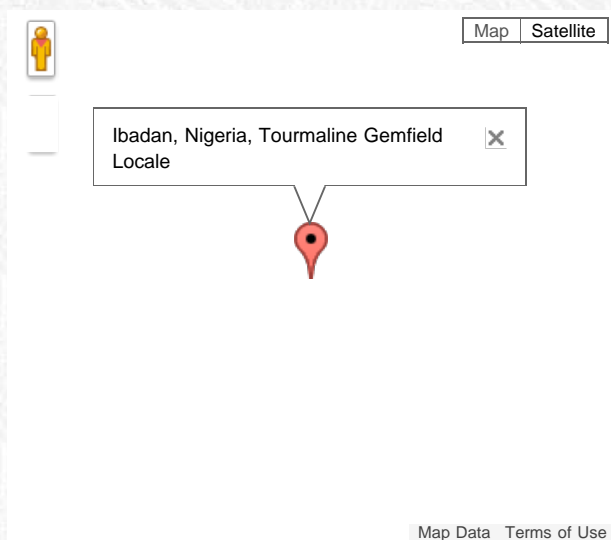




### Tourmaline deposit near Ibadan, Nigeria



### Tourmaline crystals from the Ibadan gemfield

In the summer of 1998 a new tourmaline deposit was discovered in a farming area 25 miles from the city of Ibadan, Nigeria, near the border with Benin. Gem dealers have noted that this is one of the finest discoveries of tourmaline in many years. The deposit is alluvial in nature, many of the tourmaline crystals have a frosted skin resulting from natural abrasion and weathering. Other crystals have sharp terminations indicating that they have not traveled far from their original source. The crystals were found under a relatively shallow overburden of soil (about six feet), and the deposit stretched for about 1000 meters. A flood of miners rapidly moved into the area and removed over 1,000 kilograms of fine tourmaline. The worn tourmaline crystals show very good clarity and range in color from pale pink, to raspberry pink, to orangish pink, to burgundy red. Some of the crystals show distinct color zoning (See Above). The fashionable colors, combined with the remarkable clarity and size of the rough gem material, have made this tourmaline a hit with gemstone dealers and the public. Because of the large supply of material, average prices for faceted stones at the 1998 Tucson gem and mineral shows were as low as \$60 to \$100 per carat. Because this source is largely worked out, the depressed price of these fine tourmalines is not likely to persist.