

I'm not robot!

REFERENCE: 82172/000R-9382 38 mm mm, 18K 5N pink gold CASEMaterial18K 5N pink goldSize (mm)38 mmThickness (mm)7.77CasebackTransparent caseback, sapphire glassWater-resistance (bar) 3BRACELETMaterial Mississippiensis alligator (dark brown)Size20/18BUCKLETypeArdillon buckleMaterialPink gold Reference4400
ASEnergyManual-windingSize (mm)28.60 (1½")Thickness (mm)2.8Number of parts127Number of jewels21Power reserve (hours)65Frequency28800 v.p.h. (4 Hz)IndicationsHours, Minutes, small secondsCertificationHallmark of Geneva • Authorized Dealer for over 60 Fine Watch & Jewelry Brands• Guaranteed new and authentic products with manufacturer warranties• All certified pre-owned watches come with a 2-year warranty• Complimentary shipping on all orders• Two Full-time master watchmakers in house• A Full-time master goldsmith in house• Custom Jewelry creations conceived and made in house• Gift Wrap Available Online & In-Store If you look at Kunal's account on Instagram (@khemkakunal), the word "seasoned collector" immediately comes to mind. Indeed, Kunal P. Khemka, a real watch enthusiast from India and a 44-year-old businessman, has the knowledge and the taste when it comes to choosing what to strap around his wrist – with a clear bias on elegant and refined pieces. Today, we discuss his Vacheron Constantin Traditionnelle Manual-Winding reference 82172. However, when he bought it in 2011, it was still called the Patrimony Traditionnelle Manual-Winding. We found out why this is his favourite watch. Kunal grew up in a typical Indian extended family, which included his grandparents, uncle and aunt, their kids, in addition to his parents and sister. Kunal's uncle (his father's younger brother, to be precise) was (and still is) crazy about watches, especially Vacheron Constantin. Through him, Kunal had his first introduction to watches, and to Vacheron Constantin. Frank Geelen, MONOCHROME – When did you learn about Vacheron Constantin? Kunal Khemka – This was the 1980s, a time where there was no internet, and information was not so easily available like it is today. Even ordering catalogues was not possible! My uncle's love and passion for watches and for VC got transmitted to me. As I grew older and started reading and learning about watches and the different brands, I understood why he loved Vacheron Constantin so much. Why is that, you think? I can think of at least 7 reasons. First, the brand has a "Glorious Heritage." VC is the oldest continuous watchmaker in existence, which is second to none. Currently, VC is 265+ years old. Second, they have a diverse range of abilities, which is also second to none. They have made (and still do) some of the most complicated and impressive timepieces in history, as well as some of the most artistic, such as their Métiers D'Art family. And they have also displayed immense creativity with different case shapes etc., such as the 1972 and Historiques families. In recent years, they have pushed the boundaries of innovation with pieces such as the Traditionnelle World Time (37 time-zones including those offset by half and quarter hours); Traditionnelle Twin Beat Perpetual Calendar and Les Cabinotiers Celestia Astronomical Grand Complication 3600 to name a few. There are not many watch brands that can (almost) do everything under the horological sun and excel at it. Then, for a mainstream brand, they pay a lot of attention to movement finishing, beginning from their entry-level movements. While most of VC movements adhere to the criteria of the Poinçon de Genève – or Hallmark of Geneva – it is worth noting that their own standards are as demanding. Moreover, I like it that VC is not a loud Maison. They are very understated and discrete. Those who know, well, know. They do not necessarily have the instant appeal of few of their competitors. This can be a good or a bad thing, depending on how one chooses to look at it. However, this is slowly changing as their new third-generation Overseas and FiftySix families have proved popular and have brought them many first-time customers. A fifth reason is that to my eyes (and most of the time), their timepieces have been examples of beauty, proportion, and balance. And they have always had some of the most beautiful ranges of simple dress watches. Of course, there is the rarity of the brand. Their annual production is somewhere between 20,000 to 25,000 pieces. And last but not least, a Maison is nothing without their people, as they are their truest ambassadors. I have interacted with folks from VC in Singapore (where I lived for 3 years), Hong Kong, Geneva and Paris, and elsewhere (via social media), and they have always been warm