



VACHERON CONSTANTIN
GENÈVE

Traditionnelle tourbillon

Artistic crafts paying tribute
to Chinese mythology

6 December 2022

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Heavenly choreography,
engraving and *guilloché* work

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- Fine watchmaking and artistic crafts unite in a timepiece available in three dial colours, each in a numbered 16-piece limited edition.
- Phoenix and dragon come to life in the form of sculpted 18K 5N pink gold appliques standing out against a hand-*guilloché* dial.
- The 41 mm case is adorned with intaglio engraved cloud-shaped volutes dotted across the bezel and lugs.

The Chinese legend of the Phoenix and the Dragon is graphically enacted on the dial of this new limited edition Traditionnelle tourbillon watch. At the heart of a finely engraved 18K 5N pink gold case, the legendary creatures take shape in the form of sculpted appliques on a hand-*guilloché* dial. The tourbillon is that of the ultra-thin Calibre 2160, an in-house movement equipped with a peripheral rotor.




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Legendary creatures

Forming the perfect couple and embodying the balance between strength and grace, the Phoenix and the Dragon have been intimately bound up with Chinese culture for centuries. Given their status as supernatural harbingers of peace and symbolic of blissful relations between husband and wife, any sightings of one or both through the ages were considered to herald a glorious period of peace and prosperity of the people and the country as a whole. This is reflected in the Chinese saying: *"When the dragon soars and the phoenix dances, the people will enjoy happiness for years, bringing peace and tranquillity to all under heaven."*

Although the details of their morphology vary from period to period, dragons are invariably composite creatures to symbolise the unity of power, featuring various body parts derived from snakes, alligators, lizards, carp, eagles and tigers. Inhabiting palaces beneath the oceans, dragons had the power to regulate the water essential for crops, ending droughts and stopping floods. Another supernatural 'spirit', the Phoenix – king of birds whose finery is inspired by the peacock, pheasant, parrot, duck, rock and crane – embodies the five essential virtues of benevolence, righteousness, prosperity, sincerity and wisdom.

Highly revered and much-loved, these fabled creatures have thus been subject of some of the most beautiful representations in Chinese mythology, where they are often seen dancing around a magic pearl, signifying harmony. As these legendary animals were considered auspicious, contemplating them could only be beneficial, while awaiting times of peace and prosperity. Images of the dragon and the phoenix appear on ceremonial jade ornaments and have been carved, painted or sewn into objects for everyday use – an artisanal custom that has been passed down through the ages.



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Vacheron Constantin honours these legendary creatures by giving free rein to its design workshop and its artisans to represent them.

The Traditionnelle tourbillon watch illustrates the dance of Phoenix and Dragon around the pearl, a distinctive cultural symbol of China. The finishing of the latter indeed evolved during the production process: the pearl was initially to be polished and the flames sandblasted, whereas in fact the opposite was done manually due to its extreme thinness (3/10 of a mm). This change served to endow the model with genuine radiance thanks to these animals. The two fabulous creatures are represented in the form of 18K 5N pink gold appliques that are stamped and then hand-finished using the pounced ornament technique that involves modelling with a scorper and then smoothing the reliefs with a file. Together, the fine details and precise operations used to represent the plumage of the phoenix with a rooster's head symbolising the Chinese empress; and the undulating body of the scale-covered dragon emblematic of the emperor, orchestrate a heavenly choreography. Thanks to the mobile tourbillon carriage shaped like Vacheron Constantin's Maltese cross emblem, the entire scene comes to life, with the regulator serving as a support for one of the dragon's legs, while the beating of the phoenix's wings appears to set the tempo.

Depending on the galvanic treatment applied to the hand-*guilloché* dial, it adopts a black, deep blue or silver-toned hue, giving impressive depth to this mythological scene.

On the bezel and lugs, the sky is symbolised by a succession of volutes, carved in bas-relief. This technique consists of removing material to highlight the contours of the sculpture. After drawing the motifs with a tracing point, the engraver works the decoration with a scorper, like a chasing operation that is ever-more refined as the tool becomes sharper. Volumes take shape, thanks to a delicate alternation of matt and glossy finishes.



