



VACHERON CONSTANTIN
GENÈVE

Métiers d'Art Tribute to Explorer Naturalists

A creative odyssey in the company
of 19th century naturalists

13 September 2023

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Calibre 1120 AT/1

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- Vacheron Constantin is writing a new chapter in the Métiers d'Art collection with four Tribute to Explorer Naturalists ten-piece limited editions.
- An ode to exploration, craftsmanship and technicity, the series focuses on the scientific discoveries of the naturalists who travelled the world's oceans aboard the English ship *Beagle* in the early 1830s.
- Four horological *tableaux*, at the crossroads of science and art, masterpieces of engraving and miniature enamel powered by the iconic manufacture Calibre 1120 AT/1 with satellite wandering hours.

From Cape Verde to the Cape of Good Hope, via Tierra del Fuego and the Strait of Magellan, the Métiers d'Art Tribute to Explorer Naturalists collection is a new ode to exploration and scientific discovery, echoing the insatiable spirit of adventure that François Constantin himself displayed in his day. Passionately cultivated by the artisans of the Manufacture, this philosophy endures through generations, embodying a wealth of stories and emotions.



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Vacheron Constantin invites collectors to embark on the Beagle alongside the most illustrious 19th century naturalists. It comes after the 1994 Mercator model – in homage to geographer Geraldus Mercator, but also the Métiers d'Art Tribute to Great Explorers series revealed in 2021, and the Métiers d'Art Aérostars series in 2018 celebrating the conquest of the skies.

During their odyssey across the world's oceans between 1831 and 1836, these scientific explorers richly documented their discoveries. Fabulous tropical plants with shiny foliage, colourful birds of paradise, butterflies in exotic colours, groves of flowering and fruit trees along with a fascinating array of wildlife were observed at every stop on this long voyage. These discoveries gave rise to countless scientific, botanical and zoological engravings and drawings – some of which inspired Vacheron Constantin's Métiers d'Art Tribute to Explorer Naturalists collection – composing a delicately illustrated, refined and colourful account.

Vacheron Constantin tells the story of the journey through history offered by the Métiers d'Art collection, thanks to the combined talents of its artisans – engravers, enamellers, guilloché specialists and jewellers – that the Maison cultivates within its Manufacture, alternately mingling their skills to create dials that are like windows opening onto the world. Vacheron Constantin has opted to associate two crafts in making these new ten-piece limited editions. In addition to the high-precision dexterity of the master engraver who creates the curves and depth effects of the decoration with a touch accurate to the nearest tenth of a millimetre, the master enameller tames fire as well as pigments to compose miniature masterpieces with the tip of his brush. Four days' work are needed to bring to life each of the scenes unveiled in the heart of a 41 mm white or pink gold case whose silhouette – distinguished by an extremely slim bezel and screw-topped lugs – is inspired by the watches produced by Vacheron Constantin in the 1980s and 90s.





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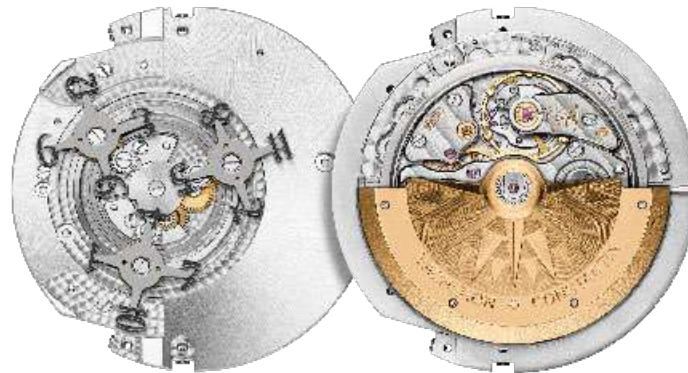
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To give free rein to the skills of its enamellers and engravers, Vacheron Constantin has once again opted for in-house self-winding Calibre 1120 AT/1. A guarantee of elegance on the wrist, this 5.45 mm-thick movement is distinguished by its slenderness, giving the gold case a streamlined silhouette measuring just 11.68 mm thick.

