

PRESS RELEASE

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For more information, contact:

Owen Duncan

Content Specialist

oduncan@sbnature2.org

805-682-4711 ext. 116

Minerals Come to Life at SB Museum of Natural History

- Exhibit opens Saturday, April 22, 2023
- Included in Museum admission
- More information at sbnature.org

[SANTA BARBARA, CA] — The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History is [reopening its permanent mineral exhibit](#) and once more inviting the public to marvel at astonishing rocks and crystals.

Over 100 specimens handpicked by Dibblee Curator of Earth Science Jonathan Hoffman, Ph.D., are on view in the small hall off the Museum's central courtyard. Fan favorites like the fluorescent minerals and Emerald-City-like malachite spires have returned, accompanied by new picks from the Museum's collection. The new permanent exhibit also features three stunning specimens donated to the Museum at the close of last summer's temporary mineral extravaganza, *Rare Earth*.

All the specimens are now situated in a new interpretive and design context that puts the emphasis on their geologic origin and surprisingly lively nature. The exhibit takes a cue from the deep time perspective of research by Robert Hazen, Ph.D., and other prominent mineralogists. The title wall leads with the startling fact that the solar system began with only 60 minerals, whereas over 6,000 are known on Earth today, thanks to the dynamic conditions on our planet.

The room's new vibe leans away from the glass-case-in-a-store feeling of older mineral exhibits. Organic forms and panoramas mask the cases, evoking the fact that minerals come from our planet's landscapes, not jewelry stores. Dr. Hoffman and the rest of the Museum's exhibit team hope to instill a greater appreciation not only for minerals, but for the lively natural forces that generate them.

As Hoffman notes, "Minerals are often beautiful, but their origin stories are just as impressive. We hope visitors will appreciate how minerals demonstrate the dynamic nature of chemistry—how minerals form, how they change over time, how organisms interact with them, and the roles they play in our society."

The mineral exhibit opens April 22 and is included in Museum admission. Members are always admitted free. More information at sbnature.org/minerals

SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM *of* NATURAL HISTORY

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About the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

Powered by Science. Inspired by Nature. Founded in 1916, the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History inspires a thirst for discovery and a passion for the natural world. The Museum seeks to connect people to nature for the betterment of both, and prides itself on being *naturally different*. For more information, visit sbnature.org.



The new exhibit invites guests to think about minerals in the contexts of science, industry, culture, and history.



These tourmaline crystals from Mesa Grande, California sit atop the granite within which they originally grew.



Sparkling malachite spires are back on display, in a new context that reveals their relationship to copper.



Dr. Hoffman shows off the new look of the fluorescent minerals display, a fan favorite.