

OMEGA Constellation 2018

The Constellation collection has long been OMEGA's symbol of unrivalled precision in watchmaking. With a name inspired by the stars above us, it has sought to redefine the standards by which we measure time and has always done so with elegant beauty and class.

This year, the Constellation takes its next step in design and technology, offering 101 new models for women which not only offer exceptional variety, but also the excellence of precision that this family of watches is known for. In the 29 mm models, mechanical supremacy is delivered through the inclusion of an OMEGA Master Co-Axial movement, assured by the 8 strict tests that every Master Chronometer certified watch faces before it leaves the factory.

Yet for this entire new line, it is the outward craftsmanship that truly stands out. The refined makeover has touched upon almost every part of the iconic design, while still keeping the central "Manhattan" look that has been a firm favourite for more than 36 years.

The moment of discovery has arrived.

When the Constellation was born

The OMEGA Constellation was introduced to the world in 1952, yet its origins began some four years earlier. To celebrate the brand's 100-year anniversary in 1948, OMEGA released its first chronometer-certified wristwatch with an automatic movement. This model, named the "Centenary", was greeted with such delight by connoisseurs of precision, that OMEGA recognised the need for a fully-established collection with the same official status.

Four years later, the Constellation arrived. This moment marked the first time that any brand had created a family of watches that consisted only of chronometers. The certified excellence was a huge signal of intent and undeniably proved the brand's dedication to accuracy.

Of course, the look was quite different to the one we see presented in 2018. But even today, our new models remain true to some of those early characteristics, such as the elegant design, uncluttered round dial and the application of a diminutive gold star.

Observatory Under The Stars

Since 1952, the Constellation collection has been symbolised by the inspiring “observatory under the stars” medallion on the casebacks of many models. Its meaning has deep significance within OMEGA and also has a modern interpretation that is truly relevant to the brand today.

The story begins in 1933, when OMEGA achieved a world record for precision at the observatory of Kew-Teddington in England. The company then repeated this achievement in 1936, when it returned to the same observatory and set yet another world record for precision in all categories, an accomplishment that still remains unbeaten.

That may be impressive enough, but in 1945, the Geneva Observatory introduced the “wristwatch-sized” movement category to its annual precision contests, and in the eight years that followed, OMEGA won an incredible six times.

By 1952, when a symbol of precision was required for the new Constellation collection, the OMEGA designers found inspiration from that successful past. Their medallion was created with an observatory cupola reminiscent of the Geneva Observatory, while the eight stars represented those two world records of 1933 and 1936, and the six contests won between 1945 and 1952.

Today, the eight stars have also come to represent OMEGA’s modern achievements in precision, notably the eight tests that each mechanical OMEGA watch must pass in order to become a Master Chronometer. Set by the Swiss Federal Institute of Metrology (METAS), the tests are the most stringent within the industry, proving a standard of precision, performance and magnetic-resistance that is quite unlike any other.

The Manhattan signals the modern look

1982 – Constellation “Manhattan”

The elegant “Manhattan” design is one that we most associate with the Constellation today. Most notably, it introduced the four iconic claws. At the time, these held the sapphire crystal and gasket against the case, assuring the watch’s water-resistance. As well as this, we can see the barrel-shaped case with its famous half-moon facets, the perfectly circular dial, and indexes on the bezel. Finally, there’s the familiar integrated bracelet with hinged links that added sophistication and comfort.

1995 – Constellation ‘95

For the first serious update, OMEGA kept the claws as a design feature, but they were no longer needed for water-resistance. Each model was also given softened and rounded lines, domed sapphire crystal, Roman numerals on the bezel instead of the dial, and elegant “baton” indexes and diamonds. It was around this time that Cindy Crawford first joined the OMEGA family and she made an instant impact by helping to make the final design choice for this new Constellation collection.

2003 – Constellation “Double Eagle”

The original Constellation “Double Eagle” was launched at the OMEGA European Masters golf tournament in 2003. The ladies’ version continued the idea with accuracy and flair. Most notably, it was the Co-Axial Chronometer Calibre 2500 (the first OMEGA Co-Axial calibre) that gave the model its unique edge, lifting the standard of precision to a brand new level. On the outside, the 31 mm model was distinguished by its over-dimensioned claws, dauphine hands and riveted baguette hour markers.

2009 – Constellation ‘09

A full makeover for the collection in 2009 saw the arrival of refined claws and new dials with half-moon indexes, as well as new “mono-rang” bracelets, which were engineered for maximum wearer comfort and also included new butterfly clasps. Some of the dials were also enhanced by the dramatic supernova pattern that emanated from the Constellation star and provided a swirl of sophistication between the diamond hour-markers. This collection redesign yet again accentuated the high-value modern elegance of the Constellation models.

