



VALUE FOR MONEY IN RUSSIAN INDEPENDENT WATCHMAKING – PART 3

True value which resides beyond the price tag

This article is the third and final part of this particular series, as Watch Affinity partners with UK-based independent watchmaking specialist retailer, [The Limited Edition](#), looking to showcase different independent watchmakers and brands to highlight what they have to offer in the ever-expanding watch market. In this article, the focus is especially on Russian independent watchmaking.

Be sure to read to the end to find out how you can get a little bonus with any order at The Limited Edition as well!

This three-part series has sought to highlight independent watchmaking at the more affordable end of the market, the idea being to showcase three more fantastic brands in this sector and some of the watches they have on offer which I think offer excellent value for money.

Independent Watchmaking in Russia

This article focuses on Russian independent watchmaking – perhaps not the first place that springs to mind when you think of watchmaking, however it might surprise you to learn that there is a lot going on and some very exciting talent emerging! Let's take a look at some of my favourites...

Raketa

If you like your watches to have some history behind them, then look no further than Raketa. Previously the brand was known as Pobeda (the Russian word for 'victory') and existed as a government owned manufacturer, producing watches for the Soviet Union. The name was

changed to Raketa (the Russian word for 'rocket') in 1961 to celebrate Russian cosmonaut and pilot Yuri Gagarin becoming the first human being in space, wearing a Pobeda watch on his wrist as he did.



Raketa caseback – photo, Raketa

It is also worth noting that the “Imperial Peterhof Factory” from which Raketa operates has just celebrated its 300th anniversary, dating back to 1721 when it was set up by Peter the Great, making Raketa’s manufacture older than even Blancpain and Vacheron Constantin, albeit it wasn’t always used for watchmaking!

Raketa are most famous for their ‘Big Zero’ design, taking the unusual step of replacing the 12 at 12 o’clock with a 0. The origins of the design were founded in legibility, with the 0 often accompanied by large numerals at 3, 6 and 9 o’clock, attracting attention when it was spotted on the wrist of Mikhail Gorbachev when he wore it on a visit to Italy in the 1980s.



Raketa Big Zero



Raketa Copernicus – photos, Raketa



Raketa Russian Code

Raketa continues to celebrate space flight and aviation, with watches that include 24-hour scales as opposed to 12, still with a 0 at the top of the dial, designed to help with keeping track of time in space. They have

many contemporary designs available, and even watches with an anti-clockwise display!

Indeed, only recently, Raketa created the Mars-3 special edition in collaboration with The Limited Edition and Scottish Watches to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first Mars landing, achieved by the Soviets on December 2nd, 1971. For this special watch, the brass dial is engraved with the first ever image taken from Mars which was sent back to Earth which I think is pretty cool.



Raketa Mars 3 collaboration with The Limited Edition & Scottish Watches – photo, The Limited Edition

For anyone who enjoys hunting around online for a bargain, Raketa created pieces for the Soviet Union for many years, including Soviet polar explorers and even for Soviet Olympic Games. Many vintage Raketa watches can be found online for as little as £100 – however I would recommend caution as you never know what may or may not be original!

From the current catalogue, there are an array of options available which, for the most part, are €1800 or less – I think this offers insane value, considering we are talking about an automatic watch from an established manufacture, which is both made *and* finished in-house! Russian independent watchmaking at its finest.

Learn more: [Raketa.com](https://www.raketa.com) or follow [Raketa on Instagram](#).