

Japanese Firm Turns Pet Ashes into Gemstones as Memorial Market Grows

犬や猫などのペットは、多くの人にとって家族の一員のような存在です。しかし、自分より先に旅立つことが分かっているからこそ、別れの後をどう過ごすかは悩ましい問題でもあります。最近では、遺骨を宝石として残すなど、ペットを弔う方法にも新しい選択肢が生まれているようです。あなたは大切な存在との思い出を、どのような形で残したいと思いますか。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

Services that turn cremated **ashes** into artificial diamonds became known in Japan about 20 years ago but were initially only available through overseas providers—making them costly and time-consuming. Now, a Japanese company has developed a new technology that creates moissanite, a synthetic gemstone similar to diamond, from cremated **remains**. The product is sold under the name "Livnite" and is aimed primarily at memorializing pets, especially dogs.

In May, a pet expo was held at Makuhari Messe during Japan's Golden Week. At the booth for memorial jewelry brand Sol & Hug, Rikio Mikami, president of the brand's sales agent LIVENT, told a reporter: "Livnite has a higher refractive index and dispersion than diamond. It is also highly durable, so we recommend it as jewelry meant to be worn."

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1. Article

Over the three-day event, around 1,200 people visited the booth. However, because the process involves entrusting a loved one's remains and the product is still largely unfamiliar, some dog owners responded with hesitation.

A 4 mm stone (equivalent to 0.2 carats) is priced at ¥198,000 (about \$1,300), with platinum ring settings starting at ¥310,000.

"Conventional synthetic diamonds are mainly produced using a high-temperature, high-pressure method that requires expensive equipment. Companies in the US and Switzerland are well known for this, and prices often exceed ¥1 million," Mikami explained. "Livnite can be a more accessible alternative. Each stone is handmade in Chiba Prefecture, and we are not aware of any other example of synthetic moissanite being produced from cremated remains."

The underlying technology was developed three years ago by a mineral researcher in Funabashi City, Chiba Prefecture. It works by extracting carbon from cremated remains and combining it with silicon and solvents in a sealed, heated environment to grow crystals from a nucleus. LIVENT, which offers customized funeral services under the brand Hana-Sougi across the greater Tokyo area, was later brought in to commercialize the technology.

A 4 mm gem requires roughly 10 grams of remains; a 7 mm gem requires about 15 grams. Test sales launched last year, and the company has since received 39 orders, including some using human remains.

A 28-year-old consultant visiting the booth with her two Shiba dogs was receptive. "Compared to diamonds, the price feels reasonable. I had no idea technology had advanced to the point where memories could be preserved in such a beautiful form," she said. "Pets pass away before we do, so I keep their baby teeth as keepsakes."

A woman in her twenties who attended with her parents and two Western-breed dogs was more hesitant. "There isn't much information about the production process, so parts of it feel unclear. When you are entrusting something as important as cremated remains, trust and reassurance are essential."

She mentioned that her family keeps the ashes of more than ten dogs at home. "It takes up quite a lot of space, so turning them into jewelry could help. But if I lost a piece while wearing it, it would be devastating—so we would probably just display it at home," she said, as her parents nodded along.

1. Article

According to Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Tokyo had the highest number of registered dogs of any prefecture as of the end of fiscal 2024, at 559,000, followed by Kanagawa, Aichi, Osaka, and Saitama—a distribution that underscores the strong potential of the pet business, and the pet funeral market in particular, in major urban areas.

"Many people want to give their pets a proper farewell," said Mikami. "We originally saw this as an [option](#) for human funerals, but we came to realize there is strong demand from people who have kept their dogs' ashes at home for years, unsure of what to do with them."

One customer, a housewife from Shinjuku, Tokyo, became familiar with the service after using Hana-Sougi for her mother-in-law's funeral. She had Livnite made from the remains of two miniature dachshunds that had long been enshrined at a household Buddhist altar.

"When I opened the box, it was so dazzling that I was speechless. I even told my son to put this jewel in my urn when I die." She had previously commissioned a portrait of her late dogs painted onto a kimono sash, but said, "When I wear it, it makes me feel sad."

She does not wear the jewelry either, keeping it in the household altar instead. "Our current three dogs are all over ten years old, so my husband and I are mentally preparing ourselves. When the time comes, I think we will make an order again."



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2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. **ashes** 遺灰

The family scattered the **ashes** in a quiet garden.

2. **remains** 遺骨

The museum displayed ancient **remains** found near the river.

3. **process** 工程

The hiring **process** took longer than expected.

4. **consultant** 相談員

The company hired a **consultant** to improve efficiency.

