



SPREADING IT OUT

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BASELWORLD and Salon International de la Haute Horlogerie Geneve (SIHH) are no longer the only launch pads which the big luxury watch brands use to unveil new timepieces. Rather than cramming all the major new launches for the year at these two mega exhibitions, each lasting barely a week (one in January and the other in March), many of the big brands owned by Richemont and Swatch – the two Swiss giant groups which produce the bulk of the world’s luxury timepieces – have spread out their 2017 releases.

They have continued to issue new models every two to three months after this year’s SIHH and BaselWorld watch fair. And while many would have already introduced the best of their new models at these two events, many of the subsequent timepieces launched have not proved to be disappointing. We highlight some of these watches below:

1. Breitling’s Bentley GT Dark Sapphire Edition is a 500-piece limited edition to mark the all-new Bentley Continental GT luxury car. This timepiece stands out not only because of its dark bluish shimmer that matches the colour of the Bentley Dark Sapphire livery; the ultra light, ultra sturdy 48 mm case is also made of Breitling – a high-tech material exclusive to Breitling. The in-house self-winding, high-frequency movement is officially certified by COSC for its superior chronometric performance. The watch is also equipped with a 30-second chronograph system inspired by a 1926 Breitling patent, with a central hand completing a full sweep in half a minute which ensures extremely accurate readings of time to the nearest eighth of a second.

2. IWC is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its Aquatimer divers’ watches in a big way. The **Aquatimer Perpetual Calendar Digital**

Date-Month Edition 50 Years Aquatimer is not only one of the most complicated divers timepieces, it is also the first with a case made of Ceratium – a material that is as light and unbreakable as titanium and as hard and scratch-resistant as ceramic. The digital perpetual calendar and chronograph model, limited to 50 pieces, is water resistant to 100 m. Price: 50,000 Swiss francs (S\$70,000).

3. With Urwerk’s UR-105 CT Streamliner, the independent Swiss watch brand’s founders Felix Baumgartner and Martin Frei take you to the New York of their youth, “a plunge into a city of different facets, from the top of the highest skyscraper to the depths of the subway”. Streamliner celebrates Urwerk’s 20th anniversary and brings back memories of the founders’ early days in New York. The Art Deco influences of the city are apparent in the watch’s geometric angularity and symmetry. Sliding the catch on the top of the case reveals the watch’s mechanism: a new wandering hour indication based on an openwork carousel carrying four satellites, each bearing three numerals for the hours. Mr Baumgartner says that the Streamliner is a watch with a flexible design. “When it is closed, it looks austere, with only the time indication visible. Open the protective cover, and you delve into a metallic environment that is quite cold, yet you perceive the notion of speed and an effort at efficiency.” The timepiece comes in two versions: titanium and mirrored-polished steel; and titanium black PVD coated steel. Each sells for 65,000 Swiss francs (S\$91,000) excluding tax.

4. The Seamaster Qua Terra Worldtimer Master Chronometer, in a limited edition of 87 pieces, is Omega’s first world-timer watch. The travel timepiece is distinguished by a circle of global destinations printed in red (GMT), black (+1 hour in summer) or blue (places

without daylight savings). The destinations include the city of Biemme at GMT+1, Omega’s home in Switzerland. The watch, which has a 43 mm watch case made from platinum-gold, is also a Master Chronometer – meaning that the timepiece and its movement have attained the industry’s highest standard of precision, performance and magnetic resistance as determined by the Swiss Federal Institute of Metrology. Price: US\$48,600.

5. Harry Winston Project Z11 – The Project Z series is known for its complication and presentation. The 11th edition has an open-work structure, off-centre grid and big date with a design based on an interplaying set of circles and angles, rigour and flexibility, durability and lightness. The watch is sporty, yet elegant in style. The 42.2 mm case, made of Zalium – an alloy exclusive to Harry Winston – houses an automatic movement with a 72-hour power reserve and driven by a silicon balance spring.

6. The Nomos Zurich Weltzeit Singapore Edition World Time is not a new travel timepiece, but it has been tweaked to create two new models for Singapore watch retail chain The Hour Glass. Both variants feature “Singapore” prominently in red on the dial to represent one of the 24 time zones, occupying the spot where Hong Kong is located in the other versions of the Weltzeit. Instead of the usual “home” logo at three o’clock, there is now a little red dot to serve as the reminder. This is complemented by a red hand on the running seconds sub-dial at six o’clock. What’s more, one of the two models has a salmon-coloured dial – only the second Nomos watch with a dial this colour. The other model has a classic white silver-plated dial; and only 35 pieces of it will be available. Retail price: S\$8,560.

7. One of three special creations distinguished by a green dial, Panerai’s Luminor 1950 Chrono Monopulsante 8 Days GMT Titanio (PAM00737) is further marked by the classic bridge lever device, patented by the brand in the 1950s, to protect the crown and help ensure the watch’s water resistance. Housed in the 44 mm

titanium case of this chronograph-GMT timepiece is an inhouse hand-wound movement with eight days of power reserve. Price: S\$25,900.

8. Jaeger-LeCoultre celebrates the 74th Venice International Film Festival with three artistic limited editions (of eight pieces each) of its **Rendez-Vous** collection, expressing three different stages of romantic feelings: seduction, romance and love. The latest addition to the Grande Maison’s ladies’ line is the pink gold **Redez-Vous Sonatina Large**, which features a chiming sound for reminder of a rendezvous and a day/night indication. Nestled in the 38.2 mm pink gold case of this complication model is a self-winding movement. No fewer than three crafts went into the finishing of the three editions: guilloché, painting on mother-of-pearl and gem-setting. Jaeger-LeCoultre has been a partner of the film festival for over 12 years.

9. After appearing in a platinum case, Vacheron Constantin’s Historiques American 1921, designed in the Roaring Twenties for the American market and hence its name, is now offered for the first time in a small 36.5 mm pink gold case. American 1921 is recognised by an avant garde cushion-shaped case, the crown located between one and two o’clock, and small seconds display between four and five o’clock. The new down-sized model comes with a dark brown alligator leather strap for the men and a red alligator shiny leather strap for the ladies. Price: S\$42,800.

10. Roger Dubuis announces its partnership with Lamborghini Squadra Corse with two versions of the **Excalibur Aventador S**, a sporty watch that includes multi-layered carbon. The model bearing the Lamborghini yellow paint code is limited to 88 pieces (S\$279,000). The more exclusive eight-piece (S\$387,000) Arancio Argos orange-liveried timepiece also features C-SMC (carbon sheet moulding compound) carbon based on the same technology used for Lamborghini cars. Both models are powered by a hand-wound skeletonised movement with double balance spring and feature jumping seconds. ■