Thanks to its original construction and unique time display, the technical aspects are replaced by aesthetics, inviting the wearer to take a visual journey through the dial as the hours tick by. Concealed beneath the upper part of the dial, the hours wheel is equipped with three arms, each bearing four Arabics numerals in turn directed by a cam whose shape is inspired by the Manufacture's Maltese cross emblem. This ingenious and technical satellite module enables the wandering hours to sweep over the dial from top to bottom, along the fixed minutes track appearing over a 120° arc. In this way, the hours numerals travel across the dial adorned with artistic crafts, with their position indicating the minutes instead of a traditional hand.

The back of the movement is, as always, adorned with finishes paying homage to traditional High Watchmaking decorations, such as the Côtes de Genève guilloché pattern swept over by the 22K gold oscillating weight adorned with a compass rose.



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Métiers d'Art Tribute to Explorer Naturalists Cape Verde (January 1832)

At the heart of the 41 mm white gold 750/1000 case is a two-part tableau. On the upper part of the dial, engraving and enamelling combine in tracing the majestic silhouette of the *Beagle*. Viewed from its stern, the finely engraved gold ship with its billowing sails glides across a miniature-painted ocean. The lower part displaying the hours and minutes is graced with a naturalist scene in which bouquets of flowers burst forth and blossom in the shade of luxuriant foliage, reproduced by the enamelling artisan with infinite finesse and a captivating play on colours, while Calibre 1120 AT/1 reveals its secrets through a sapphire caseback aperture. This ten-piece limited edition is fitted with a blue Mississipiensis alligator strap secured by a white gold 750/1000 folding buckle.



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After several weeks at sea, the *Beagle* crossed the Strait of Magellan, discovered some 300 years earlier by the explorer whose name it bears. While the region was extremely remote, naturalists discovered abundant vegetation where palm leaves mingled with ferns, reproduced on the lower part of the dial. The colours have been carefully worked by the enamelling artisan over the course of several kiln firings to ensure the best possible match with the shade of pink gold from which the 41 mm case is sculpted. The upper part of the dial is graced with a fine white gold engraving depicting the *Beagle* sailing on blue-enamelled waves, while the sapphire crystal caseback reveals a continuation of the visual journey with the delicate finishing of Calibre 1120 AT/1. This ten-piece limited edition is paired with a blue Mississipiensis alligator strap secured by a pink gold folding buckle.





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Métiers d'Art Tribute to Explorer Naturalists Tierra del Fuego (1833–1834)

On Tierra del Fuego, the archipelago at the southernmost tip of the South American continent, the naturalists travelling aboard the *Beagle* discovered enchanting flora and fauna. Vacheron Constantin's artisans drew inspiration from a number of period engravings to create a picture to be explored from every angle. Housed in a 41 mm white gold case, the upper dial features an engraving depicting a 3D butterfly and two birds standing out against a background adorned with miniature paintings. On the lower part of the dial, an ancient terrestrial map of Tierra del Fuego is reproduced in miniature enamel, along with a windrose as a nod to the world of travel. Visible through the transparent back, Calibre 1120 AT/1 beats time. This ten-piece limited edition is paired with a green Mississippiensis alligator strap secured by a white gold folding buckle.





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Métiers d'Art Tribute to Explorer Naturalists Cape of Good Hope (May 1836)

Depicted on its way back to Europe, the *Beagle* skirts the African coast from the Cape of Good Hope. This legendary passage has been used by navigators since the late 15th century and can be seen on the miniature enamel maritime scene presented on the lower part of the dial. A close look reveals every detail of the *Beagle* depicted in this extremely fine decoration. On the upper part of the dial, the combined talents of the engraver and enameller create a landscape resembling a Garden of Eden, just as the naturalists observed when they stopped off at the Cape of Good Hope. The delicate plumage of the birds perched amid the foliage is matched by the languid silhouette of an iguana. A naturalistic scene to be discovered at the heart of the 41 mm pink gold case. The show continues on the other side with the meticulous finishing of Calibre 1120 AT/1, visible through the sapphire crystal caseback. This ten-piece limited edition is paired with a green Mississippiensis alligator strap secured by a pink gold folding buckle.





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Through the sensitive and delicate touch of its Master Artisans, Vacheron Constantin tells fascinating stories and invites aesthetic collectors on a new journey through time. Inspired by the scientific odyssey naturalists who boarded the English ship the Beagle in the early 1830s, the Métiers d'Art Tribute to Explorer Naturalists collection opens a new window on the world. Available in four ten-piece limited editions in pink or white gold, each 41 mm in diameter, the collection harmoniously blends the talents of the master engraver and the master enameller to provide an illustrated account of the naturalists' discoveries around the world. It is an epic journey through time, history and science, embarking collectors on a fantastic voyage from Cape Verde to the Cape of Good Hope, via the Strait of Magellan and Tierra del Fuego. Each timepiece is powered by the self-winding in-house Calibre 1120 AT/1 and paired with a *Mississippiensis* alligator strap.





