

What:

BESPOKE WATCHES

Unique creations you design in partnership with the world's finest watchmakers. ▼



✕ The Steps of Bespoke

Rarely marketed and never advertised, bespoke watches require working in tandem with the brand you've chosen. The good news is that most luxury brands are ready and willing to do bespoke work; it's a chance to flex their creative muscles.

To start the process, contact a manufacturer through an authorized retailer, the brand's boutique, its U.S. office or Swiss headquarters. Vacheron Constantin, for example, performs its bespoke work at its Atelier Cabinotiers workshop in Geneva.

On meeting with brand representatives, you'll discuss what you want, what you like and don't like, and how involved you want to be. At each step, you'll get the chance to review your watch-in-progress—from the case structure to the metal prototype, the dial drawings and the shape of the hands. Until the design is finalized, you can make changes every step of the way.



✕ Bespoke Icons

→ A watch commissioned by financier Henry Graves Jr. from Patek Philippe in 1933 (above) sold at auction in 1999 for \$11 million, making it the most expensive watch ever.

→ A secret admirer commissioned one of history's most famous timepieces, the No. 160 Grand Complication, also known as the Marie Antoinette, as a gift for the French queen. Swiss watchmaker Abraham-Louis Breguet started the piece in 1782, but it was only finished in 1827, four years after his death and more than 30 years after Marie Antoinette was executed.

✕ Take Your Time

Having a bespoke watch made can take anywhere from two months to two years, depending on the level of customization.

✕ What It Costs

There is no standard price for bespoke. The more one-off elements (movement, case, dial, hands, etc.) you want, the more it will cost. But bespoke projects typically aren't a windfall for the maker; they represent more work than profit.

Consider Girard-Perregaux (shown here). A change to the world-timer city ring of its ww.tc model can add several thousand dollars to the price, while a bespoke grand complication by its master watchmaker Dominique Loiseau would run more than \$1 million.

Contact:

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