

# Watch enthusiasts switch gender stereotypes in favour of variety

**Despite women owning and wearing watches since the 19th century, it's still a sector that's heavily focused on the male market. That, however, is changing.**

A Deloitte report on the Swiss watch industry released in October 2022 found that 49% of brands surveyed said they were expanding their range of female watches from a design perspective and one-third plan to offer additional sizes to appeal to female watch wearers.

While there is no practical need for watches to be gendered, women's watches tend to feature smaller faces, better suited to people with smaller wrists, and more stereotypically feminine and jewellery-like designs.

One brand looking to attract more female consumers is Breitling, famous for its Navitimer, first produced for pilots in the 1950s, and its Top Time watch, gifted to James Bond in the 1965 film Thunderball.

## **This one is for the ladies**

Beauregard, one of the only independent watchmakers that specifically caters to women, is nominated in the Ladies' category at this year's Grand Prix d'Horlogerie de Geneve (GPHG), the watch industry's **most lauded awards taking place on 9 November**.

Founder Alexandre Beauregard launched the brand's first watches in 2018 after many years of development, initially starting with watches aimed at men but soon finding his passion lay in more feminine designs. "I did a full collection for men. we had the website ready, we had the photo shoot, we had 10 watches but I was not happy with it, so I shelved it," says Beauregard. "I started working on our Dahlia watch, with petals all around (the dial). That very round, flower shape; I wanted to do those kinds of shapes. It's the stones, it's the shapes, it's the way they work together. And of course, it's very feminine.



*Beauregard's Lili Bouton range has been talk of the town because of its exquisite details* - Credit: Beauregard

summer and already has seven on reserve. While the brand hasn't unveiled the watch more widely, Beauregard did share some of the details about the watch: "It's colourful. You have topaz, fire opal, mother of pearl. You say those stones and you think about women's watches. I have a little challenge with myself, I want to present that watch at the GPHG in the Jewellery category. It's very rare that a men's watch is selected in that category."

While the awards might distinguish between ladies' and men's styles, and it's common for brands and retailers to do the same, there's an argument for abolishing gender labels for watches altogether.

Despite the pastel colours, flower motifs and gem-encrusted designs Beauregard has become known for, it has received requests for a men's range.

"Men are becoming more comfortable with jewellery," Beauregard says. Actor Austin Butler and rapper Tyler the Creator are just a few of the famous men who have been spotted with watches designed for women on their wrists recently.

Beauregard presented a prototype of a men's style to select clients this