



VACHERON CONSTANTIN
GENÈVE

Patrimony retrograde day-date

The art of equilibrium: minimalist design
meets watchmaking elegance

27 March 2023

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Overview

In the purest
Vacheron Constantin style

Salmon-coloured dial, a
Vacheron Constantin signature

In-House calibre 2460
R31R7/3, the essence of
Haute-Horlogerie

Summary

Christian Selmoni interview

Technical data

- A minimalist design inspired by special retrograde displays from the 1920s and 1930s.
- Understatement, harmony and elegance highlighted by the association between the platinum of the case and the salmon pink shade of the dial, a signature from the Maison.
- Calibre 2460 R31R7/3, a manufacture self-winding movement in the purest tradition of Haute Horlogerie.

At Vacheron Constantin, technique is consistently dedicated to serving elegance. Since its founding in 1755, the Manufacture has cultivated the refinement of its watches as an art form, corresponding to one of the Bauhaus principles holding that "less is more". This is reflected in the platinum Patrimony retrograde day-date with salmon-coloured dial. With its rare combination of retrograde complications evoking the iconoclastic displays of the 1920s and 1930s, this timepiece excels in its field.





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In the purest Vacheron Constantin style

Imagining a timeless style is a quest that Vacheron Constantin has been pursuing since its foundation, as is once again demonstrated by this new Patrimony retrograde day-date watch in 950 platinum with a salmon-coloured dial.

Heir to the grand stylistic and technical tradition of the Maison, this limited annual production timepiece reveals meticulous attention to detail in which the expression of minimalism is combined with technical excellence.

The 42.5 mm-diameter 950 platinum case frames a salmon-coloured dial with a sunburst pattern reflecting the codes of the collection. The purity of the design matches the model's mechanical and aesthetic sophistication.

Every detail is designed to reflect the aesthetic characteristics of Vacheron Constantin. Beneath the 12 o'clock hour-marker sits a faceted Maltese cross in relief, the emblem of the Maison. Crafted in 18K 5N pink gold, it features facets that are sandblasted on one side and polished on the other, offering a new expression of the Vacheron Constantin symbol specific to this signature platinum case and salmon-coloured dial. The two retrograde (day and date) indications are made with blued steel hands in keeping with tradition, while the hours and minutes are displayed by 18K white gold hands. In classic 1950s style, the latter are subtly curved to match the shape of the domed dial with its intense reflections. The circular-grained peripheral minutes track is also inspired by this era in a revisited version. From the very first glance, this timepiece embodies the refined style cultivated by Vacheron Constantin.



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The development of coloured dials – from the 1930s onwards – enabled a new style of elegance to be displayed on the wrist. Featured in Vacheron Constantin watches since the 1940s, salmon-coloured dials make an ideal match with cases in white metal: particularly steel, notably with the legendary chronograph Reference 4178; as well as platinum, with which it forms a rare combination sought after by collectors and devotees of rare models. The combination of platinum case and salmon-coloured dial was picked up in the 1990s, again in conjunction with complications, such as the classic chronograph Reference 47101 and the 1992 self-winding perpetual calendar chronograph Reference 49005.

This alliance between platinum and salmon is thus part of the Maison's heritage and since 2022 has been the sign of a new aesthetic that can be found across its various collections in limited annual production.

The spirit of the new Patrimony retrograde day-date thus draws its aesthetic and technical inspiration from tradition while revisiting it.





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SUNDAY
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TUESDAY
MONDAY

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1

SWISS MADE

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In-House calibre 2460 R31R7/3, the essence of Haute-Horlogerie

The Patrimony retrograde day-date is driven by in-house self-winding calibre 2460 R31R7/3 operating at a rate of 28,800 vibrations per hour. It is fitted with a 22K gold openworked oscillating weight with a design inspired by the Maltese cross emblem and has an approximately 40-hour power reserve. In the grand tradition of in-house calibres, the bridges are finished with hand-polished angles. Straight-graining, which consists of perfectly smoothing the component flanks, is also performed by hand, while the screws are meticulously polished. The mainplate is circular-grained on both sides, while the bridges are adorned on the back with the Côtes de Genève motif.





