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*THE ULTIMATE
HOLIDAY
GIFT
GUIDE*

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FOR THE LADIES

What happens when independent watchmakers turn their eyes to the ladies? Feminine timepieces of impeccable design and mechanics emerge.

BY ELIZABETH DOERR

LAURENT FERRIER LADY F

Up until 2008, **Laurent Ferrier** was not a name that many had heard. After having spent 37 years as a watchmaker in Patek Philippe's prestigious workshops, Ferrier decided to strike out on his own with a classic movement in mind, whose design included timeless luxury, traditional design, back-to-the-roots values with a pinch of innovative thinking, and top-notch finishing. He was aided by son Christian Ferrier, who worked for a few years with an innovative developer of complicated movements, La Fabrique du Temps.

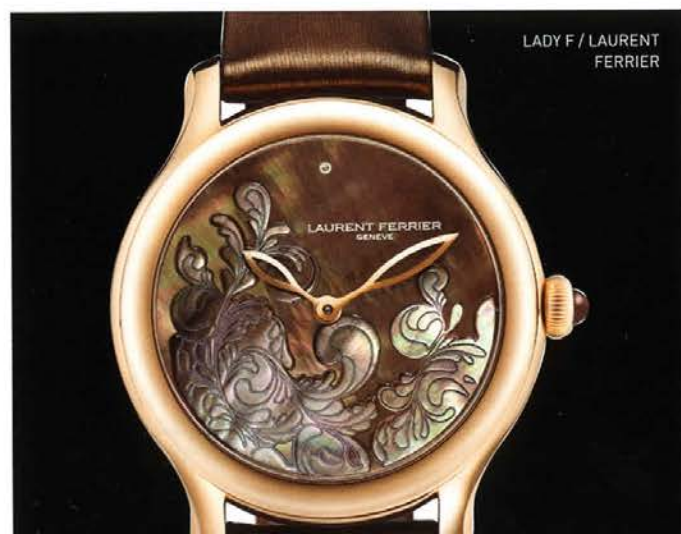
The watch that the **Lady F** was derived from is called the **Galet Micro-Rotor**, Laurent Ferrier's third timepiece, which made its debut in 2011. The Lady F's 39mm case is shaped ever so slightly different from the Galet's housing in shape and in size and is better proportioned to the female wrist, not to mention much more sensuous.

Its Caliber FBN229.01 blends vintage ideas with modern manufacturing technology and, of course, Ferrier's eye for perfection, including his obsessive style of movement finish. The impeccable mechanics of this movement are both traditional and innovative—rooted in the past but featuring a number of very modern elements, including a silicon escapement.

The dial colors were chosen to match the case metal, which is available in 18K white or red gold, with blue mother of pearl for the white gold version and a shimmering copper-colored Tahitian mother of pearl for the red gold. Both dial variations were refined with the addition of a fanciful fern motif, which is extremely hard to apply to a thin sliver of brittle mother-of-pearl that is a mere 0.4 mm thick.

Discrete gemstone embellishment includes a brilliant-cut diamond placed at 12 o'clock on the dial and a cabochon-cut sapphire set into the beautifully shaped crown, as well as snow-set diamonds on the case band. Snow-setting is a tricky skill, which only an experienced gem-setter can achieve with authority to complete the desired look created by various-sized diamonds totaling 1.4 ct (approx. 218 individual diamonds), meticulously selected and arranged to provide a unique "carpet" of radiance.

A silk strap lined with alligator skin is the final touch for this watch, which retails for about \$52,960 without diamonds and \$68,900 with them. *Contact: Alexis Sarkissian at Totally Worth It LLC, (201) 894-4710; www.laurentferrier.ch*



LADY F / LAURENT FERRIER



MARGOT / CHRISTOPHE CLARET

CHRISTOPHE CLARET MARGOT

Margot is a playful masterpiece that may look simple in its femininity, but it houses a serious mechanical movement with a never-before-seen complication.

Christophe Claret's magnificently complicated timepiece for the feminine wrist—which can well be taken as an ode to the woman—allows the wearer to play the whimsical petal-picking game "He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not." Unlike the game that American children are familiar with, which simply involves pulling petals from a flower hoping to land on "he loves me" at the end for good measure, the French version is a little more involved, offering a wider spectrum of love choices as shown in the window at 4 o'clock on the dial: *Un peu* (a little), *beaucoup* (a lot), *passionnément* (passionately), *à la folie* (madly), and *pas du tout* (not at all).

When the button located at 2 o'clock on the case is pressed, one of these messages appears in a little window on the dial in an arbitrary manner. Additionally, a little chime sounds. Each press also makes one or two of the white, satin-lacquered titanium petals of the flower, named *marguerite* in French, disappear under the dial. This occurs so smoothly and perfectly that it is impossible to follow with the naked eye. Resetting the game by pressing the button at 4 o'clock instantaneously makes all petals reappear around the yellow sapphire representing the pistil. The mechanics behind the playful game are even more complicated, powered as they are by an automatic movement comprising 731 components.

Margot's delightful visuals are dominated by a mother-of-pearl dial featuring delicately engraved verses by Victor Hugo, a poet instrumental to the nineteenth-century French Romantic movement. The excerpts are taken from his classic poem, *Unité*.

To enhance the design, the crown is placed on the back of the watch. Four versions of the 42.5mm case (two white gold and two red gold with either snow-set or baguette-cut diamond settings) are offered in editions limited to only 20 pieces each. Prices range from \$228,000 for the snow-set version to \$320,000 for the baguette-cut. *Contact: Commercial Director Phillip Ogle, (954) 610-2234; www.christopheclaret.com*