

# THE TEST OF TIME

Since it was founded in 1858, Vulcain has honed its reputation as a manufacturer of hand-made luxury watches. Although steeped in history, Vulcain watches continue to be ground-breaking when it comes to both technology and style **Dan Zeller**

In the mid-19th century, the Ditisheim brothers' workshop – which was to give rise to the Vulcain brand – immediately earned itself an enviable reputation through its award-winning complication watches. Almost a century later, Vulcain launched the first ever mechanical alarm movement, which soon achieved worldwide fame. The idea of incorporating an alarm within a watch was not entirely new, but no watchmaker had ever succeeded in developing a standard-size movement capable of producing a sound powerful enough

to awaken its owner. In rising to this challenge, Robert Ditisheim called upon the talents of the finest watchmakers and engineers. After five years of research and development, he presented the famous mechanical hand-wound Cricket Calibre, equipped with two barrels, one for the movement and the other for the alarm, emitting a strident sound reminiscent of the shrill chirping of a cricket – hence its name. The legendary Cricket Calibre also found its place in the history books as “The Presidents’

Watch,” since numerous American heads of state – including Dwight Eisenhower, Harry Truman, Richard Nixon, Lyndon Johnson and even Barack Obama – all wore a Vulcain on their wrist, a fact that earned the brand its reputation.

Conquering the highest and the lowest

Beyond the brand's prestige, the technical qualities of Vulcain watches stood up to the toughest conditions and appealed to explorers and adventurers. As of the 1930s, the brand's marketing representatives placed their watches on the wrists of seasoned athletes. In addition to soccer, Vulcain set its sights on both the heights and the depths.

To celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Italian Mountaineering Club in 1954, a team of 14 alpine mountaineers vowed to be the first to conquer K2, the mythical Himalayan peak. Under the leadership of geology professor Ardito Desio, 700 porters transported over 13 metric tons of equipment to the base camp at an altitude of 5,000 meters. On July 31, 1954, the roped party of Uno Lacedelli and Achille Compagnoni, accompanied by their Cricket watches, reached 8,620 meters. Only Everest is higher.

Vulcain watches also mastered the Earth's lowest depths. The only alarm watch in the world that works underwater owes a great deal to the exploits of an extraordinary man,

The Vulcain sailboat in the Bol d'Or Mirabaud Regatta on Lake Geneva

Hannes Keller. Since his basic training days, this Zurich resident had a passion for diving. It was one of his military friends who showed young Keller the beauties of the underwater world. In 1959, Vulcain's directors got wind of Hannes Keller's repeated exploits and decided to perfect a watch that would accurately indicate the decompression stops. The famous Nautical was born. Additionally, its chime could be heard very well underwater, an obvious plus in the darkness of the ocean depths.

When he first attempted to reach a depth of 155 meters in Lake Maggiore, using a revolutionary mixture of gases concocted by a professor from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich and greatly shortened decompression times, Keller did not attract any crowds –

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only one journalist was present. But the news was heard around the world. More than 500 press articles mentioned it and the newsreels brought the diver instant fame. Keller later beat his own record near Catalina Island, off the coast of Los Angeles. On December 2, 1962, he descended to a depth of 315 meters.

Having Keller as its standard-bearer was an extraordinary success for Vulcain. The Nautical Heritage is a reminder of this achievement; there was a limited edition of 1961 watches. Sporty and elegant, timeless and traditional.

Preserving traditions

Vulcain upholds its past by continuing to manufacture watches using the traditional mechanical mechanism. Master craftsmen assemble by hand only 6,000 pieces a year. The brand puts a great deal of emphasis on the quality of the parts, the high level of its workmanship and preserving its traditions.

“Vulcain is a boutique house which manufactures watches by hand,” notes Dror Schneider, CEO of D.H. Schneider International Trade Ltd., exclusive importers of the Vulcain brand to Israel. “These watches suit those who are looking for a luxury watch that few others own. Vulcain watches have a mechanical alarm and a classic, conservative style. They come with a two-year international warranty, and in Israel we have a complete lab that provides comprehensive service to Vulcain owners.”

Vulcain offers a range of different styles: aviator watches, complication watches, retro diving watches, women's lines and, of course, its iconic Cricket models. The watches are available in a range of preferences, such as stainless steel or pure gold, with or without chronographs, etc.

The Vulcain Cricket Aviator GMT continues to be cherished by travelers, since it shows the time all over the world. No matter where you are heading for – Sydney, Moscow, Paris or the summit of K2 – local time can be seen at a glance thanks to the additional 24-hour display.

\* Vulcain watches are imported to Israel exclusively by D.H. Schneider International Trade Ltd. and are available at: JWH in Ramat Aviv, Müller in Haifa, Danny Eliav Jewelry in Jerusalem, Rolex Show in Eilat, and Shagal in Herzliya. [www.vulcain.co.il](http://www.vulcain.co.il)

