

Postcards in Time

By Keith W. Strandberg



Nothing can really explain the popularity of watches today. After all, no one needs a watch. Time is everywhere today—on computer screens, on cell phones, in cars, glaring at us from the microwave and other places around the home.

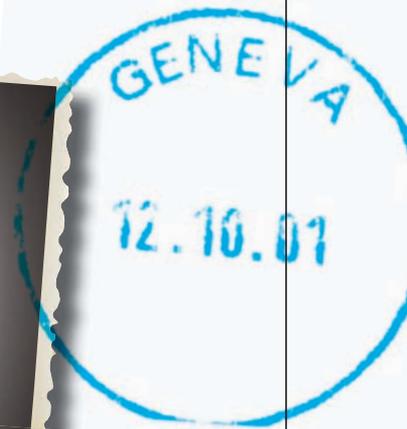
Having a watch is a throwback to another time, when it was a tool, something we needed in our lives. And to want to own a mechanical watch, when a quartz or an atomic watch is significantly more accurate, is quite a mystery when you think about it.

So, why are watches thriving, when they should have gone the way of the T-Rex? Watches are a way of showing our own particular style and revealing that we value the time. A beautiful wristwatch can remind us of how precious time is and how important it is to cherish every second.

A fine timepiece is an acquired taste—many people don't understand paying more than \$50— but once you discover the art of timekeeping, watches become an essential part of your lifestyle and can turn into quite the addiction.

Luckily, there is truly something for everyone, from the \$50 quartz watch to the \$2.5 million ultra-complicated timepiece, as you will see in this unique special section dedicated to time.





3



2



4



6



5

1 Frederique Constant Ladies Heart Beat 2 Piaget Altiplano 3 TAG Heuer Monaco Calibre 12 Automatic Chronograph 4 Bremont MBII 5 Tissot T-Touch Expert 6 Hamilton Khaki Team Earth Auto



1



2

STARTING POINT

You don't have to spend \$20,000 for a great watch. Within the entry level price range (\$50 to \$1,000) there's a great selection with high-end features. You can pick up a sturdy, versatile quartz Timex Ironman for \$59.95, or a feature-laden Tissot T-Touch Expert for \$1,025. In between, you'll find the automatic mechanical Hamilton. For less than \$500, you can buy one of the most sophisticated dive watches on the market: the Citizen Aqualand. Want classic styling? How about Raymond Weil, Victorinox Swiss Army or Longines? You'll find edgier designs with Technomarine, Luminor, Reactor, Gc or Nixon. You can have it all, even at this price point.

TREND WATCH

Looking for a fashionable time-piece? Today's stylish offerings aren't just watches with designer names stamped on the faces.

Trendy timepieces offer cutting-edge original designs, often rich in bright, vivid colors, with discs or dots replacing the more traditional hands. They can be worn alone, or with several other watches, arranged almost like bangles.

MIDDLE CLASS

If you're looking to take a step up to a slightly pricier watch, the midrange of options cost between \$1,000 and \$10,000. At those prices, the selection increases exponentially. Many of the best-known watchmakers is represented in this category—TAG Heuer, Breitling, Rado, Corum, Cartier, Omega, Movado, IWC, Montblanc, Tutima and Zenith—and aside from an extremely high level of quality, what these prices get you are more sophisticated designs (TAG's Caliber 1887), more unconventional materials (like Rado's ceramic watch) and unique features and functions.



