

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

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YOU ain't seen them all yet. This year, you are more likely – more so than any of the recent years – to have missed some of the key and worthy timepieces showcased in Geneva at the week-long Salon International De La Haute Horlogerie (SIHH) luxury watch fair – even though the fair opened its doors to the public for the first time. There are three main reasons for this. One, the mega annual exhibition held in January – once limited to journalists and buyers – let in the public on only one of its five days. Two, the media still largely zoomed in on only the “newsy” or “sexy” new watches. Three, even if the media had widened its coverage, there were too many nice and great watches to cope with this year.

For every key highlight of SIHH 2017 featured in newspapers, magazines and the Internet, at least another two or three new timepieces deserving of mention were passed over. Some of them are presented here:

1. Ulysse Nardin's Marine Tourbillon

This flying tourbillon with an enamel dial that costs just 28,000 Swiss francs – value for money for technical and artistic craftsmanship – has all the hallmarks that mould UN's identity: in-house production; technical avant garde; and rare artistry. At the heart of the 43 mm stainless steel timepiece is a UN-built automatic movement with a Silicium escapement and spring, offering added precision.

2. Drive de Cartier Extra Flat Cartier continues to expand its new men's line by adding an ultra-slim model that, at seven mm thick, is 40 per cent slimmer than the original model. The watch's 39 mm cushion-shaped case, the Drive's defining feature, is a touch smaller than the original 40 mm case. The Extra Flat comes in pink gold, price reportedly at S\$21,500, or in a limited edition of 200 pieces in white gold with a S\$23,000 price tag.

3. Richard Mille's RM 50-03 McLaren F1

A tie-up with famed F1 builder McLaren Honda, this timepiece is just under 40 g, which makes it the world's lightest split-seconds tourbillon chronograph. It is made from titanium, carbon and a new material known as graphene. Only 75 watches will be produced, and will sell for 980,000 Swiss francs each, minus tax.

4. Baume & Mercier's Clifton Club Shelby Cobra

This flying chronograph, in a 44 mm steel-titanium case, pays tribute to the American-built Cobra Daytona Coup, which won its first GT class World Sportscar Championship in 1965 and dominated the race track in 1964 and 1965 with record-breaking timings. The watch, limited to 196 pieces in recognition of the record speed set by the Daytona Coup, is a collaboration with Peter Brock, the car's designer.

5. Vacheron Constantin's Celestia Astronomical Grand Complication 3600

After unveiling the most complicated pocket watch over a year ago, the 262-year-old brand returned with an equally impressive – and colourful – collection of astronomical models. The stand-out piece is the Celestia Astronomical Grand Complication, a one-of-a-kind two-face grand complication that is the most complicated VC wrist-watch to date. It packs 23 complications in a white gold case only 45 mm in diameter and 13.6 mm thick. The watch, likely to cost over US\$1 million, displays civil, solar and side real time indications – thanks to an ingenious incorporation of three separate gear trains, one designed to emulate the Earth's rotation around the sun in actual time.

6. Parmigiani's Toric Chronometre

This high-precision timepiece is understated and streamlined in look. It was first introduced in 1966 and the first wrist-watch designed by the brand's founder, Michel Parmigiani. The latest model, in white and red gold, has been tweaked to sit more comfortably on the wrist.



7. Piaget's Altiplano Tourbillon High Jewellery

The brand's 60th anniversary collection is made up largely of old classics given a new coat of colours. This tourbillon is one of the few really new additions – and is the first tourbillon for a line which is famous for ultra-thin models.

8. Montblanc TimeWalker Chronograph 1000 18

This monopusher chronograph is a feat of horological engineering because it can record time to 1/1000th of a second. But the watch, which has a 46.4 mm titanium case and powered by a high-frequency movement, does not come cheap. Limited to 18 pieces, it retails at 175,000 euros.

9. Girard-Perragaux's Laureato Tourbillon

The Laureato line, defined by its octagonal case, was introduced in 1975. It made a comeback last year in a limited edition to mark GP's 225th anniversary. GP unveiled a full range for the line this year, led by the Tourbillon model. The tourbillon watch is powered by an automatic movement and has a 45 mm titanium case, with pink or white gold. Price: 95,400 Swiss francs (S\$135,468).

10. Jaeger-LeCoultre's Rendez-Vous Moon Medium

The brand rolled out its all-women Rendez-Vous line, which represents a marriage of its best in watch-making and artistry, in 2012. Among its latest additions is a moon-phase timepiece in steel, decked with diamonds on the bezel.

11. Roger Dubuis's Excalibur Spider Carbon

An ultra-light but sturdy tourbillon watch based on carbon and titanium, this striking red and black limited edition of 28 pieces is the first watch to have a movement plate, bridges and tourbillon upper-cage made from carbon – the very rigid T700 carbon, which limits vibrations and thus boosts precision. Housed in the 45 mm case is an “Astral skeleton” flying tourbillon movement with 70 hours' power reserve.

12. Panerai's LAB-ID Luminor 1950 Carbotech 3-days – 49mm

This innovative timepiece comes with a 50-year warranty – yes, 50 years – because it is powered by a carbon-based lubrication-free movement. Its 49 mm case is big even by Panerai's standards – its case is usually around 47 mm – but the limited edition of 50 timepieces, at 50,000 euros (S\$76,000) each, still rests lightly on the wrist, thanks to the ultra-light carbon material.

13. Audemars Piguet's Royal Oak Tourbillon Extra-Thin Openworked

It is a work of high complication and artistry. This new pink gold version, along with a stainless steel model, is the final model. The watch was first rolled out in 2011 in platinum to celebrate Royal Oak's 40th anniversary. Last year, it appeared in yellow gold. The latest pink gold model, limited to 50 pieces, is reported to be priced at about US\$220,000.

14. A Lange & Sohne's Zeitwerk Decimal Strike

The chiming complication makes time audible in a new way: its striking mechanism sounds every 10 minutes, or six times an hour – unlike an earlier Zeitwerk Striking Time, which strikes four times an hour. The watch comes in the exclusive honey gold, which Lange reserves only for very special models. The price is 120,000 euros.

15. IWC's Da Vinci Perpetual Calendar Chronograph

The best known piece of the Da Vinci collection is a 1985

perpetual calendar chronograph, a bestseller that set a new precedence for being an affordable double complications. The improved and larger update, in red gold (US\$40,200) and steel (US\$29,900), is just as competitively priced.

16. Van Cleef & Arpels' Automate Fee Ondine Extraordinary Object

A highly complex mechanism that animates various elements and tells time, this unique piece of work is the product of a collaboration between VCA and automaton maker Francois Janod, blending jewellery and watch-making. It shows movement and lightness, the beauty of nature, the grace of a fairy waking from sleep and the nuances of precious stones and enamel. ■

