GOLD

(Data in metric tons[1] of gold content, unless noted)

Domestic Production and Use: Gold was produced by about 200 lode mines, a dozen or more large placer mines (nearly all in Alaska), and numerous smaller placer mines, mostly in Alaska and Western States. In addition, a small amount of domestic gold was recovered as a byproduct of processing base metals, chiefly copper. Twenty-five lode mines yielded the majority of the gold produced in the United States. The value of 1995 mine production was approximately $4.0 billion. Commercial-grade refined gold came from about 2 dozen producers. A few dozen companies dominated the fabrication of gold into commercial products. Jewelry manufacturing was centered principally in the New York, NY, and Providence, RI, areas; other concentrations of these businesses were in California, Florida, and Texas.

Salient Statistics—United States:	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**[e]
Production: Mine	294	330	331	326	320
Refinery: Primary	225	284	243	241	240
Secondary	153	163	152	148	150
Imports[2]	154	159	144	114	115
Exports[2]	220	308	726	395	365
Consumption, reported	114	110	91	76	75
Stocks, yearend, Treasury[3]	8,146	8,146	8,145	8,143	8,143
Price, dollars per ounce	363.29	344.97	360.91	385.41	385.00
Employment, mine and mill[e]	15,100	14,800	14,700	14,200	13,900
Net import reliance[4] as a percent of apparent consumption	E	E	E	E	E

Recycling: The U.S. Bureau of Mines estimates that approximately 150 metric tons of gold was recovered from the total scrap recycled in the United States in 1995, including both manufacturing (new) scrap and post-consumer (old) scrap.

Import Sources (1991-94):[2] Canada, 70%; Bolivia, 6%; Chile, 5%; Switzerland, 4%; and other, 15%.

Tariff: Most imports of unwrought gold, including bullion and doré, enter duty free.

Depletion Allowance: 15% (Domestic), 14% (Foreign).

Government Stockpile: The U.S. Department of the Treasury maintains stocks of gold (see salient statistics above) and the U.S. Department of Defense administers a Government-wide secondary precious metals recovery program.

Events, Trends, and Issues: Domestic gold mine production in 1995 was estimated at slightly below the record levels of recent years, but at a high-enough amount to maintain the U.S. position as the world's second largest gold-producing nation, after South Africa. Domestic output continued to be dominated by Nevada and California, where combined production accounted for nearly 80% of the U.S. total. The trend for recent U.S. gold exploration activity, which appeared to have peaked in about 1988, continued to decline in 1995 as North American exploration companies sought opportunities in other regions of the world. The principal focus of recent exploration activity has been on several South American nations, where favorable geological terrains, combined with recently liberalized mining regulations, hold the promise of greater long-term success and reduced risk to the currently limited pool of investment capital available for international mining ventures. In addition, exploration and mine development opportunities were actively pursued during the year in the southwestern Pacific, western Africa, and the republics of the Former Soviet Union.

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During the first 10 months of the year, the Engelhard Industries/London daily price of gold ranged from a low of about $373 per troy ounce in January to nearly $397 in April. These extremes were nearly identical to the low and high reported for all of 1994. This stagnation in gold prices was further reinforced during the September-through-mid-October period, when prices ranged narrowly from about $382 to nearly $387.

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Mine production		Reserves[5]	Reserve base[5]
	1994	1995[e]		
United States	326	320	5,400	5,900
Australia	256	250	3,400	3,700
Brazil	76	80	700	1,200
Canada	146	145	1,300	3,300
China[e]	160	160	NA	NA
Russia	147	150	3,100	3,400
South Africa	580	530	18,000	29,000
Uzbekistan	75	80	3,000	3,300
Other countries	500	500	9,300	11,000
World total (rounded)	2,300	2,200	[6]44,000	[6]61,000

Of an estimated 119,000 tons of gold mined from historical times through 1995, about 15% is believed to have been lost, used in dissipative industrial uses, or otherwise unrecoverable or unaccounted for. Of the remaining 102,000 tons, an estimated 35,000 tons are official stocks held by central banks, and about 67,000 tons are privately held as coin, bullion, and jewelry.

World Resources: Total world resources of gold are estimated at 75,000 tons, of which 15% to 20% are byproduct resources. South Africa has about one-half of all world resources, and Brazil and the United States have about 12% each. Some of the 9,000-ton U.S. resource would be recovered as byproduct gold.

Substitutes: Base metals clad with gold alloys are widely used in electrical/electronic and jewelry products to economize on gold; many of these products are continually redesigned to maintain high utility standards with lower gold content. Generally, palladium, platinum, and silver may substitute for gold.

[e]Estimated. E Net exporter. NA Not available.

[1]Metric ton (1,000 kg) = 32,150.7 troy ounces.

[2]Refined bullion, doré, ores, concentrates, and precipitates. Excludes: (a) Waste and scrap; (b) Official monetary gold; (c) Gold in fabricated items; (d) Gold in coins. In 1991, the last year for which estimates are available, net imports amounted to 3.5 metric tons; and (e) Net bullion flow (in metric tons) to market from foreign stocks at the New York Federal Reserve Bank: 61.6 (1991), 136.4 (1992), 582.2 (1993), 216.6 (1994), and 300.0 (estimated, 1995).

[3]Includes gold in Exchange Stabilization Fund. Stocks were valued at the official price of $42.22 per troy ounce.

[4]Defined as imports - exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

[5]See Appendix C for definitions.

[6]Excludes China and some other countries for which data were not available.