
PORTOFINO: BIRTH OF AN ICON

Since its launch in 1984, the Portofino has become one of IWC Schaffhausen's most successful watch families. These elegant timepieces are inspired from the classic round gold watches the company produced in the 1950s and 60s.

The story of the Portofino started with a simple yet surprising idea: why not turn a Lépine moon phase pocket watch into a wristwatch? IWC Schaffhausen's head watchmaker Kurt Klaus and head designer Hanno Burtscher came up with this concept over a glass of wine. Then, as legend has it, Burtscher scribbled a pocket watch case with horns onto a napkin: the first Portofino was born.

It proved to be the right idea at the right time. In the 1980s, IWC's product range was dominated by the sporty, elegant SL Collection and IWC Porsche Design watches. However, Hannes Pantli, IWC's Sales and Marketing Director at the time, understood that the demand for classic gold watches was on the rise. It was then decided to include more classic models in the portfolio, and to introduce them together in a new product family.

This new family was named Portofino, after the village on the Italian coast which gained fame in the 1950s as an exclusive holiday destination for the international jet-set. Portofino watches are characterised by their classic, round design. The dials are extremely sleek and feature hour markers, Roman numerals at 12 o'clock and 6 o'clock, and slender feuille hands.

The cornerstone of the first collection from 1984 was the **Portofino Hand-Wound Moon Phase** (Ref. 5251). The watch with a 46 mm case was powered by the pocket

watch calibre 9521 and mischievously referred to as a "pocket wristwatch." But the collection also included many smaller models, specifically designed for women. Reference 4531, for instance, was a delicate ladies' watch made from 18-carat yellow gold with a case diameter of just 25 mm.

The first Portofino with a chronograph followed in 1988. The **Portofino Chronograph Quartz** (Ref. 3731) was powered by the quartz calibre 631. This technically innovative movement combined two quartz-controlled stepping motors with a mechanical chronograph and an analogue time and counter module. It was also presented as "Lady Chronograph" in 29 mm. Today, the chronograph tradition continues with the **Portofino Chronograph** in 42 mm (Ref. 3910) and the **Portofino Chronograph 39** in 39 mm (Ref. 3914).

In 1993, IWC added the **Portofino Hand-Wound** (Ref. 2010) to the collection. With its hand-wound calibre H/849 that measured just 1.85 mm in height, this model is one of the flattest wristwatches that IWC has ever built.

In 2003, the collection was extended with a larger version of the **Portofino Automatic**, featuring a diameter of 38 mm (Ref. 3533). A direct descendant of this model is it the **Portofino Automatic** in 40 mm (Ref. 3565), one of the most popular Portofino watches today.

The talking piece of the 2011 Portofino collection was the **Portofino Hand-Wound Eight Days** (Ref. 5101), with a diameter of 45 mm. At work inside was the IWC-manufactured 59210 calibre with a power reserve of eight days. This iconic model was also presented with a moon phase indication in 2017 as a nod to the very first Portofino from 1984.

IWC then introduced in 2014 a midsize Portofino collection with a diameter of 37 mm. These colourful timepieces were partially set with diamonds and paired with coloured leather straps made by Italian shoe manufacturer Santoni. Later, in 2019, the Swiss luxury watch manufacturer launched an attractive Portofino ladies' collection in 34 mm. With these feminine and refined timepieces, IWC revisited the successful Portofino ladies' watches from the 1980s.

2022 marks another momentous year for the collection. IWC Schaffhausen now presents an enhanced **Portofino Automatic 34** ladies' collection, including the **Portofino Automatic 34 Day & Night** with a charming day and night complication. The manufacture has also thoroughly updated the **Portofino Automatic 37** and the **Portofino Automatic Moon Phase 37**. These two models now feature movements from the IWC-manufactured 32000 calibre family, sapphire glass backs, and elaborately finished movements with gold-plated rotors and blued screws.

In addition, the whole collection is now fitted with either calfskin straps or a newly developed 5-link metal bracelet with a contemporary and luxurious aesthetic.

IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN

IWC Schaffhausen is a leading Swiss luxury watch manufacturer based in Schaffhausen in the north-eastern part of Switzerland. With collections like the Portugieser and the Pilot's Watches, the brand covers the whole spectrum from elegant to sports watches. Founded in 1868 by the American watchmaker and engineer Florentine Ariosto Jones, IWC is known for its unique engineering approach to watchmaking, combining the best of human craftsmanship and creativity with cutting-edge technology and processes.

Over its more than 150-year history, IWC has earned a reputation for creating professional instrument watches and functional complications, especially chronographs and calendars, which are ingenious, robust, and easy for customers to use. A pioneer in the use of titanium and ceramics, IWC today specialises in highly engineered watch cases manufactured from advanced materials, such as coloured ceramics, Ceratanium®, and titanium aluminide.

A leader in sustainable luxury watchmaking, IWC sources materials responsibly and takes action to minimise its impact on the environment. Along the pillars of transparency, circularity, and responsibility, the brand crafts timepieces built to last for generations and continuously improves every element of how it manufactures, distributes, and services its products in the most responsible way. IWC also partners with organisations that work globally to support children and young people.

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