

# WATCH

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THE WATCH MAGAZINE REDEFINED

**heritage** Founded in 1860, the former supplier to the Royal Italian Navy is now a modern maker with eight of its own movements.

**style** Offering more than just dual time, the Panerai Luminor 1950 3 Days GMT Automatic features date, stop seconds and power reserve indication.



**technology** The new caliber P.9001 is a proprietary automatic movement with 227 components, 4Hz frequency, bidirectional rotor and three-day power reserve.



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Watch Journal

*presents*

CITIZEN'S

NEW SIGNATURE COLLECTION

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## CITIZEN'S NEW

# SIGNATURE COLLECTION

BY KEITH W. STRANDBERG

Consumers have long looked to Citizen for affordable, high-quality watches. As a Japanese company, however, Citizen was content not to compete directly with the Swiss on the high-end playing field. That is, until recently.

Several years ago, Citizen started introducing Eco-Drive timepieces that use traditional complications at affordable prices—like the Perpetual Calendar and the Minute Repeater (for under \$800)—and these watches were well respected. Suddenly, complications that had been out of reach for some customers were accessible and even affordable. It was a great strategy, and Citizen went further at Baselworld this year, when it introduced the Signature Collection, which offers even higher-quality, more sophisticated and more complicated watches with light-powered quartz movements. New movements include the Signature Grand Complication with minute repeater, chronograph and perpetual calendar, and the Signature Flyback Chronograph with dual time zones. The Signature Collection is largely hand-assembled in a special factory and includes features throughout the collection like sapphire glass with double anti-reflective coating, hidden deployant clasps on bracelet styles, and crocodile straps. For Citizen Eco-Drive women's models, the Signature Collection includes the highest-quality fit, finish and polishing with detailed dials and individually hand-set diamonds.





The **Signature Flyback Chronograph** with quarter-second chronograph, minute repeater, date and 24-hour scale; powered by light via Citizen's Eco-Drive technology. The 44mm case is fitted with an anti-reflective sapphire crystal and is water resistant to 100 meters.



A Signature designed for women, this model features a mother-of-pearl dial, rose gold-tone accents and diamond embellishments totaling 0.49 carats.



The Signature Perpetual Calendar with chronograph, perpetual calendar, dual time and alarm functions, and caseback marked with the Signature crest.



"I think what is exciting about the Signature Collection is that it's a new opportunity for our brand to expand into a price range that we have not been selling in before," explains Laurence R. Grunstein, president of Citizen Watch Company of America. "It shows also that we can develop products that have much higher quality than our standard range. Our standard range establishes a ceiling, but this new collection gives us a new price range (\$800-1,500) where we can produce new modules that will only be used in this range. In terms of appearance, we will be using double-coated sapphire crystals, and the quality of the bracelets, bands and cases are at a much higher level, comparable to those on watches in the \$5,000 range."

"With the Signature Collection, we can maintain the core principle of the brand, which is great value, at the higher price point," he continues. "It also allows us to establish this collection in limited distribution to the best retailers, and each of them will have a certain amount of exclusivity. This certainly gives us a chance to go into retail stores that have not carried Citizen in the past. We will also be advertising in publications read by people interested in products over \$1,000. These are marketing opportunities that will have a halo effect for the entire brand."

The Signature Collection is hand-assembled on a production line made up of highly trained watch technicians. "The movements are all made in the same factory as the Campanola line, in the Japanese Alps in the center of Japan, about three and a half hours from Tokyo," Grunstein explains. "There are 30 people working in a progressive

assembly line constructing the movements. It's not one watchmaker making the movement, as the Swiss typically do; it's 30 people who work in stages. The Flyback Chrono, for example, has five step motors, which are part of the movement, to make all the hands turn. This manual assembly has technicians at each stage adding on each part of the movement; then the movement is tested in the same facility. This is a different method than most other factories use. We have a more manual process because of the complexity of the movement."

Grunstein expects the Signature Collection to appeal to people who have outgrown standard quartz watches, but who cannot afford luxury Swiss brands. "The Signature Collection gives these people a viable alternative," he says. "With this new collection, we can really grow market share. Swiss watch exports are decreasing, and business is difficult, but it's not non-existent; it's just a matter of who gets it. The bloom is off the rose for some high-end Swiss brands, and this is a big opportunity for us."

Where to find the Signature Collection? Not in every Citizen retailer—the new collection is reserved for the best of the best. “We plan to have the Signature Collection in 600 retailers this year, and in the end, no more than 1,000, compared to between 10,000 and 12,000 retailers for the regular Citizen line,” details Grunstein. “Because we are limiting this to relatively few retailers, we can keep it in the retailers that fit the collection. We want to pick our best opportunities to attain the highest degree of success.”

Citizen has signed golf champion Padraig Harrington to launch the Signature Collection. Ranked in the top five worldwide, winner of the last two consecutive British Open Championships and the 2008 PGA Championship, Harrington is excited about working with Citizen. “I am delighted to sign with the world-class watch brand Citizen,” Harrington says. “I believe that it is attention to detail and the ability to execute consistently that makes a good golfer a great golfer. The same holds true for Citizen, and I look forward to wearing the Signature Collection watches and being featured in their marketing programs.”

Harrington will appear in the Citizen Eco-Drive Unstoppable print media campaign throughout the US, Canada and the UK in daily newspapers as well as monthly fashion and lifestyle magazines. Current Citizen Eco-Drive Unstoppable brand ambassador Paula Creamer, the top American golfer on the LPGA Tour, will represent the Signature Collection women's timepieces. Citizen Eco-Drive's international Unstoppable media campaign features an impressive roster of talented athletes including New York Giants' Super Bowl XLII MVP quarterback Eli Manning and 2009 Daytona 500 champion racecar driver Matt Kenseth.

Bravo to Citizen for continuing to push the limits when it comes to Eco-Drive and quartz technology. The Signature Collection is a great development for Citizen, and for quartz watches in general.

*To discover more about Citizen, visit [citizenwatch.com](http://citizenwatch.com) or telephone 800.321.3173.*

The Signature Grand Complication with quarter-second chronograph, minute repeater and perpetual calendar; powered by light via Citizen's Eco-Drive technology.

