

VIP CONVERSATIONS

THE DREAM HANDSET

VERTU HAS LONG BEEN THE KING OF LUXURY MOBILE PHONES. HOWEVER, THE KING MAY FACE A SERIOUS CHALLENGE FROM A RATHER UNEXPECTED PRINCE: THE TAGHEUER MERIDIIST.



Many a horological article has mentioned the competition from electronic devices as primary timekeepers, the mobile phone included. One watch company has faced the challenge and created the perfect partner for their luxury wristwatches. With a sense of impending doom, watch enthusiasts will witness a watch company introducing a mobile phone, but TAGHeuer may be on to something here – over and above causing a temporary stir in the industry. In collaboration with highly-acclaimed Modellabs, TAGHeuer has launched the Meridiist. A handset

the maker's name and logo, but also quite a few materials, creating resonance with the TAGHeuer brand.

PERFECT MATCH

'No-one has made this effort designing a luxury mobile phone with that level of innovation before', TAGHeuer CEO, Jean-Christophe Babin, claims. 'It is an enormous challenge to adapt the details from a watch to a mobile phone. It takes days, months and years before it is perfect.' Undoubtedly, TAGHeuer has thought

SEVEN HOURS OF CONTINUOUS TALK TIME

made of 430 separate avant-garde, hand-assembled components, corrosion-free steel as used in traditional Swiss watchmaking, and even sporting a large digital watch display.

THE DIGITAL SIBLING

Like its mechanical time-keeping siblings, power reserve is a significant factor, and the Meridiist boasts a 28-day power reserve and seven hours of continuous talk time, as well as the time, plus a 1/100-second stopwatch function via the sapphire crystal secondary display which is illuminated by a specially-developed OLED (Organic Light-Emitting Diode). The elegant, secondary display also allows discreet checking of the time, and call management.

Rubber, catskin or genuine alligator leather, much like the watchstrap of a contemporary watch, covers the back, giving subtle hints of Swiss valleys and arched watchmakers. The watches share with the mobile phone not only

long and hard about creating this serious Vertu-challenger. But isn't there a risk it will challenge the sales of TAGHeuer's own watches? The consensus suggests not. It will serve as an eye-catching partner in your vide-poches along with your 40th-Anniversary TAGHeuer Monaco with a modern version of the revolutionary Calibre 11 chronograph movement, the elegant and award-winning Panorama eyeglasses or the sporty Rimless Curve sunglasses. What's next? Perhaps a remake of the Gulf Porsche 917K that Mr. Cool, Steve McQueen, drove in the 1971 movie 'Le Mans'. A set of TAGHeuer Gulf Porsche keys would be the perfect complement!

Prices of the Meridiist start at €3,500 to €4,500, in steel or PVD-treated steel, unless the diamond-encrusted version takes your fancy, setting you back approximately €8,000.

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