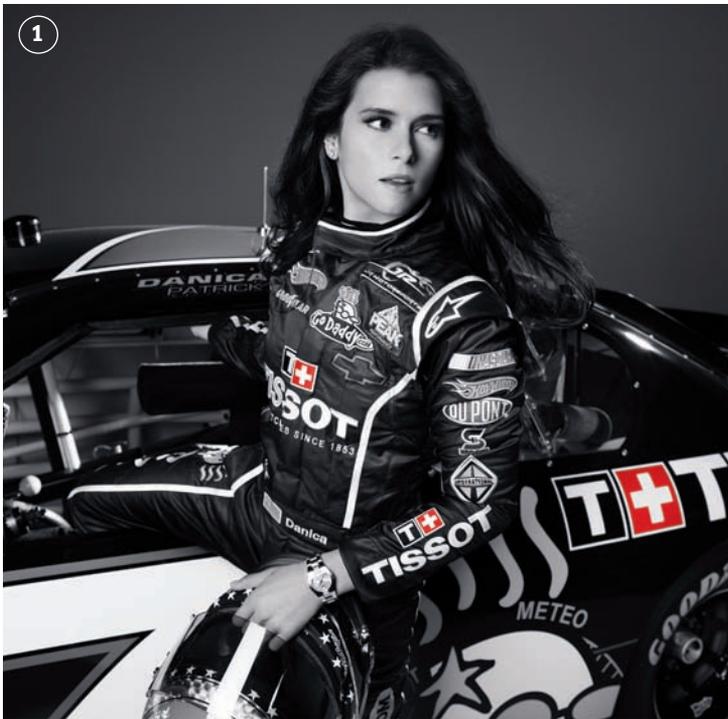
3





TIME TRAVEL

Top-end watch companies frequently collaborate with some of the best automotive and yacht manufacturers in the world to create high-end timepieces. Aston-Martin owners can buy a Jaeger-LeCoultre watch that locks and unlocks their cars. Norton Motorcycles and Jaguar are working with English brand Bremont, while Blancpain is affiliated with Lamborghini, Cabestan with Ferrari, Girard-Perregaux with MV Agusta, and Bulova with Harley-Davidson. BRM uses engine forms in its watches, while Richard Mille takes his design cues from racing cars and the new U.S. brand Equipe draws its inspiration from American muscle cars.



PLAY CLOCKS

Gone are the days when a sports watch was a plastic eyesore you put away as soon as you finished your jog. Today, multi-purpose watches can easily pull double duty at work or in the gym, and there are dedicated, sport-specific timepieces for scuba diving, trekking, flying and more. Watch companies have formed partnerships with major sports events and athletes, from the Olympics (Omega) to MotoGP (Tissot), Tiger Woods (TAG Heuer) to Roger Federer (Rolex), Danica Patrick (Tissot) to Rafael Nadal (Richard Mille), Eli Manning and Paula Creamer (Citizen), Laird Hamilton (Chanel) and New England Patriots' quarterback Tom Brady (Movado).

1 Danica Patrick, Tissot Ambassador **2** Jaeger-LeCoultre AMVOX
3 Equipe Balljoint **4** Luminox Deep Dive 500





1



2



3

IT'S COMPLICATED

A “complication” is a watch that boasts anything more than the customary hour hand, minute hand and second hand. Common complications include annual and perpetual calendars, chronographs, world timers, tourbillons, minute repeaters, features that track the phases of the moon and any combination of the above. The more complicated the movement, the more skill it takes to manufacture. A grand complication can have over 1,000 individual parts. The tourbillon, which was developed in the 18th century to counter the effects of gravity on a pocket watch, is widely considered the most difficult complication, but the minute repeater, which chimes the hours, quarter hours and minutes on demand, is one of the most beautiful.

TIME LIMIT

For some, exclusivity is key. One-of-a-kind watches and limited editions by manufacturers like Cartier and Vacheron Constantin can cost as much as \$500,000 and take more than a year to deliver. And there are some companies, like Jean Dunand, whose prices start at \$300,000,

and Artya, which strikes its watch cases with lightning. (Artya also sells the Black Belt Watch—but only to certified black belts in the martial arts.) Newer boutique watchmakers such as Hautlence, Urwerk, HD3, Peter Speake-Marin, MB&F, Romain Jerome are dedicated to turning out small quantities of highly individual watches.

