelele aims to provide orphans with a stable, loving and permanent home. It is a place of refuge in crisis and houses from 140 – 160 children.

Near Dharamsala in Northern India, where thousands of Tibetan Buddhist refugees live, a small kindergarten has been growing with the help of money raised by visitors to the Crystal Castle. In June 2007, people began to make offerings of coins to the statues on the Buddha Walk.

This practice started with Avalokiteshvara, the Buddha of Compassion, and then spread to all the statues. Over \$47,000 has since been raised. This has allowed for the continuing growth of the kindergarten, the employment of more teachers, and to pay for a local woman to cook all the children a daily healthy meal. Our support enables the Tibetan culture to continue to be handed down to the next generation.

Closer to home, The Fatherhood Project is dedicated to valuing the experience of fatherhood and building positive community through enriching the lives of children, fathers and their families.

The Pathways Foundation is a Mullumbimby-based harm prevention charity assisting young people to make the emotional shift from being a child to becoming a young adult, providing community-based Rites of Passage for boys and girls.





helping the local community

Back in the late 1980s, local community radio station BayFM was struggling to get off the ground. The Crystal Castle was the largest cash sponsor in BayFM's first year and still supports BayFM as a major sponsor of their annual membership drive.

In 2008 the Crystal Castle became a supporter of The Northern Rivers Community Foundation, with an initial donation of \$2000. This money assists locals in need for perpetuity, with annual grants.

micro-lending give a fishing rod, rather than a fish

The Crystal Castle owner Naren King along with his son Toby have been active proponents of the concept of 'micro-credit,' small loans made to entrepreneurs, in the third world. Kiva is an online community of micro-lenders where you can lend to a specific hard working entrepreneur in the developing world – empowering them to lift themselves out of poverty by creating a sustainable livelihood

health care for the under-privileged

The Jambange Project provides Tibetan and Nepali refugees who have escaped their troubled land with basic medical and dental care. Started in 2008 in the village of Rimbik, West Bengal in Northern India, the clinic provides free services to the many people living below the poverty line. All donations from 2012 to 2016 given at the Crystal Castle Labyrinth have been sent to the Jambange Project in support of this wonderful initiative.

We also donate funds to Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), the world's leading independent organisation for medical aid.

We are in deep gratitude to all visitors who contribute and thereby support these wonderful causes.

After the tragic earthquake in Nepal on April 25th 2015, we held a benefit concert here at the World Peace Stupa, starring Toni Childs with her band and other musician friends.

It was an incredible day and night of music and community, coming together to raise money for the earthquake victims. We raised over \$56,000 during that night and the weeks that followed.

In July we gathered in Kathmandu, with Toni Childs, Mik Lavage the filmmaker, Renae Saxby photographer, Toby King filmmaker (and my son), and myself, Naren King.

Rebuild Nepal has done much already...

We committed to you, that 100% of the funds you donate will go to addressing this need in Nepal. So far you have sheltered over 600 people, counselled hundreds of traumatised children, helped rebuild schools, and run a medical camp. Thank you... and there is so much more to do!

The beautiful people of Nepal are deeply grateful, for both your prayers and your financial support. Your compassion is making a huge difference.

If you feel moved to support this fundraising, there is a collection box next to the visitors book and larger donations can be collected at the sales counters.



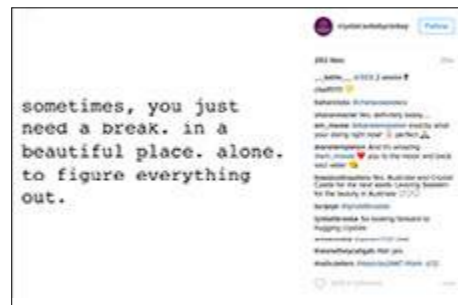
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Treat yourself to a little retail therapy and visit us at shop.crystalcastle.com.au





about the shire

With glorious golden beaches, unspoilt hinterland, and a deliciously relaxed lifestyle, Byron Shire is deservedly popular as a holiday destination. Cape Byron, named by Captain Cook after the grandfather of the famous poet, is the most easterly point of Australia, capped by its iconic white lighthouse.

