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# #BLUEDIAL: A DESIGN TREND FROM SCHAFFHAUSEN IS TAKING THE WATCH WORLD BY STORM

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50 years ago, IWC Schaffhausen created watches with blue dials. In doing so, the watchmaker from north-east Switzerland set off a design trend that has now spread throughout the entire watch industry. Around 120 references and limited special editions with blue dials have been launched in the six watch families and in various shades since 1967. IWC presents the latest highlight in blue – the **Big Pilot's Watch Annual Calendar Edition "Le Petit Prince"** with a blue dial and a blue-coloured movement, limited to 250 pieces.

Blue represents the expanse of the sky and the unfathomable depth of the sea. The colour of distance and infinity radiates harmony, contentment and peace. Watches with blue dials are currently all the rage in fashion and have also gone down a storm on the Internet for months under the hashtag #bluedial. As one of its pioneers, IWC Schaffhausen has had a significant influence on this design trend: the manufacturer launched its first models with blue dials in 1967 – the **Ingenieur Automatic** (Ref. 866 AD) and the **Yacht Club Automatic** (Ref. 811 A/AD). This kind of timepiece has had a permanent place in the collection ever since. In the 1990s, the rule that blue dials could only be used with platinum cases still applied – such as the legendary 1994 **Pilot's Watch Mark XII** (Ref. IW324107) or the 1999 **Pilot's Watch UTC** (Ref. IW325103). Today, however, elegant blue dials can also be found in combination with gold, stainless-steel or even ceramic cases.

## BLUE IS VERY MUCH AT HOME ON THE "LE PETIT PRINCE" AND THE "LAUREUS" TIMEPIECES

Since 2008, IWC has also regularly launched Pilot's Watches in honour of the famous story "Le Petit Prince" by French aviation pioneer and author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. All "Le Petit Prince" watches boast blue dials. IWC is carrying on this tradition and now presents

the latest highlight in blue: the **Big Pilot's Watch Annual Calendar Edition "Le Petit Prince"** (Ref. IW502703) is limited to 250 pieces. This timepiece a white gold case not only has a blue dial but, for the first time in the history of IWC, also a blue movement: the IWC-manufactured 52850 calibre is visible through the sapphire-glass case back and gets its distinctive colour from a coating with various metallic oxides.

In addition to the "Le Petit Prince" Pilot's Watches, the colour blue is also a firm fixture in the special editions for the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation: besides their engraved back, the dial in Laureus blue is the key feature of these timepieces, which IWC has released every year since 2006. In the tenth overall special edition for Laureus, the **Portofino Automatic Moon Phase 37 Edition "Laureus Sport for Good Foundation"** (Ref. IW459006), the colour blue also represents the hope of disadvantaged children and young people for a better future.

## BLUE SPECIAL EDITIONS DELIGHT COLLECTORS

IWC has always skilfully showcased the colour of the ocean in various special editions. The watchmaker created one of its most spectacular shades of blue in 2004 for the **Aquatimer Edition "Cousteau Divers"** (Ref. IW354803/

IW354806) diver's watch. IWC reissued a style icon this year with deep blue dials – the **Portugieser Chronograph Rattrapante Edition “Boutique Milano”** (Ref. IW371215) and the **Edition “Boutique Munich”** (Ref. IW371217).

**BLUE DIALS GO INTO THE  
VACUUM CHAMBER**

IWC often uses what is called physical vapour deposition (PVD) to manufacture blue dials. The PVD procedure allows extremely dense coatings to be created, which are only fractions of a micrometre thick. The dials are first galvanically nickel-plated and gold-plated. The actual PVD coating then follows, where they are steamed in a vacuum chamber with gaseous metal ions. The final colour depends on the specific process properties and the coating thickness, among other things. As an alternative to PVD coating, special paints are also used to achieve the blue colour on certain models.

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