

# WHY THIS WATCH COSTS \$1.85 MIL

Richard Mille's new RM 56-01 flaunts a case made entirely of see-through sapphire crystal, part of a wave of uncommon materials transforming timepieces *By Laurie Kahle*

**MORE PEEKS INSIDE**

The watch is a successor to last year's Richard Mille show-stopper, the RM 56 Tourbillon Chronograph, but takes the reveal even further. Scratch-resistant sapphire crystal is used for the baseplate, central bridge and the third wheel within the manually wound movement, shedding new light on the skeletonization. Available at Richard Mille Beverly Hills and Cellini New York.



**CRYSTAL CLEAR CASE**

The three pieces that make up the innovative case of Richard Mille's new RM 56-01 Sapphire Crystal are each honed from a single block of luminous sapphire crystal, a process that takes more than 40 days with special machines operating 24 hours a day; \$1.85 million in a limited edition of five.

**THE TECH SPECS**

In addition to a mesmerizing, spinning tourbillon, the watch displays the movement's power reserve, which tops out at about 70 hours, and the torque level, which indicates the amount of tension in the mainspring. A push of the button in the center of the crown lets you select between winding, neutral and setting functions.

**SEE-THROUGH WRISTBAND**

Silky and supple, the RM 56-01's elastic, waterproof strap also marks a technical milestone with the debut of Mille's proprietary Aerospace nano material, named for the nanotechnology used to develop it. Brand fans include Jackie Chan and Jay-Z, who name-checked Richard Mille on the *Watch the Throne* album.



Timberlake



Butler



Florence

**1 A NEW KIND OF GOLD**

Seeking to enrich noble gold with durability, Hublot developed its patented Magic Gold alloy, which encases its Big Bang Ferrari Magic Gold. Heat and pressure are applied to infuse ceramic with molten 24-karat gold for a material that's about twice as hard as stainless steel. **Justin Timberlake** is an Hublot fan; \$36,700, at Hublot boutiques.

**2 LIGHT BUT TOUGH SILICON**

In January in Geneva, **Gerard Butler** unveiled Roger Dubuis' Excalibur Quattro, the first watch with a silicon case — half the weight of titanium and four times as hard. Four sprung balances (instead of the usual one) minimize the effects of gravity on timekeeping; edition of three, \$1.1 million, at Milano Bijoux, L.A., and Cellini, NYC.

**3 FORMULA 1 RACING MATERIALS**

IWC's partnership with the Mercedes AMG Petronas team fueled the new Ingenieur line, including the Perpetual Calendar Digital Date-Month with a case of titanium aluminide and zirconium oxide, substances found in F1 cars. TV chef **Tyler Florence** wears IWC; \$26,400, at IWC boutiques.