

Press Release – Under Strict Embargo Until September 17th, 2026 – 12:00 PM CEST

BLANCPAIN LADY B.

Petite. Spherical. Mechanical.



Celebrating the **70th anniversary** of the Ladybird collection, Blancpain pays tribute to the **1956 Ladybird Bullet**. This historic feminine timepiece was created by Blancpain, under the helm of CEO **Betty Fiechter**, the first woman to lead a Swiss watchmaking house. The Ladybird Bullet was a horological landmark featuring the **world's smallest round movement**. Today's **Blancpain Lady B** continues Blancpain's mechanical **miniaturization legacy**. Faithful to its motto of **never producing quartz timepieces**, Blancpain Lady B is powered by the renowned in-house **caliber 615**, one of the smallest contemporary automatic mechanical movements with a round shape. Its spherical case measures 19 mm in diameter for a **volume of just 2.9 cm³**, and is paired with a double-tour calf leather strap, making it a true mechanical jewel. Available in stainless steel or 18K red gold, Blancpain Lady B opens a new chapter in the Ladybird collection.

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KEY POINTS:

- **B as in Blancpain...** which celebrates the 70th anniversary of the Ladybird collection.
- Three stories converge in Blancpain Lady B: Betty Fiechter, 1950s design, and mechanical miniaturization.
- Blancpain Lady B is directly inspired by the Ladybird Bullet, created in 1956 under the helm of Betty Fiechter, the first woman to lead a Swiss watch house.
- The Ladybird Bullet was the very first watch in the Ladybird collection (1956).
- For over 70 years, Blancpain has made watch miniaturization one of its signatures.
- True to its philosophy, Blancpain has never produced a quartz watch. Blancpain Lady B could therefore only be entirely mechanical.
- In 1956, the R52/R55 caliber became the world's smallest round mechanical movement ever produced in series (11.85 mm x 3.7mm). Blancpain Lady B continues this legacy with the renowned Manufacture caliber 615, one of the smallest contemporary automatic mechanical movements with a round shape (15.7 mm × 3.9 mm).
- Blancpain Lady B distinguishes itself with its spherical case measuring 19 mm in diameter for a volume of just 2.9 cm³.
- Its double-tour calf leather strap is available in a choice of 7 colors—white, beige, mocha, burgundy, blue, coral or purple—and is worn like a jewel.
- The strap is easily changed as it fits within a slot on the backside of the watch.
- Available in stainless steel or 18K red gold, Blancpain Lady B is not a limited edition. It opens a new chapter of the Ladybird collection.
- Available from September 17, 2026 in Blancpain boutiques and authorized retailers.

B as in Bubble-form

In the mid-1950s, the world looked towards the future with an almost naive confidence in progress. It was an era of technological optimism, soon extended by the Space Age, when science, innovation, and a fascination with the future profoundly transformed visual culture. Architecture, industrial design, automobiles, and fashion reinvented themselves. Straight lines gave way to organic forms.

In 1956, Eero Saarinen designed both the large and the small: the Tulip Chair, whose single pedestal revolutionized furniture design and also the iconic TWA Flight Center in New York. Charles and Ray Eames pursued their exploration of organic forms, while Isamu Noguchi blurred the boundaries between sculpture and object. Cristobal Balenciaga revolutionized the female silhouette with the Sack dress (1957), then the Baby Doll (1958). In automobiles, the General Motors Firebird III (1958) celebrated volume through its emblematic bubble cockpit. In Brussels,

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the Atomium (1958) made the sphere the icon of the World's Fair and one of the most enduring symbols of 1950s design and optimism.

It was in this creative universe that the Ladybird Bullet was born. Blancpain Lady B now revives its spirit through its spherical case, heir to this biomorphic language of the 1950s.

Blancpain Lady B. An idea born in 1956.

Blancpain Lady B is not a reissue. It is the contemporary reinterpretation of a simple and radical idea born in 1956: to fit fine watchmaking into an object the size of a jewel. Faithful to the spirit of the Ladybird Bullet, it takes up its founding gesture without copying its lines.

This vision guided the entire development of the watch. Its architecture was built around Blancpain's automatic caliber 615, whose technical specifications were embraced from the very beginning of the project. The spherical case, sapphire crystal, polished rehaut, integrated pass-through strap, and water resistance were all developed in parallel to accommodate the movement within an unprecedented volume.

