

# VASCO DA GAMA

## *An Obsession with Precision*

The early explorers traversed the world's uncharted territories on land and at sea, with only the sun, the stars and the most rudimentary of instruments to guide them. Inspired by Vasco da Gama, Montblanc's latest watch collection honours and celebrates the spirit of adventure and discovery in all of us. Portuguese explorer, Vasco da Gama was the first European to reach India by sea, a feat that linked Europe to Asia by ocean route for the first time. On the 8th of July 1497, he departed Lisbon's Restelo harbour aboard the Sao Gabriel, with the intention of discovering a southern seaway to India. His successful voyage was all the more remarkable, because neither accurate chronometers nor reliable sextants had been invented at the time, and there were no accurate charts for the South Atlantic Ocean. His discovery had a far reaching impact, and opened the way for an age of global imperialism and for the Portuguese to establish a long-lasting colonial empire in Asia. No longer would his countryman suffer the high cost of importing valuable spices such as pepper, or precious stones. His discovered route enabled them to bypass the Arabian, Persian, Turkish and Venetian middlemen and fortified Portugal as a seafaring and trading nation. Along with Portugal's best helmsmen and finest navigators aboard their fleet of four ships, da Gama relied on primitive navigational instruments such as the nocturlabium or "star clock",

which was a predecessor of the sextant, and the Jacob's staff. The stars above his masts served as the only reliable map for navigation on the high seas. Historical documents reveal that the Southern Cross, with its four bright stars - Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta - was particularly helpful in guiding him to his destination. This constellation forms a celestial crucifix traversed by the pale band of the Milky Way. If you begin with the longer axis of the Southern Cross and continue in the direction its longer leg for a distance equal to four-and-a-half-times the length of this longer axis, you arrive at the South Celestial Pole. If you then imagine a vertical line descending from that point to the horizon, the two lines will intersect at the Earth's geographic South Pole. The fleet reached Saint Helena Bay on the southwest coast of Africa on the 4th of November 1497, and several days later, sailed in a large arc around the Cape of Good Hope, landing in Mosselbaai on the 25th of November. Vasco da Gama and his crew finally reached India at a point near Calicut, on the Malabar Coast, on the 20th of May, 1498. For the first time ever, European sailing ships had voyaged to India via a sea route around the Southern tip of Africa. Like all great explorers, the success of this important expedition, can ultimately be credited to its commander's courage, thirst for action, willingness to take risks and, above all, his obsession with precision.

Photo: © Montblanc

## MONTBLANC PRESENTS THE HERITAGE CHRONOMÉTRIE COLLECTION

Montblanc's Heritage Chronométrie Collection, which was presented at SIHH 2015, pays homage to Vasco da Gama's incredible achievements, and honours the rich heritage of Montblanc's own watchmakers and master craftsmen from Minerva in Villeret. The collection is a fine reflection of the tradition of precision, which lies at the core of Montblanc's heritage, and Da Gama's quest for success.

Emulated on the dial of the Chronométrie Quantième Annuel Vasco da Gama, are the Southern Cross and other stars in the southern firmament, which are representative of Vasco da Gama's courage, thirst for action, willingness to take risks and, above all, his obsession with precision.

Four new calibres, encased in the watches of the Heritage Chronométrie Collection, continue the fine watchmaking heritage as practiced in the Villeret Manufacture since 1858. Completely developed and built at the manufacture in Villeret, each calibre features a different combination of horological complications. The movements in this superlative series include the Dual Time, the Quantième Annuel, the Quantième Complet and the ExoTourbillon Minute Chronograph.



### MONTBLANC HERITAGE CHRONOMÉTRIE QUANTIÈME ANNUEL VASCO DA GAMA LIMITED EDITION

The Montblanc Heritage Chronométrie Quantième Annuel Vasco da Gama Limited Edition has a convenient calendar that frees its owner from the chore of resetting the date, month and day of the week on his watch's calendar for an entire year. This annual calendar "knows" the lengths of all months from March to January, so the watch needs special attention only on the last midnight in February. Accurate calendrical information is displayed on four subdials: one for the day, another for the month, a third for the date, and a fourth for the moon-phase display, which is embedded in a depiction of the southern skies inspired by Vasco da Gama's voyage.

### MONTBLANC HERITAGE CHRONOMÉTRIE DUAL TIME

The Montblanc Heritage Chronométrie Dual Time is driven by the calibre MB 29.19 with a highly functional manufacture complication developed in house by Montblanc. It simultaneously displays a second zone time (local time), together with the time in its wearer's home time zone, via a second hour-hand that can be reset in hourly increments without affecting the position of the first hour-hand and without stopping the minute and second hands, meaning the correct time is not "lost". The date display also corresponds to this local time hand, with the 24-hour display at "12 o'clock" showing the home time with a day and night indication. All indicators are set exclusively via the crown.





MONTBLANC HERITAGE  
CHRONOMÉTRIE EXOTOURBILLON  
MINUTE CHRONOGRAPH

The Montblanc Heritage Chronométrie ExoTourbillon Minute Chronograph combines a chronograph and a very special tourbillon. The patented ExoTourbillon construction, which virtually separates the tourbillon cage and the balance wheel on different planes, allows a saving of approximately 30 percent of the energy needed, while at the same time increasing the precision. This innovative high complication was completed, conceived and crafted in the Montblanc Manufacture in Villeret.

A special homage to Vasco da Gama's discovery is the Vasco da Gama Limited Edition of this timepiece. It combines utmost performance and precision with the stunning beauty of a midnight blue aventurine dial depicting the night sky of the Southern Hemisphere.



MONTBLANC VILLERET TOURBILLON  
CYLINDRIQUE GEOSPHERES  
VASCO DA GAMA

The ticking flagship in the new collection, paying tribute to Vasco da Gama, is the Montblanc Villeret Tourbillon Cylindrique Geosphères Vasco da Gama, which boasts the unprecedented combination of a cylindrical tourbillon and triple time zone indication with simultaneous indication of the world time on both hemispheres. The dial displays local time and home time on a three-dimensional 12-hour compass rose, and relies on a pair of spectacular globes to depict the world's 24 time zones in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, together with the passage of the days and nights. Manual engraving and miniature painting on these two halved balls indicate the continents, their borders and the oceans on this limited edition timepiece of 18 watches. The movement is handcrafted in the spirit of the 157 years of traditional watchmaking heritage of the Villeret manufacture. ■

Photo: © Montblanc

## TimeWalker Extreme Chronograph DLC and Hugh Jackman

### Crafted for New Heights

This automatic chronograph is crafted out of resistant materials like the "diamond-like-carbon" (DLC) used for the coating of the steel case and the innovative Montblanc Extreme leather that produces a highly durable strap, capable of withstanding the rigours of urban life to make the watch a true lifetime companion. Visit [Montblanc.com](http://Montblanc.com)



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