



#NoFilter

A coloured strap is witty. It lightens the mood. And, if you get bored, you can change it. Whole new strap, whole new watch, whole new lease of life. Or buy one in every colour and do some watch-robbing. Ain't life grand? *AR*



1 GOLD, DIAMOND & LEATHER WATCH, £20,100, BY BVLGARI.
 2 STAINLESS-STEEL, DIAMOND, MOTHER-OF-PEARL & LEATHER WATCH, £8,550, BY IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN.
 3 STAINLESS-STEEL & LEATHER WATCH, £2,695 BY BREMONT.
 4 WHITE-GOLD, DIAMOND, SAPPHIRE, MOTHER-OF-PEARL & LEATHER WATCH, POA, BY BACKES & STRAUSS.
 5 ROSE-GOLD, DIAMOND & LEATHER WATCH, £23,100, BY CARTIER.
 6 ROSE-GOLD, DIAMOND, MOTHER-OF-PEARL & LEATHER WATCH, £14,900, BY WEMPE HELIORD BY KIM.
 7 ROSE-GOLD, DIAMOND & LEATHER WATCH, £32,820, BY PATEK PHILIPPE.
 8 WHITE-GOLD, RHODIUM-PLATED SILVER, DIAMOND, ENAMEL & LEATHER WATCH, POA, BY BOVET AT ASPREY.
 9 ROSE-GOLD & LEATHER WATCH, £9,170, BY CHOPARD.
 10 STAINLESS-STEEL, DIAMOND, MOTHER-OF-PEARL & LEATHER WATCH, £1,590, BY BAUME & MERCIER

MYTHICAL CREATURES

Van Cleef & Arpels

WIP-02 We are totally dazzled by the Midnight Nuit Lumineuse, *right*, POA. It has an adventurous dial set in a 42mm white-gold case and an automatic mechanical movement with retrograde hour indicator. But that's not even the main event. Thanks to something called Piezoelectricity – electricity generated from pressure – you can push a button and the constellation of Monoceros lights up. That's a glowing unicorn, for goodness' sake.

Highly commended Cartier

Meet the Dragon Mystérieux, POA – fabulous and formidable in equal measure. With a 23.77-carat cushion-fire opal for a head, a body of diamonds and white gold, a spine of onyx and emerald eyes, he's impressive and otherworldly. What's more, the watch's 9981 MC-calibre movement is set on two sapphire-crystal plates, so the hands seem to float as if by magic.

Highly commended Graff

OK, so butterflies aren't mythical. But this one kinda is – just take a closer look. The Princess Butterfly, POA, has wings that flutter (well, glide in and out) over a 17mm mother-of-pearl dial surrounded by diamonds. The diamond- and sapphire-set wings are trimmed with tapered baguettes, and the timepiece comes with either a buttery-soft satin strap or a bracelet of diamonds. Oof.



COLLABORATIONS

Jaeger-LeCoultre

WIP-03 Jaeger-LeCoultre is the first to admit that a collaboration with Christian Louboutin wasn't entirely obvious. However, the two maisons turned out to have a surprising amount in common and the fruit of their labours, the Reverso by Christian Louboutin, *left*, £7,950, is seriously good fun. Even buying one is rather jolly: swipe through endless personalised options on a touchscreen before ordering. They'll even email you all your attempts for posterity.

Highly commended Hublot

The mavericks at Hublot have managed to surprise us once again – the Big Bang Broderie Sugar Skull 41mm, from £10,200, is one heck of a watch. The face of rainbow-coloured threads woven onto silk by Swiss connoisseur of embroidery Bischoff is surrounded by 36 gemstones, depending on which case you've nabbed: red spinels to go with black ceramic, pink sapphires with steel or blue sapphires for rose gold. Nothing more to say, really.

Highly commended Raymond Weil

Can you imagine a better way to celebrate 40 years in the business than being serenaded by the biggest band ever? No? Nor can we. Cue the Maestro Beatles Limited Edition, £975, by Raymond Weil. This 39.5mm automatic has the titles of 12 of the 13 Beatles albums written around the dial, with a depiction of the iconic *Help!* album cover squeezed in at four o'clock. AND the Beatles' official logo is etched into the back.

REGAL

Breguet

WIP-04 The Perles Impériales, *below*, £81,200, deserves its own trumpet fanfare every time it enters a room. Adapted from a design originally made for Napoleon Bonaparte's sister Caroline, Queen of Naples, it looks like a crown when turned on its side. *We know...* It also has 24 round-brilliant diamonds and an akoya pearl around an engine-turned, mother-of-pearl face – think very royal wallpaper.

Highly commended Backes & Straus

What could be more regal than a collection of watches called Princeps, POA, that can be customised in every conceivable way? The ingenious – and patient – team at Backes & Straus will start right at the very beginning with endless sketches, culminating in whatever combination of jewels you choose. Eat your heart out, Marie Antoinette.

Highly commended

Mappin & Webb

Unsurprisingly, Royal Warrant holders Mappin & Webb are the purveyors of some very smart watches. The new Campaign automatic, £1,500, is perhaps the most aristocratic of them all: it is based on the types of watches British Army officers would have worn when serving in Africa at the end of the 19th century.



TATLER

BEST OF 2016

WATCH AWARDS

SOMETIMES YOU JUST NEED A WATCH WITH A THEME. WHETHER IT'S ROYALTY OR THE BEATLES, WE LOVE THEM, YEAH YEAH YEAH