

The Blancpain Villeret Traditional Chinese Calendar enters its second 12-year cycle

In 2012, Blancpain achieved a world first when it debuted its Villeret Traditional Chinese Calendar wristwatch that spanned East-West with its combination of a complex Chinese calendar and a Gregorian date, as well as a moon phase. This year, the Manufacture enters its second 12-year cycle with the introduction of a new limited edition of this grand complication featuring a dragon engraved on the red gold winding rotor in honor of the symbol of the new lunar year. This special limited edition for the first time is carried out in red gold with a green enamel dial.

Each year, Blancpain has offered a special limited edition recalling the legend of the Jade Emperor summoning twelve different animals to the gate of his palace. The order of each animal's arrival has been memorialized in the 12-year Zodiac cycle of the Chinese calendar and the official animal of the year is celebrated in each Blancpain special edition.

For the 2024 edition, the timepiece's red gold winding rotor features this year's animal, the dragon. Set against a frosted background the dragon is flanked by a red ruby and a Chinese character engraving of the words "dragon" and "wood", the element of 2024. To inaugurate the new 12-year cycle, Blancpain's artists refreshed the presentation of the Zodiac animal symbols with new portraits.

The mysticism of the Chinese calendar is displayed with an array of four dedicated hands, a window for the Zodiac, and a window for the leap month. Together these set out the Chinese hours (120 minutes in length); the 60-year cycle of the elements and Yin/Yang; the 12-year cycle of the Zodiac; the Chinese days, month and leap months. The Gregorian date is indicated via a traditional serpentine hand. Likewise, the moon phase is classically presented in a window at six o'clock.

Five full years have been devoted in the development of the movement, which comprises 464 individual components arrayed in six layers. Its complexity exceeds that of a perpetual calendar and approaches that of a minute repeater. This intricate construction is carried out in Blancpain's Le Brassus grand complication workshop. The calendar mechanism is powered by Blancpain's three mainspring barrel movement which achieves a seven-day power reserve.

The dial has been created in full fired *grand feu* enamel, its green color harmonizing with the 45mm red gold case. To facilitate setting of the calendar, the case features Blancpain's patented under lug correctors which not only free the flanks from corrector dimples but allow finger tip changes. In keeping with other Blancpain calendar mechanisms, the Chinese calendar implements a secure design which eliminates the risk of damage if setting is performed during an automatic change.

This 2024 Traditional Chinese Calendar is limited to 50 pieces.