



BY CHUANG PECK MING

## STILL COOL AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

Luxury watches used to come in only silver or gold colours, depending on the materials used to make them – steel, gold or platinum. Now they come in more colours, thanks to the introduction of new materials and coating technology in watchmaking. Black was the first of the new colours – and it has proven to be a big hit, especially with male watch collectors. These are some of the black timepieces launched this year.



**1) The IWC Aquatimer Chronograph Edition "50 Years Science for Galapagos"** is one of four special-edition diving watches that IWC launched this year to support efforts to preserve the natural world of the oceans and the Galapagos. Limited to 500 pieces, the watch also marks the 50th anniversary of the Charles Darwin Research Station on the Galapagos Islands. Water resistant to 300 m, the chronograph has a 44 mm steel case equipped with an in-house automatic movement with 68 hours' power reserve. It also features the new IWC SafeDive system which makes for safer diving. Price: S\$15,300.

**2) Chopard's L U C 8HF Power Control** is a re-issue. When it first appeared in 2012, it was the first timepiece with a high-frequency escapement to be chronometer-certified by COSC, leaving little doubt that it is a more accurate timepiece. The new watch is also COSC-certified. But while the original was titanium, the latest model has a 42 mm black ceramic case. It is limited to 250 pieces, at S\$26,530 apiece.

**3) Jaeger-LeCoultre's Master Compressor Chronograph** also has a black ceramic case, but bigger – at 46 mm. The chronograph-dual-time combo houses an automatic movement which has power reserve of 65 hours. It is limited to 500 pieces. Price: S\$20,300.

**4) De Bethune's DB28 Dark Shadows:** Three years ago, an early version of this model, which boasts a moon phase, won the Aiguille d'Or, the highest distinction awarded by the Geneva Watchmaking Grand Prix, the watch industry's equivalent of the Oscar. The new matt black interpretation, with an ultra light but hard 42 mm zirconium case, spots the famous crown at 12 o'clock. The dial opens a window to the mechanical hand-wound movement which has six days' power reserve. The spherical moon-phase indication is at 6 o'clock. The Dark Shadows is limited to 50 pieces and is priced at S\$139,300.

**5) H Moser & Cie's Perpetual Calendar Black Edition** is quite a departure for this brand, which is known for its classical designs. The complication, featuring a 40 mm titanium case that has been given a DLC treatment, is its first black timepiece – and also its first non-gold, non-platinum creation. The watch is fitted with an in-house hand-wound movement with seven days' power reserve. The price is S\$68,300.

**6) Zenith's El Primero Lightweight** chronograph stands out not only because of its colour, but also because it is light – it is 25 per cent leaner than previous El Primero models. Limited to 250 pieces, the chronograph combines a titanium and silicon automatic Zenith movement beating at a high 36,000 vibrations per minute. The movement is visible through an open dial that is held by an ultra-sporty black carbon 45 mm case. Price: S\$24,300.

**7) Blancpain's new Fifty Fathoms Bathyscaphe** is a diving watch that is water-resistant to a depth of 300 m. It is powered by a new automatic high-frequency movement which has a flyback chronograph function. The watch boasts a domed black dial and a tougher-than-steel liquid metal bezel, housed in a 43 mm black ceramic case. Price: S\$23,800.

**8) Panerai's Lo Scienziato Luminor 1950 Tourbillon GMT Ceramica** pays tribute to Galileo Galilei, the father of modern science whose formulation of the law of isochronism of the pendulum has made a big contribution to the development of mechanical time-keeping. This tourbillon-GMT complication is powered by a Panerai hand-wound movement housed in a 48 mm black ceramic case. Price: S\$227,000.