Byron's beaches are among the best in Australia. Clean and undeveloped, with white tiny-grained sand and clear turquoise-blue water, many are sheltered from the southerlies and offer great surf breaks.

The hills beyond the Bay were once covered with giant rainforest trees. Only pockets of the 'Big Scrub' remain but the area is still one of the richest and most diverse regions in Australia, home to a huge range of flora and fauna. A fabulous fruit salad of crops thrive in the mild climate with bananas, macadamia and coffee plantations dominating the agricultural landscape.

Numerous small towns and villages, each with their own unique character, are dotted throughout the region. Bangalow is an art-lover's and gourmet's paradise: charming, historic buildings with wide verandahs provide shady footpaths for top quality al fresco dining. Brunswick Heads is a classic mouth-of-a-river Australian seaside town; it is great for families, with easy access to the ocean beach and the river. A small picturesque marina complete with pelicans is a lovely place to enjoy freshly-caught fish and seafood.

And you mustn't miss Mullumbimby! Affectionately known as the 'Biggest Little Town in Australia', Mullum provides a magical mix of old-time hospitality and colourful alternative culture, maintaining a lovely laid-back atmosphere even in peak tourist season.

The spectacular peak of Mt Warning, where the dawn sun first touches mainland Australia, is the central core of one of the best preserved shield volcanos in the Southern Hemisphere. Named Wollumbin, 'Cloud Catcher', by the original Bundjalung people, it is this volcano's eruption that formed the area's unique topography.

Minyon Falls is one of the volcano's most breathtaking legacies. From the top of the cliffs, extruded as lava flows many millions of years ago, these beautiful falls plunge over 100 metres into the deep palm-shaded gorge below.

Humpback whales are among the world's largest and most distinctive whales. Each year between May and November over 10,000 of these magnificent mammals migrate from their antarctic summer feeding grounds to their breeding and birthing grounds in the tropics. They return with their new babies, sometimes stopping in the Bay to teach the young ones some of the essential whale arts of 'breaching' and 'slapping'.

*Byron Bay Lighthouse
Wollumbin
Sunset surfing at The Pass
Humpback Whale in the Bay
Hinterland Rainforest*