and friendly to me. Lovely people. Why did this particular watch stand out to you? In 2003, Vacheron Constantin had introduced the Malte Grande Classic, which debuted their Calibre 1400 (a turning point for modern VC.) At the time I fell in love with it, VC was way beyond my financial reach. In 2009, when VC introduced the then-Patrimony Traditionnelle Manual-Winding, it was like a prayer had been answered, almost like a second chance at obtaining a watch I had loved but which was unavailable to obtain. It felt like a spiritual successor to the Malte Grande Classic, and I fell in love with it instantly. I knew I had to have it. What makes it so special? The Traditionnelle is everything I have ever wanted in a classic dress watch. Gorgeous looks, perfect proportions, and superb movement (visible through a transparent caseback). It is hard not to love the details of the Traditionnelle aesthetic such as a railroad-style minute track and seconds sub-dial, the baton-style applied gold hour markers, the dauphine hands which are mirror polished one side only, and the applied gold Maltese Cross above 'Vacheron Constantin'. The case has interesting details such as a ribbed pattern on the lower part of the case, and lugs that slope a bit downward which ensures the watch sits very comfortably on the wrist. At 38mm and a thickness of 7.7mm, its size is perfect – not too small and not too big; and the case's 5N pink gold radiates an incredibly warm hue. It feels like a combination of vintage and modern. And, of course, the in-house calibre 4400 powering the Traditionnelle is a modern masterpiece of a manual-winding movement, which meets the standards of the Geneva Seal. It beats at 4Hz (28,800vph) and is powered by a large single-barrel which provides a power reserve of 65 hours (I have timed mine at 67-68 hours). The diameter of the calibre fits the case perfectly, almost as if the dial, case and calibre were designed in tandem (not too small as in some haute-horology dress watches.) And because of this, the seconds sub-dial is closer to 6 than it is to the centre, ensuring perfect balance and proportion. For a serially produced movement crafted by a mainstream brand, the finishing is beautiful. And it is designed such that it can be easily serviced by a qualified watchmaker; something that will be important in decades to come. And its timekeeping is extremely accurate. When did the watch become yours? I bought it at the Vacheron Constantin Boutique at Marina Bay Sands in Singapore in February 2011. It was a 34th birthday gift to myself and my first haute-horology watch. It is a foundational piece in my collection. Why did it have to be this particular model and not any other model from the brand? Well, my other choices were the Traditionnelle Self-Winding (same aesthetic, but where the date is at 3 and seconds sub-dial at 9), a Patrimony Manual-Winding, a Patrimony Self-Winding and a Historiques American 1921. While I had fallen in love with the Traditionnelle the moment it was launched, I had actually given a deposit for the Historiques American 1921. At the time, the 1921 was hot. There was an approximate 6-month waiting list. However, when I got the call that my watch was ready about two months later, I got cold feet. While the 1921 is a gorgeous timepiece and a modern icon, I felt I was too young for it and it did not feel right. I was forcing myself to go for it due to its popularity at the time. It was extremely expensive (almost double the price of the Traditionnelle). I was not yet ready for it. And consciously or subconsciously I realized I loved the Traditionnelle Manual-Winding the most among all the other above choices. So, I asked the VC Boutique to change my selection which they graciously did. I was fortunate to acquire the Lange 1 in rose gold (second generation) about 3.5 years ago. This is another timepiece that I fell in love with. While the Lange 1 is one of the Icons of our Time, the Traditionnelle holds its own very well next to it. Having owned both together for some years now, the Vacheron is by no means a lesser watch. As far as classical three-hand dress watches go, the Traditionnelle Manual-Winding in my humble opinion is the best of its genre and a Modern Masterpiece by VC. So, the watch must get a lot of wrist time... Initially, I used to wear it only on special occasions or on weekends. But now I wear it more often. In these pandemic times, I enjoy wearing it while I am at home. The Traditionnelle goes equally well with formal and casual wear! It looks great with jeans. I now need to experiment with straps of different colours, maybe dark blue and a certain shade of dark green. I