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1/ Why choose these adventurers?

By definition, Vacheron Constantin's Métiers d'art collection showcases rare, ancestral craftsmanship techniques in the service of watchmaking masterpieces whose creativity demonstrates openness to the world. It's true that this open-mindedness is reflected in the brand's penchant for history and travel, and often in the themes that unite them, with "Les Aérostiers" or "Les Grands Explorateurs" for example. This choice of 19th-century "adventurers" aboard the Beagle therefore seemed to us to bring together all the ingredients needed to create a magnificent watchmaking fresco, what's more in a naturalistic context, another subject the collection knows how to delight in. Let's not forget that while the name of the Beagle may not be well known, Charles Darwin's 1839 book *The Voyage of the Beagle* is perhaps better known. It was thanks to this book that the naturalist became a household name, and today it finds a new echo on Vacheron Constantin watch dials.

2/ What are the challenges involved in building a dial for this collection?

The Métiers d'art collection is first and foremost about putting technology at the service of beauty. In other words, to use watch movements whose displays are arranged in such a way as to leave the dial free for maximum expression by the craftsmen. The Manufacture caliber 2460 G4/2 is one such movement, with hour, minute, day and date indications on discs, with apertures positioned around the periphery of the dial. The caliber 1120 AT/1 follows the same philosophy. But this extra-flat, 5.45mm-thick movement with trailing hours on an arched minute track requires a slot in the dial to allow rotation of the three hour satellites. The craftsmen in charge of the models in this new "Tribute to Explorer Naturalists" collection must therefore organize their compositions to take account of a break in the dial, which is therefore on two levels. This complicates the task, but in no way detracts from the splendor of these creations.

3/ Is a sequel planned, as with the great explorers?

On the face of it, I'd say that Charles Darwin and his companions won't have any watchmaking descendants at Vacheron Constantin. Not all Métiers d'art collections have several chapters, as is the case with "Copernicus sphères célestes" or the "Élégance sartoriale" series. But who knows? Perhaps 19th-century naturalism is enough of a theme to give craftsmen reason to be more interested in the voyage of the Beagle and Darwin's accounts of his discoveries and reflections, which led, twenty years later, to the theory of evolution. All in all, a rich and fascinating theme that makes for wonderful watchmaking stories.



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TECHNICAL DATA

Métiers d'Art Tribute to Explorer Naturalists

References	7500U/000G-B991: Cap-Vert - 1 7500U/000R-B992: Détroit de Magellan - 2
Calibre	1120 AT/1 Developed and crafted by Vacheron Constantin Mechanical, self-winding 22K gold oscillating weight with tapisserie decor 28 mm (1 1/2" diameter), 5.45 mm thick Approximately 40 hours of power reserve 2.75 Hz (19,800 vibrations per hour) 205 components 36 jewels Hallmark of Geneva certified timepiece
Indications	Dragging hours, minutes
Case	18K white gold / 18K 4N pink gold 41mm diameter, 11.68 mm thick Transparent sapphire crystal caseback Water-resistance tested at a pressure of 3 bar (approx. 30 meters)
Dial	18K white gold, two-level dial, Grand Feu miniature enamel Hand-engraved 18K white gold applique
Strap	Dark blue <i>Mississippiensis</i> alligator leather with alligator leather inner shell, hand-stitched, saddle-finish, large square scales
Buckle	18K white gold / 18K 4N pink gold buckle Polished half Maltese cross-shaped

Limited series of ten timepieces per reference.
Models available exclusively through the Vacheron Constantin Boutiques.