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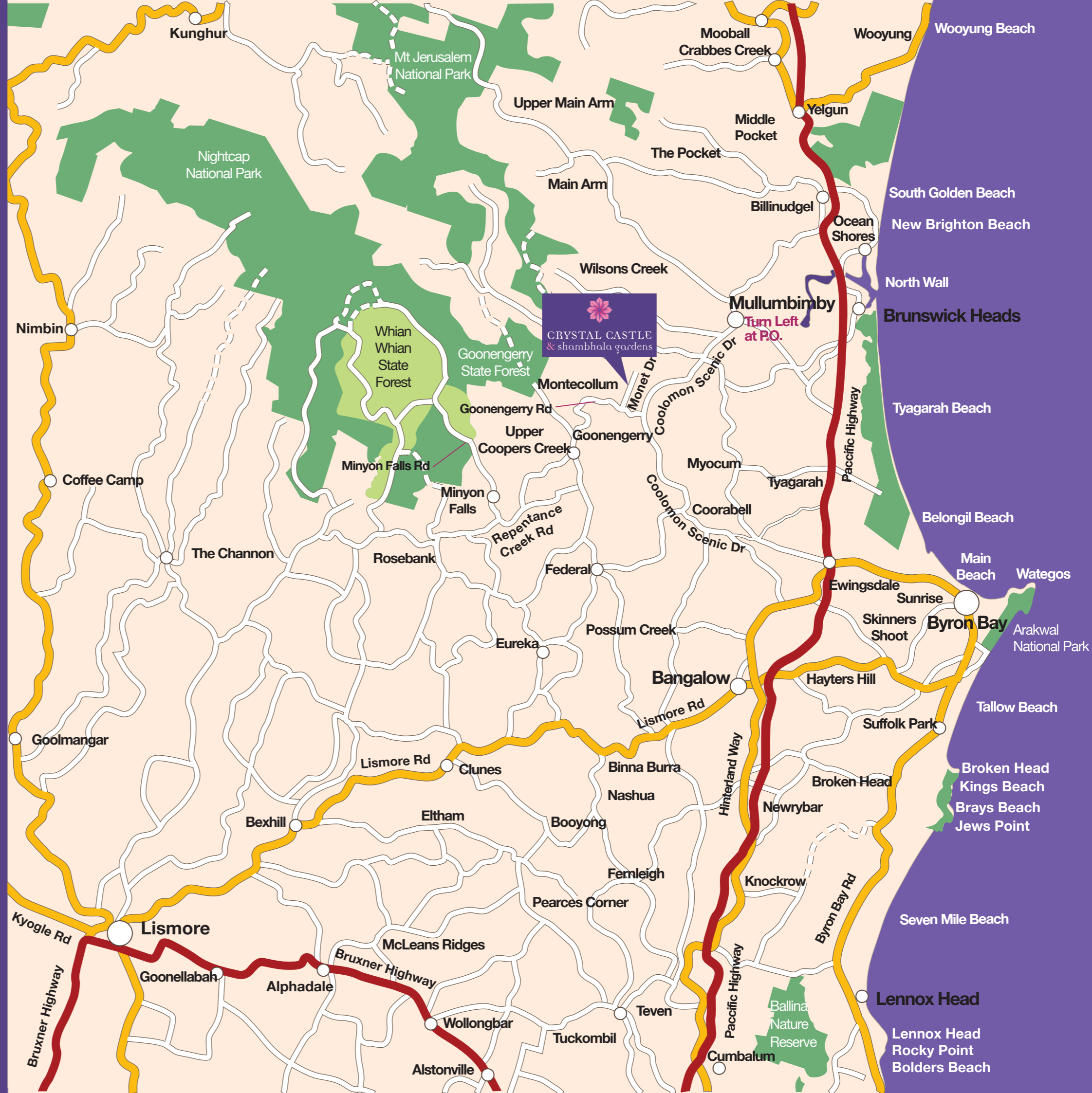
For more information:

Gyuto Monks - www.gyuto.co
Rainforest Rescue - rainforestrescue.org.au
Greenpeace - greenpeace.org
Sea Shepherd - seashepherd.org
Baphumelele - baphumelele.org.za
World Maitreya Karuna Foundation (WMKF) - wmkaustralia.org
Tso Pema school & Tibetan nun sponsorship - journeywithpantha.com
Fatherhood Project - fatherhood.com.au
Pathways to Manhood - pathwaysfoundation.com.au
Bay FM - bayfm.org
Northern Rivers Community Foundation - nrcf.org.au
Kiva Micro Lending - kiva.org
Jambange Community Project - find us on facebook
Médecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) - msf.org
Vision Walks eco tours - visionwalks.com
Interactive Landscapes (Patrick Regnault) - interactivelandscapes.com.au

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CRYSTAL CASTLE & shambhala gardens

map legend

1. Welcome Hut
2. Castle Sculpture
3. Water Pouter Pond & Torii Gate
4. Giant Sahara Fossil
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34. Rose Quartz, Reflexology Walk (p. 17) & Buddhapada

- AB Accessible Bathroom
- AP Accessible Pathway
- CP Carpark
- P Pram Accessible Pathway
- T Toilets



“the most peaceful place on earth”

Kellie B, TripAdvisor Aug 2016



Behold the biggest and most beautiful natural crystals in the world. Walk amongst the gods through stunning botanical gardens and rainforest. Touch the World Peace Stupa. Indulge in delicious views, local coffee and food.

Ignite the senses and discover the jewel of Byron.



CRYSTAL CASTLE

& shambhala gardens

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