It resembles neither a traditional round watch nor a shaped watch. Its bracelet loop is integrated and passes directly through the case, with no lugs or visible attachment. Conceived in volume rather than surface, Blancpain Lady B is a mechanical bubble: a sculptural object to wear on the wrist.

Not a single quartz watch

Blancpain Lady B beats. And that changes everything. Blancpain has never produced a single quartz watch. Not during the watch crisis of the 1970s, when the industry shifted. Not today. Never. Since 1735, this choice is not a strategy. It is a philosophy. Every watch Blancpain creates is first and foremost a mechanical watch. Blancpain Lady B could, therefore, only be entirely mechanical.

The heart of Blancpain Lady B

The Manufacture caliber 615 that powers Blancpain Lady B measures 15.70 mm in diameter and 3.90 mm thick. It comprises 180 components, 29 rubies, and a power reserve of 38 hours. It beats at 3 Hz, or 21,600 vibrations per hour. Its plates are decorated with Côtes de Genève. The geometry of the case back has been completely conceived to accommodate the specific trajectory of this rotor. Introduced in 1995, the Manufacture caliber 615 has undergone continuous refinement, benefiting from technical advancements such as the introduction of a silicon balance spring. Decades of evolution have established it as a proven movement, renowned for its reliability and robustness.

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A watch conceived in volume: 2.9 cm³

Where the traditional watch is defined by its diameter, Blancpain Lady B is defined by its volume. 2.9 cubic centimeters. An unusual measurement in watchmaking but perfectly suited to an object conceived in space rather than drawn on a plan. At 19 mm in diameter and 13.2 mm thick, it fits in the palm of your hand like a polished pebble. Its form naturally invites touch. Holding it in your palm is a sensory experience. Under your fingers, the oscillating mass comes into motion. A subtle vibration reminds you that a mechanical heart beats within.

Invisible complexity

Blancpain Lady B appears of absolute simplicity. Yet its case is one of the watch's most complex elements. Over thirty technical drawings were necessary to bring this sphere of just 2.9 cubic centimeters to life. To accommodate the movement, the case is constructed in two parts: the upper and lower sections. The back, slightly smaller than the bezel, remains invisible when the watch is viewed from above. The entire challenge lay in making this architecture disappear. The junction line between the bezel and the back is deliberately obscured through the interplay of volumes, light, and polishing. Achieving a perfectly continuous polish on a sphere this small is one of the major challenges of its manufacture. The result is that of a monolithic volume, as though carved from a single block, even though its construction is far more complex than it appears.

The strap challenge

Blancpain Lady B has no lugs. The strap passes directly through the case via an opening machined into the solid metal. This geometry of extreme fineness (10 × 1.6 mm) is executed as a single piece. The interior is micro-blasted so the leather glides with fluidity, while the sharp edges and knurling are entirely finished by hand with cabochon tools, according to the traditional techniques of fine watchmaking finishing. At this scale, the slightest gesture becomes decisive.

The finishing of the tiniest details

Available in stainless steel as in 18K red gold, the case is entirely finished by hand. Polished, satin-finished, and micro-blasted surfaces are executed successively on an already-assembled watch, each area carefully protected before working on the next. Even the engravings are not entrusted to laser alone. They are machined with mechanical cutters to achieve the depth, sharpness, and finishing quality required by the Manufacture. Blancpain Lady B reminds us that in watchmaking, complexity does not reside solely in complications. It can also lie in the perfection of an object of just 2.9 cubic centimeters.

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An aesthetic of restraint

The dial is of absolute purity. Identical on stainless steel and 18K red gold versions, it is dressed in a warm beige opaline hue achieved through gold inlay. Deliberately free of setting, it lets the material and light speak. As always at Blancpain, the applied stick indices are crafted from gold. Measuring just 1.82×0.39 mm, they illustrate the remarkable level of miniaturization achieved by Blancpain Lady B. Polished on their upper face and sides, they capture light with subtlety. The two hands, deliberately sober, extend this same quest for purity and readability. Entirely polished, the rehaut acts as a mirror. Its reflections extend the case's curves and reinforce the impression of a sphere carved from the mass. Nothing is decorative. Nothing seeks attention. The dial shows only what the eye chooses to see: the time and the discreet Blancpain logo. The crown is signed with the initials JB, another nod to Blancpain's history.