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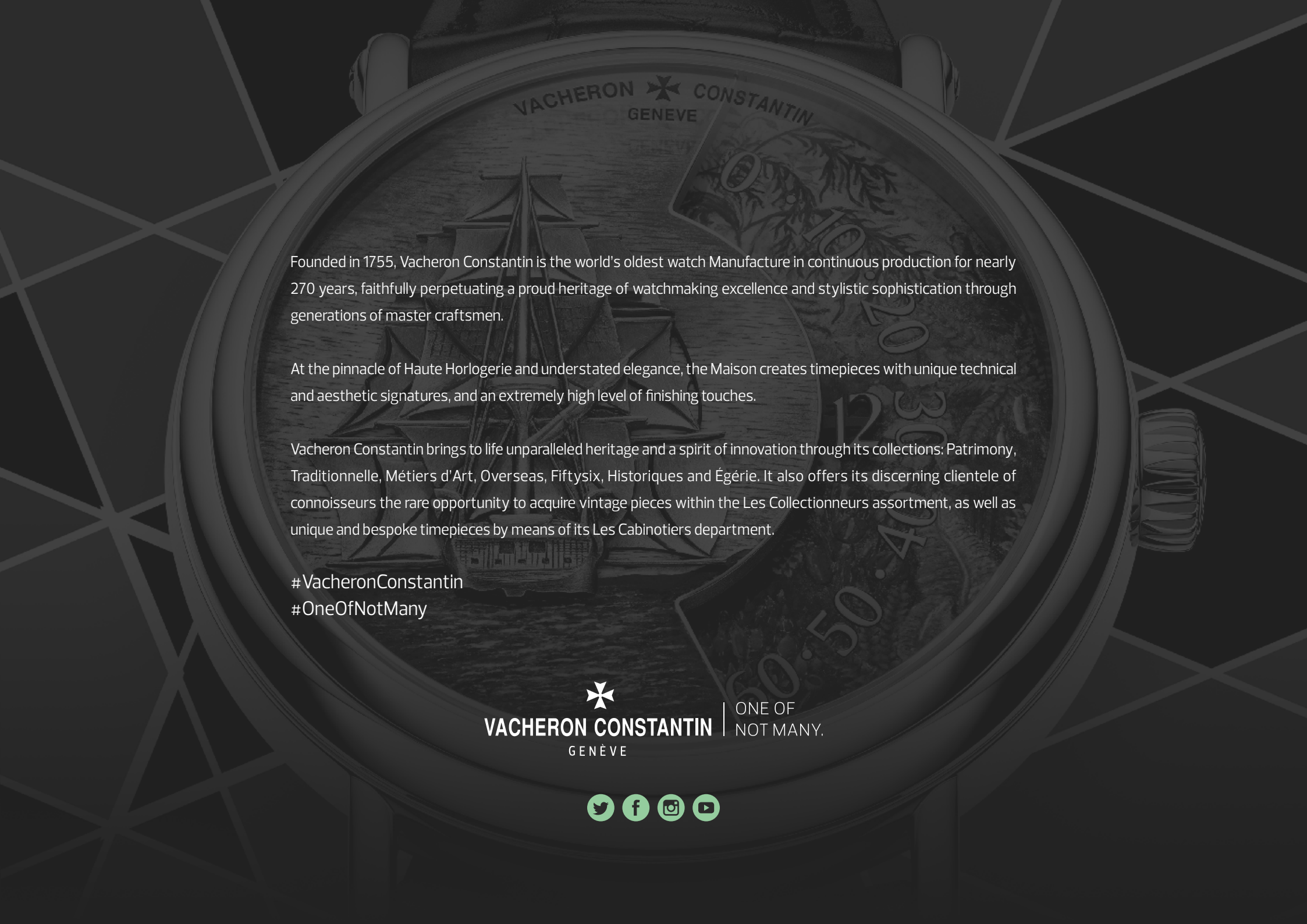
TECHNICAL DATA

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References	7500U/000G-B993: Terre de Feu - 1 7500U/000R-B994: Cap de Bonne-Espérance - 2
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Founded in 1755, Vacheron Constantin is the world's oldest watch Manufacture in continuous production for nearly 270 years, faithfully perpetuating a proud heritage of watchmaking excellence and stylistic sophistication through generations of master craftsmen.

At the pinnacle of Haute Horlogerie and understated elegance, the Maison creates timepieces with unique technical and aesthetic signatures, and an extremely high level of finishing touches.

Vacheron Constantin brings to life unparalleled heritage and a spirit of innovation through its collections: Patrimony, Traditionnelle, Métiers d'Art, Overseas, Fiftysix, Historiques and Égérie. It also offers its discerning clientele of connoisseurs the rare opportunity to acquire vintage pieces within the Les Collectionneurs assortment, as well as unique and bespoke timepieces by means of its Les Cabinotiers department.

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