5. **option** 選択肢

Taking the train is a good **option** when traffic is heavy.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. How much does a 4 mm Livnite gemstone cost?
2. How many orders has the company received since test sales began?
3. Why did some visitors hesitate to use the service?
4. Would you like to keep a physical memorial of a pet? Why or why not?
5. What are some other meaningful ways people can preserve memories of pets?

4. 「先に死ぬ」犬の遺骨で宝石供養 国産技術で弔い多様化

遺骨から人工ダイヤモンドが作れることは、20年ほど前から日本でも知られるようになってきているが、海外発注でお金と時間がかかる印象も強い。そんな中、国内で遺骨からダイヤモンドに似た人工鉱石モアサナイトを生成する新技術が開発され、共に生きる石を意味する「リヴナイト」として販売が始まった。犬の供養を主力に展開し、5月に千葉市で開かれた「ペット博」に出展。3日間で約1200人がブースを訪れたが、遺骨を託す繊細な未知の商品だけに慎重な愛犬家の声も聞かれた。

「ご遺骨や毛でつくる宝石」の看板の下、「きらきらしてる」と見本の指輪をのぞき込む女性。ゴールデンウィーク中の4日。幕張メッセで開かれたペット博での一コマである。

遺骨ジュエリーブランド「Sol（ソル）&Hug（ハグ）」ブースで、販売代理店を担うLIVENT（リベント・東京都品川区）の三上カ央社長（52）が取材に応じた。「リヴナイトの光の屈折率と分散度はダイヤモンドを上回る。耐久性も高く、アクセサリとして身に着けていただくご提案もしています」

価格は直径4ミリ（0.2カラット相当）で19万8000円で、プラチナ指輪加工の場合、31万円からなど。「従来の人工ダイヤモンドは高額な設備が必要な高温高压法と呼ばれる製法で、米国やスイスの企業が有名ですが、価格は100万円超えが主流。対してリヴナイトはより多くの方の選択肢になりえる。千葉県内で一点一点手作りしているが、遺骨からの人工モアサナイト製造は他に聞いたことがない」

遺骨から得た炭素を、ケイ素や溶媒とともに密閉・加熱し、核から結晶を育ててモアサナイトを生成する技術は3年前、千葉県船橋市の鉱物研究者が開発。商業化のパートナーとして、オーダーメイド葬儀「花葬儀」を首都圏で展開するイベントに声がかかった。必要な遺骨量の目安は直径4ミリの宝石で10グラム、7ミリで15グラム。テスト販売を昨年始め、人の遺骨も含めて39件を受注している。

柴犬2頭を連れて立ち寄ったコンサルタントの女性（28）は、「ダイヤと比べたら現実的なお値段。技術の発達で、きれいな形で思い出が残せることを初めて知りました。自分たちより早く亡くなっちゃうから、形見の品として乳歯を取っているんですよ」

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出典：「先に死ぬ」犬の遺骨で宝石供養 国産技術で弔い多様化
[Japan Forward](#)

4. 「先に死ぬ」犬の遺骨で宝石供養 国産技術で弔い多様化

洋犬2頭を連れて両親と来場した20代女性は「生成過程の情報が少なく不透明に感じる部分もある。大切な遺骨を預けるのだから信頼や納得感が大切」と指摘した。家には代々の愛犬十数頭の遺骨があるそうだ。「結構場所も取っている。宝石にしたら小さくできるかな。でもアクセサリーにして落としたりショック。家に飾っておくだろうね」などと親子で話していた。

厚生労働省によると都道府県別の犬登録件数は東京都が最も多く、令和6年度末現在で55万9千頭。神奈川県、愛知県、大阪府、埼玉県と続き、大都市圏のペットビジネス、ひいてはペット葬祭市場の潜在力を示している。「手厚く弔いたいという方が多い。当初は人の葬儀のオプションと考えていたが、ワンちゃんの遺骨を何年も家に置いたままでどうしよう。そんな声を何人も聞いてニーズに気付いた」と三上社長。

東京都新宿区の主婦（62）は義母を花葬儀で見送った縁で、長年自宅の仏具の厨子に祭っていたミニチュアダックスフント2頭の遺骨でリヴナイトを作った。

「箱を開けたとき、あまりにも輝きがすごくて、えっ！？ 息子には、この宝石を私の骨壺に入れてと伝えていきます」。亡き愛犬の肖像画を着物の帯に描いてもらったこともあるが「締めると切なくなってしまう」。

今回もアクセサリーとして身には着けず、厨子に安置している。「今の3頭も10歳を超え、主人と覚悟しておこうねって。そのとき多分、またお願いすると思います」

自分より先に死ぬことがわかっているのに、なぜ人はペットを飼うのか…。根源的な問いに突き当たる。