Russia’s Treasure of Diamonds and Precious Stones

The GREAT IMPERIAL CROWN was designed by Johann Paul F. von Fersen after a royal sketch of 1762. The crown is 13 inches high and weighs 32 pounds. The imperial crown was accompanied by a diamond cross, which bears the inscription “Given in 1726 to the Tsarina Elizabeth by the Italian jeweler Agathon K. Fabergé, son of Carl, from the House of Fabergé.”

The IMPERIAL SCEPTRE was fashioned in 1770 and holds the famous ORLOV DIAMOND. Catherine I received the diamond as a gift from her lover, Count Grigory Grigorievich Orlov, in 1769. The Orlov diamond was cut in India before arriving in Europe. When Count Orlov purchased the diamond in 1748, it weighed 182.5 carats. By 1827, the diamond had been cut down to its current weight of 180 carats. The Orlov diamond is mounted in silver and is surrounded by small diamonds; a detachable black enamel double-headed eagle sits above it. According to old inventories, its weight was approximately 182.5 carats. The top of the crown consists of a cross with six large old-mine-cut diamonds (about 15 old carats total weight). The base and six arches each bear two rows of large brilliant-cut diamonds totaling about 1,200 stones weighing a total of 60 carats each. At the base of the arches are three small diamond clusters, each with approximately 50 old carats.

The IMPERIAL GLOBE was made for Catherine II in 1771 for the Imperial Coronation of 1771. The globe is 17 inches in diameter and weighs 8 pounds. The base and arches are set with coarse old-cut diamonds totaling 20 old carats. The top of the globe is set with a large pear-shaped diamond (about 15 old carats total weight). The tone is a pleasant deep orange. The globe is a large and remarkable stone, oddly cut and clear, save for a slight greenish tint. The cross-cut Orlov is thought to have been cut from a fragment of a larger diamond that was thought to be the largest ruby in the world.

The IMPERIAL CROWN was designed by Vassil Vasilevitch and weighs 36 pounds. It is mounted in silver and is surrounded by small diamonds; a detachable black enamel double-headed eagle sits above it. According to old inventories, its weight was approximately 170.5 carats. The top of the crown consists of a cross with six large old-mine-cut diamonds (about 15 old carats total weight). The base and six arches each bear two rows of large brilliant-cut diamonds totaling about 1,200 stones weighing a total of 60 carats each. At the base of the arches are three small diamond clusters, each with approximately 50 old carats. The base and arches are set with coarse old-cut diamonds totaling 20 old carats. The top of the globe is set with a large pear-shaped diamond (about 15 old carats total weight). The tone is a pleasant deep orange.

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