



LETTER FROM SWITZERLAND

THE WATCH MAGAZINE REDEFINED

12:2012 WATCHJOURNAL.COM



PERSONAL PREFERENCE

AND THE WORLD OF WATCHES

Do you wear your watch on your right wrist or on your left? Face up or face down? And why? I am fascinated by the reasons for how we wear our watches. Once, when I was in Naples, Italy, I noticed that almost everyone wore their watches on their right wrists. When I asked my host about this, he smiled and explained that locals in the seaside city liked to drive with their windows down and their left arms out the windows. But thieves were stealing the watches right off people's wrists! So the Napolitani started wearing their watches on their right wrists, which stayed inside the car.

What about straps? Do you prefer leather or rubber straps or metal bracelets? I've only had a few metal bracelet watches, so I guess I'm a strap man. In most cases, leather is my strap of choice, but for sports watches, I prefer rubber for its water-resistance.

Quartz or mechanical? Mechanical watches are amazing engines we can carry on our wrists, but there's no denying the convenience and precision of quartz technology. Most watch lovers have worn both quartz and mechanical watches, but the mechanical watches are the ones with soul. I own both kinds, but my mechanical watches far outnumber my quartz.

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Simple timekeeping or complicated functions? There's something to be said for an incredible complicated watch and all the work that goes into it, but a classic three-hand timekeeper is both tried and true and elegant at the same time.

Wrist or pocket? Pocket watches are coming back into vogue, and there are several convertible watches that transform from a wristwatch to a pocket watch and even to a table clock. Very cool, and the perfect timepieces for some.

Whimsical or serious? I love watches that make me smile. It might be a Mickey Mouse watch, a watch with silver bullets on the dial to ward off werewolves, a poetic complication or a fun, colorful timepiece.

One of the greatest things about watches is their infinite variety. We aren't limited to just one watch; the choices are legion, and we can wear them any way we wish. No matter who you are, where you are going or what you are doing today, rest assured there is a watch that is perfect for your particular activities. And for you.

—Keith W. Strandberg

INTERNATIONAL EDITOR