

The snake slithers onto the Villeret Calendrier Chinois Traditionnel 2025

Blancpain is delighted to unveil its new Villeret Calendrier Chinois Traditionnel to celebrate Chinese New Year 2025, which on 29 January will see the wooden dragon give way to the wooden snake. For the 14th consecutive year, the Manufacture is uniting East and West in a commemorative timepiece themed according to the zodiac sign of the lunar new year, engraved on the watch's rotor. Produced in a limited edition, this calendar is the first to pair a platinum case with a green *Grand Feu* enamel dial.

In 2012, Blancpain achieved a world first with the launch of its Villeret Calendrier Chinois Traditionnel wristwatch associating a complex Chinese calendar with the Gregorian date and moon phases, a symbolic conjunction of Eastern and Western traditions. On entering its second 12-year cycle in 2024, the Manufacture revamped the design of the 12 zodiac animals appearing through a 12 o'clock aperture, recalling the legend of the Jade Emperor. In 2025, the Year of the Wood Snake, this restyled animal will appear for the first time on a timepiece featuring a 45.2 mm platinum case framing a green *Grand Feu* enamel dial.

Renowned for its intuition and perspicacity, the snake takes pride of place on the 22K white gold rotor of this Villeret Calendrier Chinois Traditionnel 2025 with its frosted finish. Brought to life in Blancpain's *Métiers d'Art* workshop, the reptile has been delicately drawn by in-house artisans. This zodiac sign is accompanied by natural ruby and an engraving in Chinese characters indicating the words 'serpent' and 'wood'.

Powered by Calibre 3638 and its 464 components, the traditional Chinese calendar features a complex mechanism going well beyond that of a perpetual calendar to resemble that of a minute repeater. It springs to life in the Grand Complications workshop at Le Brassus. Resulting from five years of research and development, it comprises three barrels providing an impressive seven-day power reserve. While its complexity is apparent from a first glance at the dial comprising numerous indications, their cleverly arranged layout ensures excellent legibility. This calendar is enlivened by a set of four hands, accompanied by two apertures. These display the five elements combined with Yin and Yang – linked to the sexagesimal cycle – at 3 o'clock; the Chinese days and months at 9 o'clock; as well as double Chinese hours at 12 o'clock. The apertures provide information on the Chinese leap month at 9 o'clock and the zodiac sign of the current lunar year at 12 o'clock. In addition to this multitude of calendar data, a serpentine hand points to the Gregorian date, while the emblematic Blancpain moon phase appears at 6 o'clock.

Despite its complexity, the Villeret Calendrier Chinois Traditionnel 2025 is very user-friendly thanks to its under-lug correctors. Presented as a world first and patented by Blancpain in 2005, these enable the calendar indications to be adjusted simply at the touch of a finger, without any need for additional tools. Discreetly positioned beneath the lugs, these small correctors free the sides from the 'dimples' usually found on calendar watches, without compromising the comfortable feel on the wrist. What's more, if the wearer tries to set the calendar indications when the mechanism is automatically adjusting them – which could otherwise lead to mechanical damage – nothing happens, as the movement is secure.

Paired with a chocolate brown alligator leather strap matching the dial colour, this Villeret Calendrier Chinois Traditionnel 2025 is issued in a 50-piece limited edition.

Villeret: timeless elegance and an eminently technical nature

Blancpain's native village lends its name to the Brand's most classic collection. Rooted in tradition yet looking firmly to the future, Villeret models personify the roots of the Manufacture and are distinguished by their restrained, pure lines endowing them with timeless elegance. With its iconic double-stepped case, the Villeret collection incorporates the results of Blancpain's recent research into its movements.

Moon phases: The face of Blancpain

Reintroduced by Blancpain in 1983 in the wake of the quartz crisis, this complication, now a signature of the Manufacture in Le Brassus, enabled the Maison to demonstrate that a mechanical timepiece testified to extraordinary expertise and that quartz could never replace a complex mechanical watchmaking creation. It thus came to symbolise the revival of mechanical watchmaking. Blancpain's immediately recognisable moon phase graces the Villeret Calendrier Chinois Traditionnel 2025.

Blancpain: The Master of Calendars

As key components of the Manufacture's DNA, calendars demonstrate Blancpain's expertise in complications. The complete calendar made a strong comeback after the quartz crisis and in 1983 heralded a succession of timepieces equipped with calendar indications. Whether in the form of a weekly calendar, a simple date display, an annual calendar or a perpetual calendar, the Brand's ability to create calendars culminated in the extremely complex creation of two world firsts: the Villeret Equation du Temps Marchante and the Villeret Calendrier Chinois Traditionnel. Frequently featured within the Manufacture's catalogue in the Villeret, Ladybird and Fifty Fathoms collections, calendar mechanisms consolidate Blancpain's stature as the Master of Calendars.

The silicon revolution

Silicon has revolutionised watchmaking since the beginning of the 21st century and enabled major advances in time measurement. Elastic without deforming, hard, light and highly resistant to corrosion, this material notably stands for its resistance to magnetism, a welcome quality when it comes to ensuring timepiece precision.

Contrary to the 1950s, when the balances of timepieces were fitted with metal springs that could become magnetised – hence the need for a soft iron inner cage to shield and protect the movement from magnetism –, contemporary Fifty Fathoms feature a silicon balance-spring, which enables them to have a sapphire crystal case back revealing their unique movement construction. Featuring a balance spring fitted with this technology, the Villeret Calendrier Chinois Traditionnel 2025 not only showcases a mechanism with high-quality finishes, but also offers superior timekeeping performance thanks to this material.