

The Modern Face of a Grand Tradition

A. Lange & Söhne is casting a traditional glance at its most advanced watch. An edition of the Lange Zeitwerk limited to 30 watches celebrates Saxon artisanship at its very finest. The special edition watches are available exclusively at A. Lange & Söhne boutiques.

Three years ago, A. Lange & Söhne presented the Lange Zeitwerk, the first mechanical watch that featured a constant-force escapement to achieve a precisely jumping numerals display. Since then, this winner of multiple awards has ranked among the brand's biggest successes. As a limited edition with the designation Handwerkskunst, the timepiece has risen to a new level: Exquisite case, dial, and movement decorations as well as a Glashütte lever escapement stand for the artisanal and horological proficiency of the Saxon manufactory. They constitute the tradition-steeped complement to the numerous technical innovations inside the exquisite masterpiece.

The dial in black-rhodiomed white gold is endowed with an elaborate tremblage engraving. The engraver manually guides a specially crafted lining burin across the surface in precisely choreographed multi-directional movements. This produces a delicate and highly vivid granular texture. A formidable challenge for the engravers: The curved A. Lange & Söhne logo and the filigreed lettering of the power-reserve indicator remain standing in sharply contoured relief. Decorated with linear graining, the time bridge in rhodiomed German silver contrasts with the dark dial. Used traditionally at Lange for frame elements such as bridges and cocks, German silver identifies it as part of the movement ensemble. Skilfully integrated in the dial, the time bridge embraces all time indications: the large white numerals of the hour and minute displays as well as the grey seconds dial in solid silver. The interaction of precious metals culminates with the platinum case. The A. Lange & Söhne signature, the case number and the edition serial number on the caseback are hand-engraved as well.

A glance through the sapphire-crystal caseback of the Lange Zeitwerk Handwerkskunst reveals the highly complex manufacture calibre L043.4, which apart from classic elements such as the three-quarter plate and screwed gold chatons also stands out with a kaleidoscope of artistic decorations: The three-quarter plate made of untreated German silver is endowed with a granular surface and hand-engraved lettering. The A. Lange & Söhne signature on the mainspring barrel is executed as a relief engraving. This technique requires the artist to chisel the motif out of the material, making it look as if it had been embossed. The balance and escape wheel cocks are also decorated with a special free-hand engraving. The upper side of the bridge for the constant-force escapement is embellished with black polish, the most elaborate and time-consuming finissage technique.

The Glashütte lever escapement pays special tribute to 19th century Lange traditions. Its lever and escape wheel are made of hardened 18-carat gold. The advantage of the material was its insensitivity to magnetic fields. The antimagnetic steel alloys commonly used today were not available then. The lever is designed to remain well balanced in any position. The pallets are concealed and slightly curved to reduce the friction between them and the escape wheel. Perfectly executed, all these subtle design characteristics contribute to provide the precision of the watch. It was an appealing challenge for the current generation of master watchmakers to resort to one of Ferdinand A. Lange's most important inventions.

The exclusive collector's item is limited to 30 watches that are distributed exclusively through the seven A. Lange & Söhne boutiques worldwide. The Lange Zeitwerk Handwerkskunst will be launched at Dubai Mall, one of the world's largest shopping venues, when Lange's latest boutique is inaugurated there on 26th September 2012.

About A. Lange & Söhne

With the establishment of his manufactory in 1845, the Dresden watchmaker Ferdinand A. Lange laid the foundation for Saxony's precision watchmaking industry. His precious pocket watches remain highly coveted among collectors all over the world. After the comeback in 1990 by his great-grand son Walter Lange, Lange crafts today only a few thousand wristwatches in gold or platinum per year. They are endowed exclusively with proprietary movements that are lavishly decorated and assembled by hand. In a period of little more than 20 years, A. Lange & Söhne developed more than 40 manufacture calibres and secured a top-tier position among the world's finest watch brands. Its biggest successes include innovative timekeeping instruments like the LANGE 1 with the first outside date in a regularly produced wristwatch as well as the LANGE ZEITWERK with its perfectly legible, precisely jumping numerals: both have become icons of the venerable brand.