



Fulgurite – “Petrified Lightning Bolt”

The word ‘Fulgurite’ comes from the Latin, ‘Fulgur’ which means Thunderbolt.

Fulgurites are naturally occurring hollow glass tubes that are formed when lightning bolts hit sand, or sandy soils. The temperature at the point of contact can reach well beyond 2000 degrees celcius higher than that required to turn sand into glass. So when lightning strikes sand the silica is instantly melted into glass, the surrounding grains are fused together and the central hollow tube is the result of this ‘core’ material being completely vapourised.



Fulgurites have been termed “Petrified Lightning Bolts”, a dramatic term but it is true that the newly formed tubes remain as an accurate indicator of the path that the lightning took through the sand. Fulgurites can be as thin as a few millimeters in diameter, but can also be several centimeters thick. Extremely fragile, it is unusual to see Fulgurites more than 10 – 15 centimetres long, but their total undamaged length may be as long as several metres. Fulgurites have been found as much as 15 metres below the surface of a lightning strike. The image at left shows a Fulgurite that was excavated to a depth of 6 metres by the University of Florida, Lightning Research Group in 1996. It was carefully removed for museum display.

The colour of Fulgurites is directly related to the colour of the base material that the lightning strikes. Often brown or a dirty white, the near white Fulgurites of the Cape Flattery area in North Queensland is the result of strikes into some of the purest white silica sand in the world.

Fulgurites are said to be among the most powerful stones for manifesting one's visions through the power of prayer. They say that lightning energy has long been believed to be the “touch of the Divine”, still resides in them, and they can act as magnifiers of one's clear intention, building a powerful resonance between oneself and the latent powers of the higher worlds. Some also believe that Fulgurites have a strong, high-frequency vibration, and that they may have some sort of resonance with the electrical force that created them. Some say that touching Fulgurites give the feeling of a sense of energy passing through the chakras, purifying and cleansing the entire system. Fulgurite is said to be especially helpful for those ready to experience major breakthroughs and to release habit patterns that no longer serve.