Introducing the 2018 “Manhattan” Collection

With 101 new Constellation ladies’ models being presented this year, there are a lot of details to explore and discover. While the iconic Constellation design has been retained, the collection has received a full makeover with subtle changes found in every angle.

Overview

Sizes:

25 mm
28 mm
29 mm

Movements:

OMEGA Calibre 4061 (25 mm and 28 mm models)
OMEGA Master Chronometer Calibre 8700/8701 (29 mm models)

Materials:

18K Sedna™ gold
18K yellow gold
Stainless steel – 18K Sedna™ gold
Stainless steel – 18K yellow gold
Stainless steel

New Dial Colours:

Sun-brushed blue
Sun-brushed chestnut brown
Sun-brushed dark grey
Sun-brushed gold champagne
Silk-embossed silvery
Silk-embossed gold champagne
Crystal silvery

Changes in Detail

Bevelled Edges

The new matte-finish Constellation is embellished by polished bevelled edges along the case and bracelet. These refined edges help the models to appear slimmer and more feminine, while also giving a new sense of elegance and finesse. Furthermore, they help to reinforce the bracelet-watch design, which is quite unique in the watch industry.

Bezels

New slender bezels have been created for each watch, seemingly providing a wider view of the dial. As well as having a finer design, the bezels include thinner Roman numerals, which are all now in the upright reading position.

Claws

In proportion to the new bezels, the famous Constellation claws have been given a slimmer look and an improved integration. Also with polished bevels, they merge gracefully into the bezel and around the casebody.

Crown

The exquisite detail of the crown shows just how far OMEGA has gone to transform the Constellation design. Look closely and you'll see that the teeth of the crown have been given a feminine half-moon shape, following the iconic half-moon facets of the case.

Hands and Indexes

On the dial, OMEGA has brought more subtle change. The hands have been given a slimline update in the shape of a skeletonised leaf, specifically for these ladies' models, while the new indexes are inspired by the Manhattan skyline, most notably the triangular facets of the Freedom Tower.

Bracelet

Two different bracelet styles can be found within the collection for easy recognition. The quartz models have a similar bracelet to the Constellation '09, whereas the 29 mm Master Chronometer models have been given a more luxurious version. The new bracelet is inspired by those of the original Constellation "Manhattan" collection, featuring polished "mid-bar" links.

Bracelet Clasp

Now featuring domed covers with the OMEGA name and symbol, the bracelet clasps have been given polished half-moons and a comfort release adjustment, which allows the wearer to extend an extra 2 mm of comfort when required.

Caseback

On the 29 mm models, the slim design is achieved by the use of domed sapphire crystal on the caseback, which absorbs the thickness of the movement's self-winding system. For the 25 mm and 28 mm models, the famous observatory medallion is used.

The Master Chronometer Difference

Each of the new 29 mm Constellation models is certified at the Master Chronometer standard. This means an ultimate level of precision, performance and magnetic resistance that is quite unrivalled within the industry.

To achieve this status, the movements are first subjected to standard Chronometer testing by COSC (the Official Swiss Chronometer Control). The movements and completed watches must then pass 8 Master Chronometer tests, which include exposure to magnetic fields of 15,000 gauss. This is particularly important when you consider the effects of magnetism we face in every day life from items such as laptops, phones, hairdryers and the metal clasps of ladies' handbags.

METAS (the Swiss Federal Institute of Metrology) has officially ensured that Master Chronometer testing leaves no room for doubt. Only perfectly-functioning timepieces with extraordinary levels of magnetic resistance will reach a woman's wrist.

**Four iconic women.
One iconic collection.**

For OMEGA, the Constellation is a true jewel in its long history of ladies' watchmaking. Women from all countries and backgrounds have come to know and love this watch. For many decades, its beauty and precision have been universally adored, with a popularity that has crossed the generations. Therefore, when it came to creating a new Constellation campaign for 2018, OMEGA chose to include not one, but four inspiring women at the heart of the brand.

Cindy Crawford, Nicole Kidman, Alessandra Ambrosio and Liu Shishi all represent the elegant and captivating qualities of the Constellation collection. But just like each individual model, these four ambassadors are unique and talented in their own ways.

The fashion photographer, Damon Baker, shot the following images with a minimalist and chic concept – based on a modern interpretation of the Manhattan skyline. Along with the red of OMEGA, the colour palette includes white and gold, in line with OMEGA's recent "Her Time" exhibition, which has toured many global destinations from Paris to St. Petersburg.