A watch worn like a jewel

Each Blancpain Lady B comes with a double-tour calf leather strap, available in a choice of seven colors: white, beige, mocha, burgundy, blue, coral or purple. Closed with a pin buckle, it wraps naturally around the wrist and transforms Blancpain Lady B into a true jewel. It complements a tailored suit, disappears under the cuff of a white shirt, dialogues with a collection of bracelets and rings, or speaks for itself. Blancpain Lady B is available in stainless steel and 18K red gold.

B as in *Bijou*

Not simply a watch, nor simply a jewel. Like the Ladybird Bullet before it, Blancpain Lady B resists simple categorization. It is a watch. It is a jewel. It is a design object. And yet, beneath this apparent simplicity lies a conviction that has guided Blancpain since 1735: a watch must be, above all, a watch. Its value is felt in its restraint – expressed through a clean, unadorned case and a pristine dial that allow its pure proportions to shine. Blancpain Lady B reveals itself to the one who wears it and to those who know how to look. Beneath this apparent simplicity lies an in-house caliber decorated to the standards of fine watchmaking.

Perhaps this is its paradox:

- It appears contemporary, yet its roots run deep in Blancpain's history.
- It seems simple, yet it descends from decades of technical ingenuity.
- It presents itself as a jewel, while remaining resolutely mechanical.

Above all, Blancpain Lady B reminds us of what Betty Fiechter understood long before these ideas became fashionable: that intelligence, simplicity, and beauty are not opposing virtues, but companions.

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Blancpain Lady B marks the beginning of a new chapter for Blancpain.

Some watches commemorate history. Others continue it. Blancpain Lady B belongs to the latter.

B as in Betty

In 1912, she entered an apprenticeship in Blancpain's workshop located in Villeret, in the Swiss Jura mountains. She was sixteen years old. When she retired in 1968, it was at the end of an exceptional career that had seen her become the owner of the Manufacture and the first woman to lead a Swiss watch manufacture.

In 1932, a turning point arrived with the sudden death of Frederic-Emile Blancpain, the last seventh-generation member of the Blancpain family to lead the company. For the first time in two centuries, Blancpain's future was uncertain. With no family successor willing to take over the business, Betty Fiechter and commercial director Andre Leal took a bold gamble: they secured loans from several lenders to acquire the Manufacture. In 1933, Betty Fiechter became co-owner of Blancpain. As Swiss legislation no longer permitted the company to operate under the name "Blancpain" alone without a member of the founding family at its helm, the Manufacture was renamed *Fabrique d'Horlogerie Rayville S.A.* (Rayville Watch Manufacturing Co. Limited), "Rayville" being a phonetic anagram of Villeret.

This was a challenging period for Swiss watchmaking. The Great Depression was raging. A second blow came with her partner Andre Leal's death on the eve of World War II. Betty found herself alone at the helm of the company. At a time when women in Switzerland had not yet been granted the right to vote—they would not gain it until 1971—she became the first woman to own and lead a watch Manufacture, overseeing a company of more than 200 employees.

Her vision was to strengthen Blancpain's international presence, particularly in the American market. Blancpain became a leading supplier of movements to major American houses—Gruen, Lucien Piccard, Elgin, Hamilton—while preserving the technical expertise that distinguished its own production.

One area where Betty demonstrated a particular insight was watches for women. Betty understood that women's timepieces merited the same ingenuity and mechanical integrity as any other watch. She made this specialty one of Blancpain's defining strengths.

In 1950, her nephew Jean-Jacques Fiechter joined her. She organized a one-year program to introduce him to all aspects of the business before welcoming him to the board. The duo that followed shaped Blancpain for two decades—combining Betty's experience and pragmatism with Jean-Jacques's curiosity and appetite for innovation.

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Together, they created two watches that still define Blancpain today: the Fifty Fathoms in 1953, and the Ladybird in 1956.

Outside the Manufacture, Betty Fiechter divided her time between her home in Villeret, her property in Pully on the shores of Lake Geneva, and her villa in Cagnes-sur-Mer on the French Riviera. Always impeccably elegant, she wore natural pearl necklaces and brooches, and her signature fragrance was *L'Air du Temps* by Nina Ricci. She lived surrounded by works of Georges Rouault, Auguste Renoir, Marc Chagall, Maurice Utrillo, Mary Cassatt, and René Auberjonois.