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With its original combination of retrograde complications evoking the iconoclastic displays of the 1920s and 1930s, the new Patrimony retrograde day-date in 950 platinum with a salmon-toned dial perpetuates a refined style. Elegance and technicality are highlighted by a dial colour exclusively associated with timepieces featuring a 950

platinum case in limited annual production and only available in Vacheron Constantin boutiques.

More info: https://youtu.be/o3plZx_zUfE



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Interview with Christian Selmoni

When did the first retrograde indications at Vacheron Constantin appear?

Even though the Manufacture has in-depth knowledge of its archives, it is possible that certain timepieces have not yet been discovered. That being said, the first wristwatch to feature a retrograde date was the Don Pancho, nicknamed by collectors after the person for whom it was commissioned. In 1935, the Maison received an order from Brooking, its official retailer in Madrid, for a wristwatch with functions that were previously reserved for pocket watches featuring complications: a minute repeater and calendar indications, with a retrograde hand. It took four years until 1940 to meet this order and deliver Reference 3620, now known as the Don Pancho: a tonneau-shaped wristwatch in yellow gold, distinguished by its crown at 12 o'clock and its minute repeater with deliberately low tones, activated via a right-hand slide piece. Don Pancho wore it for seven years and it then vanished for 60 years before reappearing in 2019 at Phillips, Bacs & Russo where it attracted the second highest bid ever for a wristwatch from the Maison. Another remarkable model unveiled in 1994 which highlights the craze for unusual dials is the Mercator watch. A tribute to the 16th century geographer Gérard Mercator, this creation features a double retrograde display of trailing hours and minutes on an enamelled or engraved dial. The positioning of the hand axis at 12 o'clock provides an ideal surface for expression on this model from the Métiers d'Art collection.



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Why is the Don Pancho so important in the history of Vacheron Constantin?
Aurel Bacs who auctioned it in 2019 explained it in very clear terms:

"The historical importance of this timepiece cannot be stressed enough. Made at a time when wristwatches with multiple complications simply did not exist, it is a technical feat and a masterpiece of human genius. The combination of a minute repeater and a calendar with retrograde date had never previously been seen in a wristwatch, and it would be nearly 60 years before we saw something similar."

Vacheron Constantin wristwatches with retrograde date made a comeback in the early 2000s with Reference 47245, presented to mark the 245th anniversary of the Manufacture and which featured a retrograde date but a day display via an auxiliary dial at 6 o'clock and a trailing hand. The system of displaying the date by retrograde hands offers advantages in terms of legibility but is technically very complex to implement. It was not until 2006 that the first double retrograde day-date wristwatch was produced, Reference 86020.



Christian Selmoni, Director of Style and
Heritage at Vacheron Constantin.



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TECHNICAL DATA

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Reference	4000U/000P-H003
Calibre	2460 R31R7/3 Developed and manufactured by Vacheron Constantin Mechanical, self-winding 25.6 mm (1 $\frac{1}{4}$ "") diameter, 5.4 mm thick Approximately 40 hours of power reserve 4 Hz (28,800 vibrations/hour) 276 components 27 jewels Hallmark of Geneva certified timepiece
Indications	Hours, minutes, retrograde day of the week and date
Case	950 platinum 42.5 mm diameter, 9.7 mm thick Transparent sapphire crystal caseback Water-resistance tested at a pressure of 3 bar (approx. 30 meters)
Dial	Salmon-coloured with sunburst finishing Convex external zone with external minute-circle composed of fine diamond-polished 18K white gold pearls 18K white gold applied hour-markers and hour & minutes hands Blued steel date and day hands
Strap	Dark blue <i>Mississippiensis</i> alligator leather with calf inner shell, tone-to-tone stitching, square scales
Clasp	950 platinum pin buckle Polished half Maltese cross-shaped

Available exclusively from Vacheron Constantin boutiques



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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#OneOfNotMany


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