

IN FOCUS

(MARI)TIME NEWS | MONTBLANC UPDATES THE MARINE CHRONOMETER FOR BOTH YACHT AND WRIST
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While modern explorers need only to check in with a satellite to determine their exact location, historical navigators had to rely on high-precision clocks called marine chronometers and an understanding of spherical trigonometry. In 1737, English clockmaker John Harrison collected a prize for devising a reliable timekeeping system that mariners could use to determine their longitudinal positions by calculating the time difference between the ship's local time and the time in a fixed place, such as their homeport.

Harbormasters around the world maintained accurate regulator pendulum clocks that a captain could use to synchronize with a portable ship's chronometer to track home time throughout a voyage.

Montblanc tapped into this maritime history as it sought a new concept for its patented emergency power reserve movement introduced in 2009. But rather than create a classical timepiece paying homage to tradition, Montblanc's Régulateur Nautique chronograph ventures into contemporary design territory. Its distinctive modern aesthetic also guided the creation of its companion marine chronometer built by Munich-based clock manufacturer Erwin Sattler. The partners will produce 16 sets, priced at \$387,500 each.

"In Villeret, we always safeguard traditional elements of watchmaking, but we wanted to give this watch a technical, almost contemporary, look," explains Alexander Schmiedt, director category management watches for Montblanc International, alluding to the watch's partially open dial that reveals the movement's inner workings, including the bridge of the distinctive power reserve.

Rather than the typical single-hand indicator for the power reserve, Montblanc adds a second "emergency" hand (in red) that emerges when your watch reaches the last 12 hours of power

Montblanc Régulateur Nautique wrist chronometer chronograph

to alert you that immediate winding is needed to avoid a loss in accuracy. "It is like an emergency power reserve in your car executed in an innovative way using traditional watchmaking mechanics," says Schmiedt. "In the last 12 hours, the torque gets lower and precision is less optimal. The idea is especially relevant for the marine clock, which must run precisely."

Evoking the set's historical inspiration, the monopusher column-wheel chronograph features a regulator dial with a central minutes hand, a separate hours subdial at 12 and another subdial displaying the seconds, plus dual time



The Régulateur Nautique timepiece set, \$387,500

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zones that allow jetsetters to keep track of home time and local time like their ancient mariner forebears. The unusual dial layout displays these functions plus a winding-zone display on multiple levels with some indications appliquéd on the dial while others are inset.

Made from brass, aluminum, carbon fiber and steel, the navigational clock mirrors the watch's design, but with three time zones on its main regulator dial in addition to a world-time function. Standing at about 3 feet tall on a granite base, the clock, which also stores the watch, is designed with a cardanic suspension system that maintains both timekeepers in a horizontal position even in rolling seas. "So, you have a marine chronometer for your boat, and when you go to port to have a drink, you have a marine chronometer for your wrist," says Schmiedt. Although, with the clock weighing in at more than 260 pounds, you may need a bigger boat.

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