



Technical Specs

Model: Ref. 250 84 10

Movement: Calibre 846; 21,600 vph; 93 parts; manually wound

Functions: Hours, minutes

Power reserve: 42 hours

Case: Steel; reversible; over 50 parts



Cartier Santos 100

Like the Reverso, Cartier's Santos has both a long history and a sporting heritage; the subject of sensitive updating by its maker, preserving its square shape with rounded corners, and screws through its bezel - a detail copied to great effect in the 1970s by Gérald Genta for the Audemars Piguet Royal Oak. To mark its first century in 2004, Cartier upsized the Santos, keeping its looks while making it more appealing in an era where 40 mm watches are considered 'mid-sized'. Without an object nearby to betray its size, the Santos 100 (from £2,500) is a dead-ringer for the original. We like the all-steel W20073X8 housing the Cartier 049 self-winding calibre and offering water-resistance to 100m. If something more dressy is required, Cartier offers all-gold and gold/steel variants. And the most pleasant surprise of all? The Santos looks and feels even better in its modern, larger form.

Rolex Prince

Unlike Jaeger-LeCoultre and Cartier, Rolex has a peculiar take on its heritage. It seems as if the Giant of Geneva has a marked abhorrence for anything that smacks even slightly of 'retro'. So you can imagine the sense of a bombshell dropping at the 2005 Basel fair when Rolex announced the return of the Prince (yellow-gold ref. 5440/8 pictured; £6,740). Over the decades since its demise, this rectangular model had become one of the company's most coveted Rolexes, among the more discerning collectors. But the new line bears only one thing in common with its predecessors: a rectangular outline. That's it. Inside is a magnificent, all-new manual-wind movement, visible through a crystal caseback, which is unusual for Rolex. Outside, four cases and dials that address the watch's roots, but only in their deference to the art deco styling of the original's era. With order books already overflowing, expect Rolex's revived Prince to be among the hottest watches of 2006. Oh, and *QP* uncovered a teensy scoop: there's reason to believe that the UK production versions will *not* bear the 'Cellini' label. Thank goodness.

Modern Classics: Jaeger-LeCoultre Reverso

i Permanently situated in the pantheon of all-time greats - for its originality, its iconic status *and* its longevity - is Jaeger-LeCoultre's Reverso. It is not so much a watch as a tradition, and it keeps company with very few other timepieces, for only a few can boast the same achievement: Patek Philippe's Calatrava, the Cartier Tank, Breitling's base-model Navitimer and certain Rolex Oysters such as the Submariner. That's pretty much it - the most exclusive club in horology. And don't even think of applying for membership before you reach your 50th birthday.

Ken Kessler

We're only a year away from the Reverso's 75th Anniversary, born as it was in 1931 and we expect Jaeger-LeCoultre to announce something very special at this year's SIHH in Geneva. But it was the 60th birthday, occurring precisely at the dawn of The Great Mechanical Wristwatch Revival of the 1990s, that brought the watch back - not just in all its swivel-hipped glory, but as a whole family of watches.

Jaeger-LeCoultre, one of the industry's true *manufactures* before the term became a form of validation, developed its most famous model in response to the demands of the 'sporting gentlemen'; to protect its timepieces in a decade that, irrespective of the Great Depression, was notable for the exuberance of the wealthy. Although Incablock shock-resistance was two decades away from commercial viability, there were still concerns to attend to beyond the security of the movement *per se*. What Jaeger-LeCoultre addressed was the matter of protecting its clients' watch crystals during sport; specifically, "to meet the sporting requirements of British officers serving in India by standing up to the hard knocks involved during their polo matches." The Le Sentier watchmakers developed a rectangular watch case that the owner could flip over on a cradle, to protect the glass and, by extension, the dial and hands. It was so simple and so clever that it was embarrassing. Inevitably, other brands made their own flip-over watches, but the Reverso was the first and remains

the best. An added benefit emerged when it became apparent that the caseback was an ideal place to engrave a coat-of-arms or family crest, initials or other personal symbols. In recent years, Jaeger-LeCoultre has taken this a stage further by offering the services of its master enamellers to Reverso owners.

Since its rebirth, the Reverso alone has repositioned Jaeger-LeCoultre as one of the most desirable names to wear on your wrist. The company has created a vast range, encompassing everything from small ladies' quartz models to assorted mechanical models with dedicated, fitted movements, to limited editions bearing all manner of complications. For the purist though, the basic men's 'Classique' model in steel (£2,510) will suffice.

Despite celebrity endorsements ranging from Pierce Brosnan in *The Thomas Crown Affair* to Christian Bale in *Batman Begins*, just one fact supports the argument that the Reverso is the first watch to receive iconic adulation in the post-quartz era: it is, to the best of my knowledge, the first individual model - rather than a whole brand - to inspire and justify a massive, episode-laden, data-rich history. In 1991, before similar tomes charted the sagas of Rolexes, the Omega Speedmaster Pro, the Panerai, the Cartier Tank and others, *Reverso - The Living Legend*, by Manfred Fritz, was published. That's not just momentous: that's seriously cool. **o**

Further information: Jaeger-LeCoultre UK, Tel: 0800 587 3420, www.jaeger-lecoultre.com