

Have a rare old time

In the wonderful world of horology, there is a group of fine Swiss watchmakers producing some absolutely exquisite timepieces.

Words by Steve Huyton



Left
Louis Moinet
Tempograph 20-Second.

Right
Montblanc Villeret
1858 Exotourbillon
Rattrapante.

AS A WATCH JOURNALIST, I get to feature a really diverse range of timepieces that are marketed at all price points. All of the watches I write about display a huge amount of originality and design integrity. However, there are some limited-edition timepieces that are so exclusive it's very difficult to even get access to the real thing. These creations are normally made of luxurious materials such as gold and platinum, and in some instances, they're also lavished with precious stones. What also makes them so extraordinary is that every component is entirely Swiss made and normally by one master craftsman. Here are five brilliant watches that perfectly illustrate this point.



Louis Moinet Tempograph 20-Seconds

Louis Moinet SA derives its name from the legendary 18th-century French horologist, sculptor, painter and inventor of the chronograph. But it is dynamic owner and creative director Jean-Marie Schaller who revived the present-day company. The Tempograph 20-Second is a beautiful timepiece and a wonderful example of their work. With a classically proportioned 5N rose-gold case measuring 43.50MM x 15.60MM, this creation will definitely appeal to collectors. Its three-dimensional, multi-layered dial is a sight to behold, and beneath that luxurious exterior lies a mechanical self-winding movement developed in partnership with Concepto. The Calibre LM39 comprises 36 jewels and oscillates at a frequency of 28,800VPH (vibrations per hour).

Montblanc Collection Villeret 1858 ExoTourbillon Rattrapante

Montblanc is synonymous with the production of high-quality luxury goods such as pens and wristwatches. But the Collection Villeret 1858 ExoTourbillon Rattrapante is probably their most ambitious and complicated timepiece to date. Its sensational ivory *grand feu* enamel dial contrasts smartly with its blue steel hands. All of this splendour is encapsulated in an elegant 47MM x 18.20MM 18-carat white-gold case. At the heart of the watch is an exceptionally complicated hand-winding in-house movement: the Calibre MB M16.61 contains 426 individual components and oscillates at a frequency of 18,000VPH.



Maitres du Temps Chapter One Tonneau Transparence Titanium

Maitres du Temps is a high-end luxury watch brand established by the charismatic Steven Holtzman. The company has collaborated with renowned ateliers such as Daniel Roth, Peter Speake-Marin and Christophe Claret to produce a range of distinctive timepieces. One of their finest creations is the sublime Chapter One Tonneau Transparence Titanium, a watch that definitely grabs your attention thanks to its meticulously detailed skeletonised dial. Other sensational features include two patented cylinders displaying day of the week and the moon phase. Beneath the lightweight exterior lies a highly complicated manual-winding tourbillon mechanical movement containing 558 individual parts. The Calibre SHC02.1 comprises 58 jewels and oscillates at 21,600VPH.

McGonigle Tuscar Red Gold

McGonigle is a small, independent watchmaker, owned by brothers John and Stephen McGonigle. Unusually, the brand's headquarters is located in Ireland, not Switzerland. Their sublime Tuscar Red Gold is a very exclusive watch that's been limited to only 20 pieces. Its skilfully handcrafted open-worked dial gives the watch a bold and distinctive three-dimensional appearance. With a classical 42.5MM case, the timepiece should also appeal to serious collectors. Powering the watch is the Calibre McG01, which has been developed with the assistance of renowned watch designer Alberto Papi. This mechanical hand-winding movement comprises 31 jewels and oscillates at 18,000VPH.



Clockwise from top left
Maitres du Temps Chapter
One Tonneau Transparence
Titanium; McGonigle Tuscar
Red Gold; AkriVIA Tourbillon.
Monopusher Chronograph.

AkriVIA Tourbillon Monopusher Chronograph

AkriVIA is a high-end watchmaker that was established in 2012 and is based in Geneva, Switzerland—with the youthful and dynamic Rexhep Rexhepi presently owning the company. His first model is a highly ambitious and complicated watch called the Tourbillon Monopusher Chronograph. This timepiece combines contemporary styling with traditional Swiss craftsmanship and a meticulous attention to detail. Dimensionally, the timepiece measures 43MM x 12.90MM and is available in a choice of either 316L stainless steel or luxurious 18-carat 5N red gold. Beneath the multi-layered façade is a very accomplished mechanical hand-winding calibre containing 286 parts. The movement comprises 33 jewels and oscillates at 21,600VPH. **✎**