

The new Blancpain tourbillon thinks big

Blancpain values are based on a process of perpetual renewal by pushing the boundaries of watchmaking and constantly improving horological complications. Two centuries after the invention of the tourbillon and 25 years after the creation of Calibre 23, the world's first and thinnest hand-wound flying tourbillon, Blancpain reinterprets and further refines this complication designed to break free of the effects of gravity and currently representing one of the masterpieces of traditional horology.

Developed in the watchmaking workshops of the Manufacture, as indeed are all Blancpain movements, the new Calibre 242 takes things to a new level by further improving on the record-breaking autonomy of Calibre 25 unveiled in 1998: the world's first self-winding tourbillon with an 8-day power reserve. The new self-winding tourbillon movement has an exceptional 12-day power reserve guaranteed by a single barrel. Comprising 243 parts united within just a space just 6.10 mm thick and 30.60 mm in diameter, it is equipped with a silicon balance-spring and pallet-fork horns in order to alleviate the effects of magnetic fields.

For this new model, Blancpain has applied its technical expertise to serving aesthetic elegance. Each detail of the movement has been designed to highlight the decoration visible through the sapphire crystal. The automatic winding mechanism and the power reserve have been integrated so as to create a thin movement. The oscillating weight has also been entirely openworked and the "kerbs" have been eliminated so as to provide a broader space for decoration. The bridges and power-reserve disc are entirely decorated with a hand-guilloché motif – an ancestral skill calling for meticulous and accurate execution; while the ratchet-wheel features a bevelled wheel-rim design.

On the dial side, the off-set tourbillon carriage at 12 o'clock has been enlarged to offer a perfect view of the new design of the balance and the escape-wheel. This being a flying tourbillon, the carriage has no upper bridge and thus provides an unobstructed view of this complex mechanism. It rotates once a minute in order to compensate for the effects of gravity. Reflecting the Villeret collection identity, the dial and the painted Roman numerals are in *grand feu* enamel, gracefully swept over by hollowed sage leaf-shaped hands.

This timepiece with its double stepped 42 mm case is available in a limited numbered platinum edition. It also comes in 18K red gold teamed with a chocolate brown alligator strap lined with alligator calfskin and secured by a triple-blade folding clasp.