



VACHERON CONSTANTIN

Manufacture Horlogère. Genève, depuis 1755.

Vacheron Constantin and the lady's watch A new chapter in a story of devotion

- Vacheron Constantin's expertise in watches for women dates from the early 19th century.
- In 2013, Vacheron Constantin dedicated most of its new watches to women.
- Three major collections, Patrimony, Malte and Métiers d'Art, encompass creations that have been entirely conceived and designed for women.

Vacheron Constantin's tradition as a producer of women's watches started with the 19th century, when the first pocket-watches especially made for women appeared. Although smaller than men's watches they were much more lavishly decorated and thus demanded skills in miniaturisation and decoration that only a few of the watchmakers of the time possessed. Vacheron Constantin was one of them. One of the first of the manufacture's women's watches was a quarter-repeater produced in around 1810 and which proves that watchmaking complications were not only for men.

It was an age when a lady was not expected to know the exact time, still less enquire of it in society. Vacheron Constantin therefore embarked on the creation of watches as real jewellery that came to symbolise the status of their owners. They were soon to become the indispensable accessory, worn chest high on a sautoir, hung on a chatelaine of keys, pinned to the dress or disguised as a brooch. Such objects stretched the imaginative capacities of the manufacture's craftsmen and women, not only the elite watchmakers but also the engravers, enamellists, engine-turners, jewellers and gem-setters as they strived to meet the expectations of their wealthy clients.

Diamonds, turquoises, rubies, pearls, onyx, garnets and many other precious stones were mustered to frame eye-glasses, create the petals and pistils of flowers, or bring glory to a miniature in enamels or a finely chased and engraved scene. The Vacheron Constantin manufacture, attentive to the slightest detail, then attached as much importance to the case and mechanism as to ensuring the perfection of the chains, sautoirs or brooches accessory to the watch. Gradually the precious and semi-precious stones were no longer confined to frames and outlines, but constituted a decoration in themselves, progressively covering the entire precious metal of the case or bracelet and bringing jewellery to the peak of sophistication. When platinum started replacing silver, even finer monograms and other engraved motifs became possible.



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A creative profusion of ladies' watches

The widows of Vacheron and Constantin took over control of the business in the 1870s. Although it was a critical period marked by economic crisis, the two women made an undoubted contribution to the development of the firm.

At the end of the 19th century, the wristwatch started to assert its claim as a legitimate and practical style. History tells us that it was initially designed for women before being adopted by men. Vacheron Constantin immediately appreciated the potential of the market for women's wristwatches. In 1889, it brought out a wristwatch for ladies that vindicated the manufacture's reputation for workmanship. It featured a revolutionary way of winding the watch and setting the time by simply turning the bezel, thus avoiding the need for a winding crown.

While it was launching its first wristwatches, Vacheron Constantin embraced the talents of one Ferdinand Verger, casemaker at the Place des Victoires in Paris. The partnership's multitude of designs combining mechanisms with gemstones helped revive the jewellery watch. Then the 20th century introduced a new style that set an even higher level of miniaturisation. The baguette watch, based on a calibre that Vacheron Constantin introduced in 1914, widened the artistic scope for jewellery watches while meeting the standard of precision promised by the brand. Even today, some models in the Kalla collection are fitted with Vacheron Constantin's calibre 1005 baguette movement, a direct descendant of those first baguette movements.

The Geneva style of watchmaking, ornate yet refined has never left the Maison. Contemporary fashions and artistic trends inspired a plethora of watches that today bear witness to women's emancipation and the scale of the 20th century's creative output. Some took the shape of the cameos that were fashionable from around 1900 to 1920; others came in a variety of forms: oval, octagonal or even a bowed rectangle. Vacheron Constantin's creations for women rejoiced in the freedom to astonish as the years went by, from sinuous Art Nouveau to geometrical Art Deco with watches that hung from cuff-links, bracelets in woven chain, linked rods or that wrapped thrice around the wrist, and straps of satin ribbon or leather.

Their pre-eminence is manifest from the numerous advertising campaigns featuring women from the 1940s to the 1980s.



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Dedicated collections

Today, Vacheron Constantin pays a new tribute to women. The 2013 vintage, presented at the Salon International de la Haute Horlogerie (SIHH) in Geneva, shows the brand's determination to dedicate their best work to women by combining the beauty intrinsic in artistic craftsmanship with the technical mastery of the mechanisms of time.

Three major collections each offer their own interpretation of time in the feminine gender. The Malte collection extends the celebration of its 100th anniversary with a seductive emphasis of its curvaceous case. Patrimony is home to original creations in the Contemporary and Tradition styles that extol the jewellery-making skills of the manufacture's gem-setters. Finally the latest opus of the Métiers d'Art collection, called *Florilège*, draws from ancient knowledge to steal a woman's heart with three outstanding models.

The Malte Lady devotes its curves to women

- Three new references for women.
- Graceful styling.
- Lit up by diamonds.

In 1912, an era of innovation and progress, Vacheron Constantin decided to make a break from the round case for watches and became one of the first watch manufacturers to produce the tonneau case. It became a fashion emblem as soon as it appeared, appealing to men as well as to the female gender. During the century it would play host to some of the most impressive watchmaking complications, notably in the Malte collection.

The Malte collection comprises only watches in this iconic shape. Today it adds another chapter to its century of history with new creations for women. Curvaceous and poised, it becomes an ideal celebration of feminine grace. Its clean and refined lines, demure in spirit, exude sensuality in a display of diamonds.

Three models dressed in pink or white gold signal their pedigree by focussing on the essential attribute: the appreciation of time, a loyal companion by day and a trusted confidante at night. In these models, the diamonds that highlight the curves of the case frame a paved tonneau of diamonds in the centre of the brushed silver-toned dial. Applied gold Roman numerals and the hands for the minutes and the hours radiate feminine charm in a discreet yet thoroughly modern style.

The new Malte Lady comes in a case measuring 28.30 x 38.75 mm, curved to hold the most delicate wrist, and which houses the calibre 1202 quartz movement. A leather strap from *Alligator mississippiensis* or a satin band make a ladylike connexion to the buckle in the shape of a half Maltese cross, which can be plain or set with diamonds.



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T ECHNICAL DATA

Reference	25530/000G-9741 25530/000G-9801 25530/000R-9802 Malte Lady
Caliber	1202
Energy	Quartz
Movement size	13.00 x 15.70 mm (5 ^{3/4} x 6 ^{3/4})
Movement thickness	2.10 mm
Jewels	4
Number of components	33
Frequency	32,768 Hz
Indications	Hours and minutes
Case	Diamond-set bezel (50 round-cut diamonds, approx. 0.96 carat) 18K white gold / 18K 5N pink gold 28.30 x 38.75 mm / 7.28 mm thick
Water resistance	Tested at a pressure of 3 bar (approximately 30 meters)
Dial	Silvered sand-blasted or Silvered sand-blasted with 18K gold diamond-paved center (142 round-cut diamonds, approx. 0.59 carat) 10 applied Bâton-shaped and 2 applied Roman numerals hour-markers in 18K white gold / 18K 5N pink gold
Bracelet	25530/000G-9741: blue <i>Mississippiensis</i> alligator, square scales, stitched-tip 25530/000G-9801 & 25530/000R-9802 : warm grey satin, stitched-tip
Clasp	25530/000G-9741: 18K white gold buckle 25530/000G-9801 and 25530/000R-9802: diamond-set buckle (21 round-cut diamonds, approx. 0.08 carat) in 18K white gold / 18K 5N pink gold