

Time still stands

Our love obsession with time – the one thing we can't control – continues strong into 2023; and only the finest timepieces will do for the billionaires of this world

As luxury items go, watches seem to be a favourite among the rich and famous, as they not only serve a function but provide some pretty hot bling on the red carpet, on screen or even for an outing to the grocery store. Celebs love to flaunt their incredible timepieces, whether it be a Rolex, Paté Philippe or a simple black Casio.

Here are five of the world's most expensive watches, both pocket timepieces and wrist adornments.

BREGUET MARIE-ANTOINETTE GRANDE COMPLICATION POCKET WATCH

At a staggering cost of US\$30 million, this 18th Century piece was commissioned for the lover of

French Queen Marie-Antoinette. The pocket watch has a rotating bezel, with a display that shows off the mechanics under the surface, highlighting the gold that replaced other metals wherever possible, at the request of the queen's lover. He also asked that the watch be as complicated as possible, using as many different auxiliary mechanisms as possible.

Marie-Antoinette never got to see the timepiece, as it wasn't finished until 1827, 34 years after her execution and four years after Breguet himself had passed away. The history of the watch has been tumultuous, with a theft from a museum in the 80s and a restoration to its final resting place at the Mayer Museum in 2008. breguet.com

CHOPARD 201-CARAT WATCH

This wrist watch is almost entirely encrusted in diamonds, multi-coloured, some as large as 15 carats, with even the watch face embedded with the precious stones. ►

Below: The Henry Graves Supercomplication Handmade watch by Patek Philippe, which was completed in 1932





The watch was originally crafted in 2000, with gleaming white gold and yellow gold hardware, but one of the draws of this incredible piece is that it passes for a diamond-studded bracelet but reveals a secret. The centre-piece is revealed by pressing the spring-loaded mechanism, which releases the three heart-shaped diamonds, one pink, one blue and one white, opening like a flower. Three yellow pear-shaped diamonds adorn the watch face that hides underneath. The total number of diamonds on the watch comes to a whopping 874, many of which are several carats each. This brings the total cost of the piece to around US\$25 million, giving it a well-earned second place on this list. chopard.com

Above: Rolex on Paris' Champs Elysees and 'Billionaire II'; the ultimate testament to Jacob & Co's watchmaking and gem-setting experience
Right: Paul Newman's 'Paul Newman' Rolex Daytona sold for \$17.8m; a wristwatch record in 2017

PATEK PHILIPPE HENRY GRAVES SUPERCOMPLICATION

The 24 complexities on this iconic timepiece earns it the title of supercomplication, and while it's third on the list for most expensive, it has the record for the most anyone has literally paid for a watch. In 2014, this Patek Philippe watch was sold at Sotheby's auction for around US\$24 million, after its repossession by Sotheby's in 2010.



In addition to the story of its recent auction, this watch has many other amazing features. It held the title for most complicated watch until 1989 and is crafted from yellow gold, with the mechanical movement inside a product of the three stacked layers, or tiers. This resulted in a two-sided pocket watch with indicator dials on each face. patek.com

THE ROLEX DAYTONA OF PAUL NEWMAN

This watch may be the anomaly on the list, given its initial worth



of only around US\$200 in 1984 when it passed from Paul Newman's hands to a personal friend. Of course, what makes this watch worth so much money is its history. It has a dial design that has been dubbed 'exotic' and a cream and black face, but its real draw card comes from the story behind the watch. Paul Newman was known for his love of motor sports, though he was an actor by trade, and people noticed when he began wearing his 1968 Rolex Daytona, gifted to him by his wife. The inscription on the back reads 'DRIVE CAREFULLY', signed 'ME', and he wore the watch so often, his name was added to its title. These details are what caused the watch to be sold at auction in 2017 for US\$15.5 million. rolex.com

A BILLIONAIRE'S WATCH FROM JACOB & CO.

The title of this wrist watch gives an immediate idea of how luxurious it must be, and the reality of the timepiece does not disappoint. To start with, this diamond bezel measures 177 carats between the 325 emerald-cut stones that make up its length. The skeletonised face shows off the inner workings of the watch, with the hands a bright cobalt blue and a rose-cut ruby decorating the crown.

Worth around US\$11 million, the watch's bracelet is made up of six links, joined expertly to allow for increased flexibility and the best fit possible. The hour markers are set with 12 diamonds in lieu of number, set into the flange frame, making for a stunning sight as the light sparkles in each of the 326 stones that are a part of this watch.

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