



Our man-about-town **Brian Salter** finds out how a well-chosen watch can considerably complement your wardrobe and make a personal jewellery statement

Watch It!

Call me a fashionista if you will, but for me there is nothing quite so alluring as a fashion statement peeping out from underneath a well-turned cuff. For many, watches are as much a fashion statement as a means of telling the time. Not surprising, therefore, designers are always on the lookout for means to redefine the humble watch in different and interesting ways. Inventors of watches of yesteryears could surely never have dreamt of them turning into such multifarious entities that say so much about the person wearing them!

In 1511, Peter Heinlein, a locksmith in Nuremberg, designed the first pocket watch; in 1780, Abraham Breguet of Paris designed the hair-spring mechanism leading to the flowering of the first wristwatches as a fashion item as far back as the early 1900s. But perhaps now, like never before, more and more people from all walks of life are becoming concerned about the way they look and present themselves to their peers through what they wear.

Many of us buy watches after considering their style quotient and potential to invite attraction. They're a fantastic accessory to capture a particular style and this season, for the girls, it is all about the colour — the bolder and more vibrant, the better! While gold and diamonds are never out of fashion, recent contemporary trends are highlighted in the bright, original and sometimes downright-bizarre designs from Joe Rodeo, Aqua Master, Techno Master, Freeze Watches and other fashion houses.

Also high on the trend-setting agenda are sporty watches so epitomised by Superdry, Animal Watches, Nautica, Timex and Oakley Watches with their innovative designs that help you stay on top of your game. In the higher price bracket, look out for trendy Adidas, Nixon, Black Dice and LTD Watches, not forgetting D&G and Ed Hardy with their beautifully-detailed tattoo art.

Other hot brands that ooze oodles of appeal include DKNY for that spirit of New York, Diesel for innovation, and Fossil for something totally out of the ordinary. And for the super elegant, look out for Guess

“An important fashion accessory for both sexes, watches provide the cutting edge to making you look most fashionable above whatever other accessories you wear. Since most international fashion labels are also into watches, this adds value to the overall personality.

P Ravi Rao, group general manager, Hour Choice, Rivoli Group

Special Feature

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It's a great thing that watches aren't a necessity any more... In the last decade-and-a-half, watch-makers have become really creative... the growth of the fashion watch segment is a recent trend in the watch industry.

Asim Khan, marketing manager, Al-Futtaim Watches

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The jewellery watches segment has its own target customers — especially the Middle East is doing well in this segment ... A recent trend is the popularity of ceramic and rose gold-plated watches.

Savi Kumar, category manager - watches, Damas LLC

and Michael Kors which epitomise femininity with their diamante embellishments, bracelet straps, chic patterns and jewellery-reminiscent aesthetics.

Men's watches, too, represent a way in which they can express themselves through fashion. More and more men are now concerned about how they look and present themselves; most times, watches are used as a symbol reflecting status as well as a sense of vogue — even if top-of-the-range brands such as Patek Philippe, Hublot, Gucci, ESQ and Invicta could set you back by a small fortune. The fact that virtually every mall in the UAE sport a number of shops stocking such brand names proves there is no shortage of demand here.

For those on a more modest income, there are plenty of Swiss replica watches that reflect the trend-setting appeal of their more expensive brethren. As one Swiss website quaintly puts it: “Common people can also have a taste of luxury on an affordable budget”!

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