

CLASSIC DRIVER



Classic Life Special: Icons of Watchmaking

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Mechanical watches are fascinating little masterpieces with guild of enthusiasts across the world. In our special *Icons of Watchmaking* series, horological expert Gisbert L. Brunner guides us through the most important and beautiful chronograph bracelets, from Audemars Piguet to Zenith.

Icons of Watchmaking No 1: Audemars Piguet Royal Oak

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Hot or not? A great many new watch models appear on the market every year, some of which only survive for a year, while others hold their own for decades. The Royal Oak by Audemars Piguet is one of the long-term winners... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No. 2: Breitling Navitimer

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The name *Navitimer* wasn't registered by Breitling until 22 January 1955, but the actual birth of this iconic pilot's watch was when production began in 1952... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No. 3: Bulgari-Bulgari by Bulgari

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In 1977, ultra-fashionable Roman jeweller Bvlgari turned the horological world on its head by stamping its trademark name ('Bvlgari', with the 'u' changed for the Latin 'v') on the smooth round bezel not once, but twice. Since that day, the classic design has often been imitated, but never equalled for simplistic styling... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No. 4: Cartier Santos

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It was a pioneer of flight, Brazilian born Alberto Santos-Dumont who, in 1904, asked his great friend the jeweller Louis Cartier for a watch that could be consulted without taking either hand off the controls of his aeroplane... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No. 5: Chronoswiss Regulator

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After an intensive development period Lang, who'd already worked for the legendary Jack Heuer, at last produced the first wristwatch with a 'Regulator' movement. Hence the name... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No. 6: Heuer Carrera

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The 1960s was a decade of intense activity for the Heuer company. With the introduction of the new range of chronographs titled 'Carrera' - after the famous Mexican road race - the world of motor sport finally had an accurate timing device that could be worn on a wrist... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No 7: Hublot Classique

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

Icons of Watchmaking No 8: IWC Portugieser

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The history of the iconic Portuguese is quite unusual. At the end of the 1930s, the management of the International Watch Company - IWC for short - received a polite letter from Portugal. Two Portuguese IWC importers wanted to buy watches with the precision of a marine chronometer, but with a steel case... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No 9: Jaeger-LeCoultre Reverso

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This is a watch which has been around for an uninterrupted 80 years. It was on 4 March 1931 that René-Alfred Chauvot patented a wristwatch which could slide on its base and swivel... to flip over on itself... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No 10: Lange & Söhne Lange

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The watches from A. Lange & sons are among the most elegant and technically advanced in the world. The Saxon factory has a legacy of more than 165 years' production of precision timepieces, but things have not always run smoothly for the watchmakers from Glashütte... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No 11: Nomos Tangente

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Created by architect Walter Gropius in the immediate post-World War One period, the Bauhaus movement in Germany's Weimar Republic had a vision of a 'total' work of art or design, in which art combines with craftsmanship to produce the characteristically 'clean', modernist designs of the 20s and 30s... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No 12: Omega Speedmaster Professional

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Space travel saw NASA specialists making extreme demands of their chosen watchmaker. On 29 September 1964, the Swiss watch brand Omega provided some specimens for testing and, in early 1965, the official NASA watch was chosen... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No 13: Panerai Luminor Marina

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When Giovanni Panerai opened his watchmaker's shop in 1860 on the Ponte alle Grazie in Florence, he would never have guessed how valuable his name would eventually become in the watch world. It took around 56 years for the small shop to transform itself into a brand of international standing...[more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No 14: Patek Philippe Nautilus

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Although Patek Philippe is generally considered a 'conservative' company, in the 1970s no one was safe from radical thinking. It was in 1975 that the legendary 'grand manufacture' decided that something all-new, very 'of the moment' yet still classically elegant should be added to its collection. Under the direction of legendary designer Gérald Genta, the Nautilus was born... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No 15: Porsche Design P'6530 Chronograph

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The Porsche Design Chronograph, for long considered a fashion fad of the 1980s, is currently experiencing a revival. The modern lines come from the pen of the designer Ferdinand Alexander Porsche, a member of the famous Porsche family and one of the main stylists of the 911. Like all

Porsche Design products, the watches took their technical inspiration from the cars bearing the same shield... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No 16: Rado DiaStar

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Because a top-quality gold watch is easily scratched, in the early 1960s, the then-head of Rado issued orders for his staff to conduct experiments with 'hard metals' in the hope of creating a scratch-proof watch. However, it was soon clear that contemporary case designs would not produce the desired result, even with new materials. .. [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No 17: Rolex Datejust

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The date display is clearly one of the most significant additions to the wristwatch so far; until the mid-40s, the date was only revealed by the stars. The birth of this innovation came in 1945, when ingenious Rolex founder Hans Walsdorf celebrated the company's 40th anniversary by launching the Datejust... [more >>](#)

Icons of Watchmaking No 18: Zenith El Primero Chronomaster

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Many regard the El Primero as traditional watch manufacturer Zenith's best work. When Zenith proudly revealed the timepiece in 1969, the response of the trade press was overwhelming; when held in the hand, the watch was found to be surprisingly small and flat. Yet with a frequency of 36,000 alternations per hour, it was accurate up to 1/10th of a second... [more >>](#)

Text: [Gisbert L. Brunner](#)

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