

CLASSIC DRIVER

Icons of watchmaking history no.7: Hublot Classique



In our *Icons of Watchmaking* series, timepiece expert Gisbert L. Brunner gives his opinions on wristwatches with cult status. This week, attention is focused on a modern classic: the Hublot Classique from 1980.

Translated from French, the word *hublot* means nothing more than small hatch or porthole. Operating under the brand Hublot made it inevitable that the company's design language revolved around a nautical theme.

Before the Milanese Carlo Crocco founded Hublot in 1980, and brought the first watch to market, he spent three years thoroughly studying the collections of his competitors and coming to the conclusion that a watch should represent something special. The premiere of his first creation showed a distinctive but understated design, with 12 screws around the bezel to garner some attention. These bolts replaced the traditional hour markers, and the watch was only characterised otherwise by the date marker and logo. Another feature of the new brand was the fusion of unusual materials – such as a gold case with rubber strap. What is almost classed as 'normal' today was a novelty in the early 1980s.



The timeless design of Hublot watches mean they remain popular in modern culture, especially in the Iberian Peninsula. This is particularly true in Spain, where the Spanish King and his son both wear a Hublot when sailing. The King also presents a chronograph to the winner of each category in the Copa del Rey sailing competition, of which Hublot is the official timekeeper. Under the auspices of well-known CEO Jean-Claude Biver – who previously resurrected Blancpain and Omega – the company has experienced an unprecedented boom in sales. To honour Hublot’s history, he decided that the Classique series should “resurrect classic fusion”.

Icons of watchmaking history -

No. 1: [Audemars Piguet Royal Oak](#)

No. 2: [Breitling Navitimer](#)

No. 3: [Bvlgari-Bvlgari by Bvlgari](#)

No. 4: [Cartier Santos](#)

No. 5: [Chronoswiss Regulator](#)

No. 6: [Heuer Carrera](#)

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