think they will look great. Does this watch attract a lot of attention? Over the years, I have got some reactions from friends, family, and other collectors at GTG's... But the Traditionnelle is not a loud timepiece, and as such does not draw unwanted attention. Which is a good thing. I personally do not like loud pieces. I like pieces where I know what it is and can appreciate the details, and share with like-minded collectors at GTG. I enjoy writing about watches, too, having had the opportunity to contribute to publications in Singapore, Australia and India. Writing enables me to share my passion for horology. Do you know the current market value of the watch? The current retail price is USD 20,600. When I bought mine in 2011, the price was slightly lower. I am not sure about the current market value, but I suppose it is in the range of USD 15,000 – USD 20,000. Unless absolutely necessary, I would not like to sell it, though. Are there any more watches you would like to buy? Well, yes, since a modern prestige daily beater is missing from my collection. The obvious choices are Rolex (maybe the new OP in black or blue dial), Omega (new Speedy Moonwatch) and Grand Seiko. I am quite tempted by the VC Overseas range, especially the Overseas Self-Winding and Dual Time. These two serve the purpose of haute-horology and a daily-beater all in one package. I am always drawn to beautiful dress watches (and some with complication) and loving a few pieces by VC (Patrimony Manual-Winding, Traditionnelle Complete Calendar, Harmony Complete Calendar, Historiques Ultra-Fine 1955, Historiques Cornes De Vache 1955) and A. Lange & Sohne (1815 three-hander and 1815 Annual Calendar). I am eagerly waiting to see what Patek Philippe will introduce in its Calatrava collection. An update to their classic 5196 would be a great move, as well as a regular production stainless-steel Calatrava. And I am also drawn to a few micro-independents and haute-horology independent watchmakers. Of course, I cannot buy all and everything, and it's going to be a long journey, but I am hopeful and excited. Sometimes I feel the next watch I will go crazy about has not yet been launched! Can you give tips to other collectors who want the watch you possess? The Traditionnelle Manual-Winding should be available at any VC boutique and VC authorized dealer. If not in stock, I am sure it could be easily ordered. You could also get good deals on reputed online platforms. It can serve as a daily beater but within reason. While the movement is robust, always be careful as this is not designed as a sports watch. Dress watches with hand-wound or automatic movements will always be more delicate than purpose-designed sports watches, and beyond a point cannot absorb shocks. Also, keep it away from electronic devices as much as realistically possible, as the movement can get magnetized. (And if so, it is very easy to get it demagnetized at any AD who has the right equipment.) Be careful and focused when winding it, so you do not accidentally over-wind. As soon as you feel tension, stop. Basic care and precautions like this will give the owner decades of enjoyment. What's the fun in collecting watches, would you say? Any tips? I would recommend studying and reading as much about watches as you can. There is a lot of information out there – print and online, which includes information on social media. Try and figure out what you like and want to collect. Collecting is very personal. What is important is that a timepiece or type of timepiece speaks to you. And take your time. There should be no hurry, no pressure to show off and compete. Collect at your pace and buy what you love and can comfortably afford. Buy the best type of watch for your taste and budget. Do not go broke trying to impress. We live in a world of rapid information (especially on IG), hype, artificial scarcity, long waiting lists, and it is easy to get swayed and want to keep up and follow this hype. These are very short-lived. I reckon you should think long-term. Try not to see watches as investments. It's a good idea to develop lasting and long-term relationships with ADs. Do not have a sense of entitlement from ADs, as no one owes you anything. In the long run, your passion, coupled with friendship, kindness, and decency will go a long way and do more for you if you choose to obtain a hard-to-get watch. Watch collecting is as much about people and friendships as they are about timepieces. Finally, give your collection its own unique voice and personality. Because what is not hot today, might be one of the great collections of tomorrow!

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