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S I N C E 1 9 0 7

CRUISING TO CABERNET
LONG ISLAND'S NORTH FORK IS FOR WINE LOVERS

◦36◦

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ROSETTI SUPERYACHTS IS READY TO BUILD TO 500 FEET

◦16◦

15 TOP FISHING TENDERS
A LOOK AT THE BEST NEW RIDES FOR AVID ANGLERS

◦52◦

MANN MADE

THE 61-FOOT *JICHI*, HULL NO. 37, MARKS CAROLINA BOATBUILDING LEGEND PAUL MANN'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY

◦38◦

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TINKERING WITH TIME

The Swiss watchmaker Christophe Claret used to create movements for other brands. Today, his company has come into its own.

By Kim Kavin

CHRISTOPHE CLARET WAS 14 YEARS OLD when he visited the shop of a man who restored watches, setting the inspiration for what would become his life's work. Five years later, Claret had graduated from the Geneva Watchmaking School, after which he worked at the knee of master Swiss watchmaker Roger Dubuis. Claret then worked from home, thinking he'd specialize in restoring

antique timepieces. ¶ But then people started asking him to build complicated movements, the types of timepieces that showed far more than just hours and minutes. Claret got so good at it that he went on to build them for Harry Winston, Franck Muller and other top names, but never under his own moniker. It wasn't until 20 years into his career that he produced his own brand, DualTow, celebrating his company's anniversary

Much of the work on Christophe Claret's limited-edition timepieces is still done by hand, blending horology with art.

in a way that announced its newfound presence. ¶ Today, the Christophe Claret brand graces not only timepieces but also some of the machinery on which they are created. His Flashcut Laser machine, for instance, is a 16-axis CNC that took three years to design and develop. ¶ Craftsmen use that machine and more to make the four lines of watches that Christophe Claret now offers: Traditional, Extreme (the X-Trem-1 has a

magnetic field at its heart), Gaming and Ladies. The Gaming watches are upscale playthings that take simple fun and add mind-bending depth and complexity. The Poker version, for instance, allows for a three-player game of Texas Hold 'em, with 98,304 combinations possible so that each player has about the same chance of winning — all inside a case less than 2 inches wide, with titanium, gold and other fine finishes available. ¶



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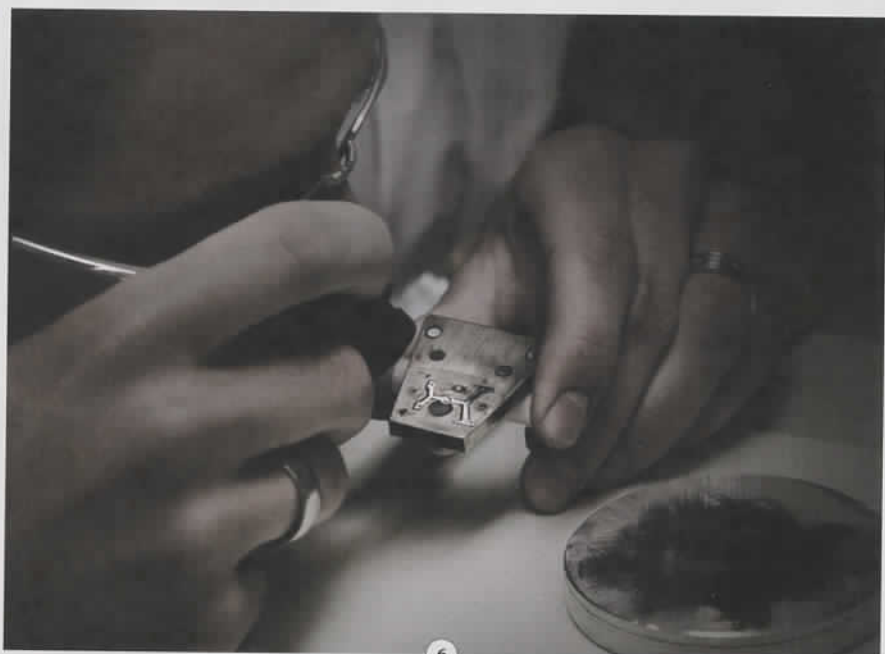
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IT TAKES TIME TO KEEP TIME

1. Angling a timepiece component. **2.** Christophe Claret, CEO of the brand that bears his name. **3.** Angling a tourbillon cage, which helps counter the effects of gravity on the timepiece. **4.** Manoir du Soleil d'Or: Claret manufacturer, purchased by Christophe Claret in 1999. **5.** Gluing blackjack watch hands. **6.** Controlling the polishing of the timepiece's bridge.