



CHRISTOPHE CLARET

AL-ULA, THE MAGIC OF THE EAST

From the cradle of civilization to the stronghold of watchmaking

A keen connoisseur of history and culture, Christophe Claret unveils a timepiece whose symbolic power is highlighted by the ingenious optical phenomenon of the mirascope. At the center of this limited edition conveying a message recalling the history and civilizations of the East which founded the foundations of modern society : AL- ULA, a basin stretching from Jordan to the Arabian desert, sumptuous witness of the Nabatean civilization, the iconic monument symbolizing appears to literally burst out of the dial.

Christophe Claret never ceases to surprise. This true virtuoso of the watchmaking art plays with mechanics, reinvents style codes and creates a fresh and very personal vision of the passing of time. This approach has driven the creation of the Mecca timepiece that uses the optical phenomenon of the mirascope in paying tribute to a civilization and a rich culture more than three thousand years old.

Optical illusion

AL-ULA, the capital of the Kingdom of Dedan, is today a site of major cultural significance and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It welcomes Al-Hegra and Mada'in Saleh into its signature. The site has several dozen monuments that have been incredibly preserved from late antiquity.

One of these monuments, very famous in its symbolism, is micro engraved and highlighted thanks to the mirascope, a process invented about thirty years ago at the University of California. The mirascope is composed of two identical parabolic mirrors arranged one on top of the other, creating an elliptical shape. The convex mirror on top has a hole in the middle. When an object is placed in the center of the concave bottom mirror, the reflection from the top mirror creates a hologram of the object, which appears nearly two times larger than it actually is. In implementing this optical effect in the Mecca model, the monument looks as if it is thrusting out of the middle of the watch and offers a 360-degree view of the emblematic memorial which has withstood all phenomena to bear witness to the grandiosity and talent of the past civilization.

AL-ULA, like all Christophe Claret signature timepieces, epitomizes the highest standards of fine watchmaking embodied by the brand. Developing the technically demanding mirascope to function perfectly took extreme dedication and focus. Two months of research and several prototypes were integral to obtaining the desired optical effect. The next critical step was designing and crafting the hour and minute

hands, which had to be reconfigured, as the mirascope was now the centerpiece of the watch. The hands became pointers revolving on an invisible ring around the perimeter of the dial, each equipped with a counterweight to optimize stability. The challenge of creating the hands was to find a material light enough to compensate for the relatively larger – though mainly concealed – size of the display mechanism. The solution was to use anticorodal (aluminum), which has an excellent rigidity/weight coefficient.

The power of symbols

Esthetically speaking, no detail was left to chance. The AL-ULA timepiece features a wealth of emblematic elements and references to the ancestral culture of the region. First, the dial which opens on the iconic Mada'in Saleh monument is engraved in solid rose gold. The color green, in connection with the Arab culture of the past and the present. To accentuate the symbolism of the piece, the Arabic hour numerals and the "AL-MIM" motifs have been engraved on the flange. The front of the watch reveals a calligraphy drawn in the Diwani style by a master calligrapher, "AL-ULA and THE MAGIC OF THE ORIENT", this one is filled by a hand engraving.

The aesthetic and symbolic spectacle is continued on to the back of the AL-ULA timepiece. The ball-bearing cover is decorated with an engraving of the coat of arms of the Christophe Claret brand around which the green sapphire oscillating weight of the self-winding movement rotates. It should be noted that Christophe Claret has obtained a patent for the sapphire element connecting the ball-bearings to the oscillating weight concealed behind a circle Crafted in green sapphire so as to reveal the meticulous movement finishing, all decorated with a motif around the edge engraved by hand with a green enamel filling.

Finally, the back bezel is engraved with the symbolism of AL-ULA's current geographic location. The back of the watch shows important inscriptions relating to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, guardian of today AL-ULA. All adorned with green enamel, the inscriptions "LA ILAH ILA ALLAH MOHAMAD RASOOL ALLAH" and "THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA" are also calligraphed in the Diwani style and engraved by hand to perfect this extraordinary masterpiece. Indeed, the kingdom of Saudi Arabia has made considerable efforts to promote this world heritage of humanity and recently made this wonder accessible to the public.

With these words, almost everything is said... the rim of the titanium case reveals that only very few enthusiasts will have the chance to wear one of the AL-ULA watches on their wrist.

Technical specifications

Movement:

Caliber:	AVE15, self-winding
Dimensions:	- Diameter: 26.20 mm - Thickness: 3.37 mm (without hands)
Number of parts:	186
Number of jewels:	28
Barrels:	Twin barrels
Power reserve:	72 hours
Escapement:	- Frequency: 4 Hz (28,800 vph) - Swiss lever
Features:	'Mystery' oscillating weight with sapphire crystal segment and transferred motifs
Functions:	Hours and minutes display

Case:

Dimensions: Ø 44 x 18.49 mm
Water resistance: 3 ATM / 30 m / 100 ft

MTR.AVE15.600-617

Case: Grade 5 titanium

Hands: Anticorodal,
anodized green
with 4N red gold tips,
black lacquered

Crown: Grade 5 titanium
and anthracite gray grade
5 PVD titanium

Strap: Green alligator

Limited edition: 17

Price in Swiss francs (ex VAT): 69'000



MTR.AVE15.620-637

Case: Red gold 5N

Hands: Anticorodal,
anodized black
with 4N red gold tips,
black lacquered

Crown: Red Gold 5N

Strap: Green alligator

Limited edition: 17

Price in Swiss francs (ex VAT): 77'000



Distinctive features:**Front:**

The AL-ULA watch is inspired by the Aventicum model: the center of the dial, the mirascope with the emblematic monument of Mada'in Saleh micro-engraved.

Around, oriental calligraphy engraved and lacquered in green and gray color.

Back:

The oscillating weight is in green sapphire revealing the movement, adorned with an "Al-Mim" motif engraved and enameled in green around the circumference of the weight.

On a decorative plate, green decal of two inscriptions Arabic:

At 12: "LA ILLAH ILA ALLAH MOHAMAD RASOOL ALLAH"

"There is no god but GOD and Muhammad is his messenger"

At 6: "AL MAMLAKA ALARABIA ALSAOUZIA"

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia"

At 3 and 9: the sword symbol of the flag of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia