

Hemispheres

THREE PERFECT DAYS IN MEXICO CITY

BILL COSBY REVISITS
THE EARLY YEARS IN
THE HEMI Q&A

A FOOLPROOF GUIDE
TO THE BEST HOLIDAY
GIFT IDEAS

OLD-SCHOOL EATS ON
HAMBURG'S BRAND-NEW
WATERFRONT

PORSCHE'S SLEEK
TOURING CAR TAKES
SAN SEBASTIAN

UNITED 

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 

FACE VALUE

Just in Time for the Holidays

By Keith W. Strandberg, *Hemispheres* Watch Editor



Alpina Startimer (\$2,595)

IN TODAY'S UNCERTAIN ECONOMIC CLIMATE, people are focusing on value for money. This is especially true in watches, given that most people don't really need a watch, as time is just about everywhere around us (on the computer, cell phone, dashboard, microwave, etc.). Certainly, a watch is one fantastic way to show your personality, your style and your taste. Conspicuous consumption is a bit of a no-no these days, so the watches on these pages are the best value for money in three different price ranges.

WHY PAY MORE?

Sure, there are watches for about \$100, but they are merely timekeepers, sold by the millions and are on just about everyone's wrist. If you are looking to stand out a bit, express your personality and wear a quality timepiece, you have to spend a little more money.

Don't worry, though. In the past, fine watches had to be babied a bit, but that isn't the case today. The watches on these pages have been tested to be able to

withstand shocks, variations in temperature, a dunk in the water (or a swim in the pool) and more. You don't have to be careful with these timepieces—just strap them on and go about your day.

WHY WATCHES ARE A GOOD VALUE

The majority of the watches listed here are mechanical watches, meaning that they are powered by a traditional movement, which requires incredible skill and expertise to manufacture.

On top of this, there are so many things that go into the creation of a fine timepiece. Designing a good-looking watch is a difficult job—there isn't much space to work with and the challenge is to come up with something that doesn't look like every other watch out there.

Then, once you come up with a great design, you have to make it, which involves hundreds of parts, complicated assembly, in-depth testing and much more.

So, here are the watches we consider the best value in three very popular price points.



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UNDER \$1,500

1. GANT BY MICHAEL BASTIAN LIMITED EDITION (\$395): Designer Michael Bastian has been doing clothes collections with Gant for the past three years and this year has introduced a limited edition timepiece, inspired by the first wrist watch that made its debut during World War I. The watch comes in two versions each limited to 1,949 numbered pieces (1949 was the year Gant was founded).

2. LUMINOX ATACAMA FIELD CHRONOGRAPH (\$900): This rugged 42mm steel chronograph from Luminox is named after the famous Chilean desert. To get the color just right, the case and bracelet are treated with a Gunmetal PVD coating.

3. HAMILTON KHAKI PILOT (\$995): Hamilton is a revered American brand (now owned by the Swiss), with a solid tradition in aviation watches. Hamilton was the chief supplier to the US military during World War II, and the Khaki Pilot draws direct inspiration from these classic watches. Easy to read, easy to use, the Khaki Pilot is a great entry-level mechanical watch.

4. VICTORINOX AIRBOSS AUTOMATIC (\$995): The Swiss Army Knife comes to the wrist in this bold Victorinox timepiece. Designed to be a rugged everyday watch, the AirBoss Automatic is easy to read, but also very attractive.

5. TISSOT SEA-TOUCH (\$1,150): An incredible watch at an amazing price. Using a great tactile display, you can cycle through two time zones, an alarm, a chronograph, a timer, a compass, a thermometer and a dive computer complete with depth gauge.



1

\$1,500 – \$5,000

1. ORIS SWISS HUNTER TEAM PS EDITION (\$1,750): The Swiss Hunter Team PS Edition is dedicated to the famous Patrouille Suisse (PS) Hunter planes that were withdrawn from the Swiss Air Force in 1994. Oris is a quality Swiss company that only makes affordable mechanical watches, equipped with its signature red rotor on the back of the movement.

2. TAG HEUER AQUARACER (\$1,900): Water-resistant to 300 meters, the TAG Heuer Aquaracer is a lot of automatic watch for the money. Two tone and classic, it can go from the boardroom to the ocean, and everywhere in between.

3. SEIKO ANANTA CHRONOGRAPH (\$2,100): The Ananta is named after a samurai sword, and the clean lines of this chronograph are very distinctive. Powered by a high-quality automatic movement, manufactured in-house by Seiko (which has been making mechanical watches since 1881), this watch offers incredible value for the money.

4. ALPINA STARTIMER (\$2,595): (PAGE 63) New for 2011, the Alpina Startimer range is a very well-priced line of watches, linked to Alpina's aviation history and modern-day Cessna aircraft. These watches are designed to appeal to pilots, as a backup to their instruments, and anyone else who is looking for a classic, easy-to-read watch.

5. BAUME & MERCIER CLASSIMA EXECUTIVE (\$3,250): Baume & Mercier's Classima Executive is a 42mm steel timepiece with silvered dial with line engraving, with an opening to view the moving balance wheel of the automatic movement.

6. BELL & ROSS BR01-92 CARBON (\$4,600): Bell & Ross reinvented the pilot watch, using the actual instruments in the cockpit as inspiration for the BR01. Big, bold and very easy to read, the BR01 makes a no-nonsense statement on your wrist.



2



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5



6



OVER \$5,000

1. **ZENITH CAPTAIN WINSOR ANNUAL CALENDAR (\$8,700):** Zenith's El Primero chronograph movement is one of the best in the entire watch industry, and to get this legendary movement in an annual calendar version (which only has to be adjusted once a year) is fantastic.

2. **BREITLING CHRONOMAT 44 (\$8,960):** A chronograph designed and manufactured in-house is a rare thing for a watch at this price, and with Breitling backing it up, you know it has phenomenal quality.

3. **OFFICINE PANERAI LUMINOR SUBMERSIBILE 1950 3 DAYS AUTOMATIC BRONZO (\$10,700):** The Panerai Luminor line, one of the most instantly recognizable watches, is based on watches made for and only sold to Italian military divers. Now available to the general public, Panerai's are very much in demand and extremely difficult to get.

4. **CARL F. BUCHERER PATRAVI TRAVELTEC (\$10,900):** A super-complicated watch that allows you to simply read three time zones at a glance, it also includes a chronograph, all for a very reasonable price. It will certainly turn heads when it's on your wrist.

Whether you are buying these watches for yourself or as a gift, you can't go wrong with any of the choices on these pages. Happy shopping!