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Operating at rate of 18,000 vibrations per hour (2.5 Hz) and positioned at 6 o'clock, the tourbillon – whose carriage bears the small seconds indication by means of a blackened screw – enlivens this 'carnival of the animals'. It can also be admired through the sapphire caseback without being concealed by the oscillating weight. The movement construction incorporates a peripheral rotor winding the barrel to ensure a comfortable 80-hour power reserve. The choice of the peripheral rotor also contributes to the slenderness of Calibre 2160 which, despite the presence of the tourbillon, is barely 5.65 mm thick.

This ultra-thin movement with its 188 components has made it possible to offer an 18K 5N pink gold case with a total thickness of 11.21 mm and a 41 mm diameter that is suitable for all wrists.

The finishing of Calibre 2160 offers the same high level of quality as the embellishment of the dial.

The bar of the tourbillon carriage is entirely hand-bevelled, as are the movement components. The mainplate is circular-grained on the dial side, while the bridges are adorned with *Côtes de Genève* on the back. Paired with a black, deep blue or brown alligator leather strap, depending on the model, secured a folding clasp and available in a limited boutique edition of 16 timepieces for each dial colour, this watch embodies a perfect symbiosis of artistic crafts and fine watchmaking.




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To honour the Chinese legend of the Phoenix and the Dragon, Vacheron Constantin presents three numbered limited-edition Traditionnelle tourbillon watches. The two fabulous animals are depicted in a traditional manner, beautifully choreographed in their dance around the pearl. Legendary creatures from Chinese mythology, the Phoenix and the Dragon symbolise strength and grace: a perfect complementarity that procures peace and happiness. On the dial of the three models, the Phoenix and the Dragon come to life in the form of pink gold appliques sculpted on a hand-*gulloché* dial. The galvanic dial treatment in black, deep blue and silver tones distinguishes the three versions of the model, each issued in a 16-piece limited edition. The 41 mm-diameter case in 18K 5N pink gold is engraved with cloud-like volutes on the bezel and lugs, which form a bas-relief motif on the case middle. In-house self-winding Calibre 2160 with tourbillon was chosen to enliven this mythological scene. Measuring just 5.65 mm thick thanks to its peripheral rotor ensuring an 80-hour power reserve, this ultra-thin movement with 188 components has made it possible to offer an elegant case with a sapphire back providing a view of the finishing details.




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TECHNICAL DATA

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References	6040T/000R-B959 6040T/000R-B960 6040T/000R-B961
Calibre	2160/1 Developed and manufactured by Vacheron Constantin Mechanical, self-winding, peripheral rotor 31 mm (1 3/8") diameter, 5.65 mm thick Approximately 80 hours of power reserve 2.5 Hz (18,000 vibrations per hour) 188 components 30 jewels Hallmark of Geneva certified timepiece
Indications	Hours, minutes, small seconds on tourbillon carriage (coloured screw) Tourbillon
Case	18K 5N pink gold 41 mm diameter, 11.21 mm thick Hand-engraved bezel and lug sides Transparent sapphire crystal caseback Water-resistance tested at a pressure of 3 bar (approx. 30 meters)
Dial	18K gold hand- <i>guilloché</i> , silver-toned / deep blue / black galvanic treatment Hand-engraved 18K pink gold applied phoenix and dragon
Strap	Brown/deep blue/black <i>Mississippiensis</i> alligator leather strap with alligator leather inner shell, hand-stitched, saddle-finish, large square scales
Clasp	18K 5N pink gold folding clasp Polished half Maltese cross-shaped

Limited Editions of 16 individually numbered timepieces.
Only available in Vacheron Constantin Boutiques.





Founded in 1755, Vacheron Constantin is the world's oldest watch Manufacture in continuous production for over 265 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 unique and bespoke timepieces by means of its Les Cabinotiers department.

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