

CHRONOMÈTRE FERDINAND BERTHOUD FB 1R.6-1

THE BRAINCHILD OF CHOPARD'S CEO KARL FRIEDRICH SCHEUFELE, THE CHRONOMÈTRE FERDINAND BERTHOUD IS A WATCH CONNOISSEUR'S DREAM. **BY KEEF WONG**

Released at SIHH 2018, the new Chronomètre Ferdinand Berthoud FB 1R.6-1 is based on the original Chronomètre FB1, itself a ground-breaking model first shown in 2015.

The FB 1R.6-1 deviates from the classic display with a simple uncluttered dial, the seconds hand taking the central position and primary focus. The hours and minutes are split with the minutes in a circular sub-dial at 12 o'clock and the hours displayed through a window at the 2 o'clock position. The hour indications are Arabic numerals printed on a glare-proof sapphire crystal disc that rotate under the dial for a very classy way to display the time.

At the 9 o'clock position, a fourth indication takes its place, for a display of the power reserve. This display in itself is a unique application that has a patent filed for the sophisticated manner that it amplifies the displacement of the actual power-reserve hand. The indicator is coupled to the barrel via a set of elaborate springs to display the power reserve with peerless precision.

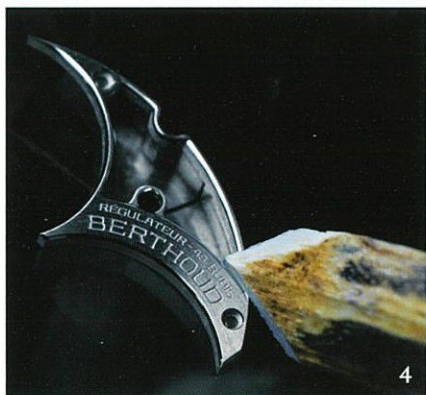
The dial itself is nickel silver with a brushed black rhodium finish. This is extremely classy with an industrial-chic style that is completely in line with the watch's modern application, as well as its historical leanings. Interestingly enough, the solid dial covers the tourbillon visually; a bold move considering how almost every other watch would celebrate the inclusion of a tourbillon front and centre.

An innovative 44mm watch case made out of a new ultra-resistant carburised stainless steel that is extremely robust, corrosion resistant and biocompatible, features two octagonal-shaped stainless steel side pieces, and includes two lateral portholes at 2 and 11 o'clock, allowing the wearer to admire the unique chain-and-fusee mechanism of the movement in action.

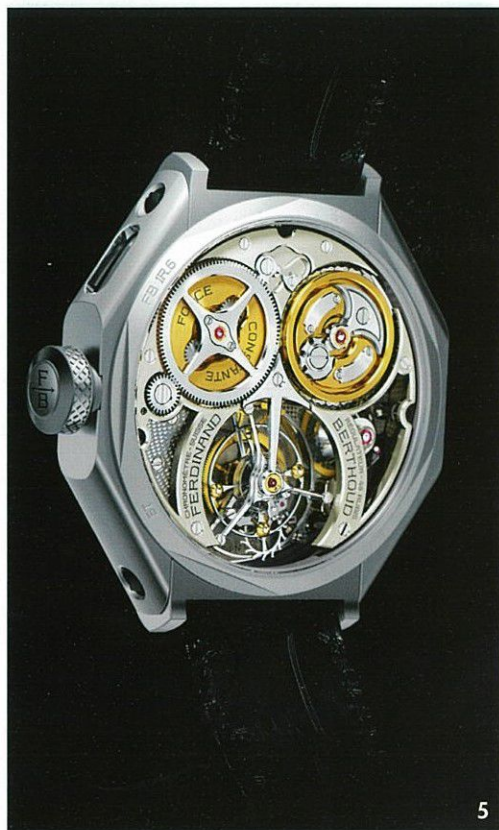
Internally, the watch is powered by the utterly unique FB-T.F.C.R calibre. Typical of 18th century marine chronometer construction, the hand-wound movement features 18 nickel silver bridges framed by polished titanium pillars surrounding the mechanical organs. At just 9.89mm thick, the movement of the Chronomètre



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1. Chronomètre Ferdinand Berthoud FB 1R.6 Caburised Steel edition.

2. Ferdinand Berthoud - Edition 1785.

3. Applying the regulator to the complicated timepiece.

4. A closer look at the regulator mechanism.

5. The caseback of the Ferdinand Berthoud.

6. A finishing touch, the window to the watch's soul.

7. A sextant from the wreckage of L'Astrolabe.

Ferdinand Berthoud FB 1R.6-1 is extremely thin for its category despite the regulator-type display and power-reserve indication.

Built as a numbered limited edition, only 20 pieces of this watch will be produced worldwide.

CHRONOMÈTRE FERDINAND BERTHOUD FB 1R – EDITION 1785

A new interpretation of the Chronomètre FB 1R, the 1785 edition is a series of five bronze watches, each of which is absolutely unique, with the application of various artistic patinas. Each of the Edition 1785 FB 1R chronometers features a beadblasted case entirely made of bronze, the alloy specially chosen for its ability to acquire a distinctive patina.

The models are individually numbered and all feature a different colour as a result of the distinct formulas used on each case to achieve the desired patina after dozens of trials and tests. The aim was to achieve the specific aesthetic look while ensuring the watch's dermo-compatibility in compliance with the REACH regulations of the European Union.


The history behind the creation of the Edition 1785 collection is a fascinating one, entrenched with both the history of watchmaking, as well as the early days of circumnavigating the globe.

In brief, in 1785, led by Jean-François de Galaup, count de Lapérouse, two frigates, *L'Astrolabe* and *La*

Boussole, sailed on the boldest campaign of maritime exploration that France had ever undertaken then.

Entrusted by Louis XVI, the purpose of the expedition was to circle the globe in order to complete its cartography and to pursue exploration of the Pacific Ocean. Equipped with the finest measurement and observational instruments of the era, including five marine chronometers by Ferdinand Berthoud, the ships crossed the North and South Atlantic, sailed up to Alaska via Hawaii, crossed the world's widest ocean reaching China and headed towards the South Pacific. A few months after visiting Australia in March 1788, the ships vanished.

In 2005, among other objects found from the wrecks of *L'Astrolabe* was a sextant, oxidised yet intact after 217 years. Crafted in bronze, this fundamental navigating instrument inspired the patina colours of the Ferdinand Berthoud Edition 1785 watches.

While the exterior may have the patina of an old soul, the interior is anything but. Housing the world class mechanical hand-wound Calibre FB-T.FC.R-2 that features a tourbillon with fusee and chain transmission as well as several other patented technical features, the watch intentionally looks like 1785, but it performs like 2018. 

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