Betty Fiechter never sought recognition. Yet without her, Blancpain's history would have unfolded very differently. She preserved the Manufacture through periods of profound uncertainty. She championed the mechanical women's watch at a time when no one yet gave it its full due. And she helped forge values that still guide Blancpain today: discretion, substance, and an unshakeable conviction in the enduring value of mechanical watchmaking. She became beloved by not only her employees in Villeret but also the village as a whole. Her bust on a hillside overlooking the historic workshop is an enduring memorial of her life and achievements.

Blancpain Lady B is her legacy.

R52/R55, The World's Smallest Round Movement

Blancpain's ambition behind the 1956 Ladybird Bullet was bold: not only to create the world's smallest round mechanical movement but one that would be robust. The result was a triumph of miniaturization. With a diameter of just 11.85 millimeters, the original Ladybird caliber –thanks to two key innovations– combined record breaking smallness with sturdiness.

The first was the addition of a fifth wheel to the gear train. A conventional mechanical movement has four, from the barrel to the seconds wheel. Fiechter's solution was to add an additional one, controlling the force reaching the escapement and reducing the caliber's overall dimensions. The second was the inclusion of shock protection for the balance wheel—an element that most very small movements omitted, to their detriment in durability. Blancpain found a way to adapt these protections to the micro-dimensions of the Ladybird caliber, producing a movement that was both remarkably small—barely the size of a fingertip—and, unlike other small calibers of the time, genuinely robust.

The resulting movement is the R52/R55 caliber (sidewind), soon joined by a variant, the R520/R550 (backwind). Fitted with a winding crown hidden on the back of the watch, the latter freed up the case sides and opened a new field of expression to jewelers. The R52/R55 retained a classic crown at 3 o'clock. Both calibers beat at a frequency of 3 Hz and comprise 133 individually machined components, inspected to a tolerance of 1/2000 of a millimeter. The balance wheel,

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described in the period advertisement as "exceptionally heavy," is fitted with 22 solid gold screws and provides a power reserve of 40 hours.

The R52/R55 is still to this day the world's smallest round mechanical movement ever mass-produced.

At its launch, Blancpain presented the Ladybird as a "technical miracle." Unveiled at the 1956 Swiss Industries Fair in Basel, it was described as combining "all the precision and reliability of a normal-sized watch" within an unprecedentedly small volume.

The R52/R55's success quickly extended beyond Blancpain. Its miniature architecture seduced many watchmaking houses, such as Omega and Longines, who adopted it to power their own creations. Within Blancpain, it opened an entirely new territory of expression. Its small footprint gave rise to countless watch-jewels: gold bracelets and cuff watches, bangles set with ornamental stones, bold compositions mixing coral, hard stones or diamonds, rings, pendants, cufflinks. The caliber's miniaturization gave designers unprecedented creative freedom, making the Ladybird a true laboratory of jewelry expression.

Nearly thirty of these historic creations, exceptionally preserved in Blancpain's archives, will be brought together for the first time in a travelling exhibition dedicated to the world of Ladybird. In 2026, the exhibition will travel to **Blancpain New York City** (14–20 September), **Blancpain Shanghai Xitiandi** (17 – 27 September), **Blancpain Paris – Faubourg Saint-Honoré** (15–24 October), **Omotesando Standby Gallery in Tokyo** (17–25 October), and **Youthquake in Seoul** (11–15 November). Further stops will follow in 2027.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Blancpain Lady B, ref. 0064

MOVEMENT

Caliber: Blancpain Manufacture 615

Type: Automatic

Diameter: 15.70 mm

Thickness: 3.90 mm

Components: 180

Rubies: 29

Frequency: 21,600 alternations/hour (3 Hz)

Power reserve: 38 hours

Decorations: Côtes de Genève

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Balance Spring: Silicon

CASE

Material: Polished stainless steel or 18K red gold

Diameter: 19.00 mm

Thickness: 13.20 mm

Volume: 2.9 cm³

Water resistance: 30 meters

Construction: Two-part case with integrated bracelet passage

DIAL

Color: Opaline

Decoration: No gem-setting

Indices: Gold applied polished stick hands (in red gold for the red gold version and grey gold for the stainless steel version.)

Hands: Hours / minutes

BRACELET

Material: Calf leather

Type: Double-tour

Width: 10 mm

Buckle: Pin buckle

Colors: white, beige, mocha, burgundy, blue, coral or purple.

Not a limited edition

Price: CHF 9,500 for the stainless steel one / CHF 14,500 for the red gold one