CRAFT WORK

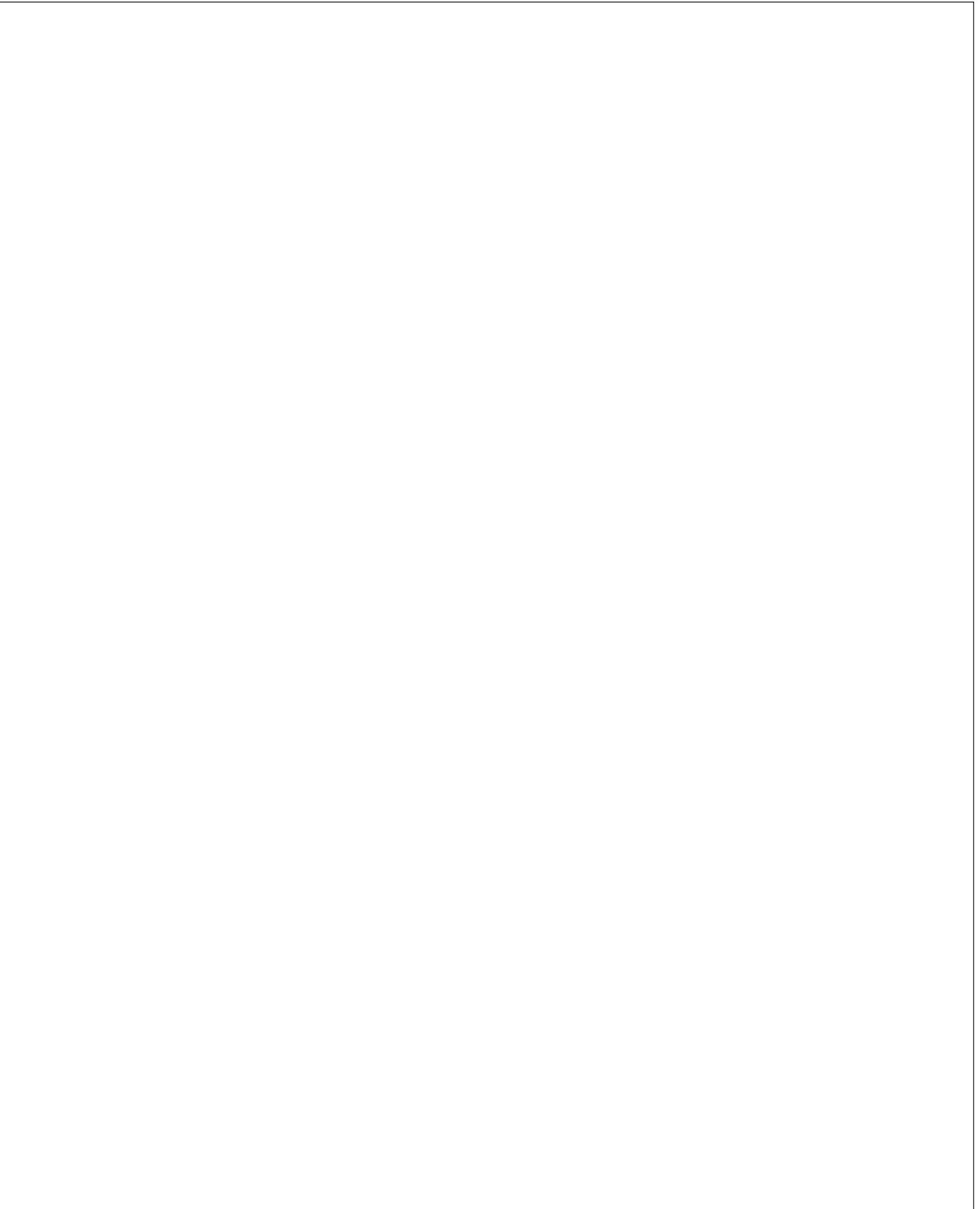
Today, a number of centuries-old artisanal processes—like enamel, engraving, miniature painting and more—are making a comeback, with more consumers placing an emphasis on craft. Van Cleef & Arpels has led the way with its poetic complications: watches that combine amazing movements with incredible artistry on the dial. One of the most interesting is the Le Pont des Amoureux watch, which features a beautiful enamel dial on which a bridge is applied. On the bridge, two engraved figures, a man and a woman, move towards each other, meeting with a kiss at midnight. Patek Philippe also has a line of limited editions that feature enamel and miniature painting, as does Vacheron Constantin, Bovet and Jaeger-LeCoultre.

With all these choices and a continued emphasis on quality across the board, it's a wonderful time to be looking for a new timepiece.

TIME TO BUY

When you find the watch you want, the next step is finding the right place to buy it. The most important consideration is that you buy from an authorized retailer, whether online or in a brick and mortar store. Authorized retailers are supported by the brands they sell, and the brands will honor the warranties of watches sold through their network. Plus you can be assured that the watch is the real thing, not counterfeit or worse, stolen.

How can you tell if a retailer is authorized? Check the website of the brand you'd like to buy for a list of authorized sellers, or just ask at the store. Once you find a trusted, authorized retailer, you can buy your new watch with peace of mind.





Jean Dunand Palace

Not too long ago,

the mechanical watch was dead. When the quartz watch was introduced in the 1970s, everyone thought that this had to be the death knell for the mechanical watch. After all, the quartz watch was cheaper and more accurate, the latest cutting-edge technology.

Logic dictates that there's no way that people will pay more money for a watch that is less accurate. After all, no one in the music industry has gone back to eight track tapes now that digital files are the standard.

Watches, however, are different from just about any product on the face of the planet. They are one of the few things that you wear on your body, in intimate contact with your skin. Watches are so...personal.

For men, especially, watches are just about the only things they can wear to express their style, their panache, their personality. Watches are cool because they can be both subtle and bold, understated and flashy, elegant and casual, all at the same time.



THE MAGIC OF A MECHANICAL WATCH

There is something special about a mechanical watch on your wrist. A mechanical watch is something that has to be created, crafted and has had life breathed into it by a skilled watchmaker. Mechanical watches cannot be made on an assembly line, they have to, at one point or another, regardless of how much they cost, be attended to by a watchmaker.

Once the watch is purchased, it is kept alive by its owner, wearing and winding it every day.

No one really knows why mechanical watches are in such demand right now, but they are

here to stay. They are magic on the wrist, living machines that are amazing in their complexity and their number of moving parts. Take for example the Zenith El Primero movement, one of the most famous movements in the industry. This movement beats 36,000 times an hour, which is 864,000 times a day, 25,920,000 times a month, 311,040,000 times a year.

The mechanical watch is truly a marvel of miniature engineering and a phenomenal accomplishment of the human race.

Available now, on a wrist near you. What are you waiting for?

1 Breitling Chronomat BR01 2 Bovy Tourbillon Ottanta by Pininfarina
3 Jean Dunand Tourbillon Orbital 4 An exploded view of the Zenith El Primero Chronograph movement

HOW A MECHANICAL WATCH WORKS

Like a rubber band powered balsawood airplane, a watch movement is at its most basic level about taking stored energy and translating that into timekeeping. The watch's energy is stored in the mainspring and as it unwinds, the other parts of the watch control that power and make it possible to display the time.

Here are the basics on how a movement works;

Every timepiece has four requirements:

- [1. A power source](#)
- [2. A way of transmitting power](#)
- [3. A way of regulating power](#)
- [4. A way of indicating power so you can tell the time.](#)

For mechanical watches, the mainspring's stored power is transmitted through a series of gears called the "gear train." The balance wheel, which is the part of the watch that turns back and forth at a changeable rate, is where the power is regulated or controlled. The indication is done by the hands: hours, minutes, seconds.

