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## Raketa Returns To Antarctica With A Reissue Of The 1970s Raketa Polar Watch

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Ever since the first Soviet Antarctic research station, *Mirny*, was opened on Queen Mary Land in 1956, the Soviets, and later the Russians, have been continually engaged in Antarctic research and exploration. Whether drilling ice cores on the Ross Ice Shelf or scaling Vinson Massif, polar exploration takes a special kind of person—and a special kind of watch—that can hold up to one of the most inhospitable regions on earth. With its trademark 24-hour dial and bold iconography, the **Raketa Polar** is a faithful re-issue of the original Raketa classic produced for Antarctic explorers in 1970 — albeit one with plenty of modern updates.



Even when working during the height of summer, when light shines continuously 24 hours each day and average daytime temperatures reach a relatively balmy 1°C, Antarctic exploration is never free of hazards. From sled-swallowing crevasses to katabatic winds that can reach over 300km/h to unexpected blizzards, working in Antarctica presents challenges to explorers and their gear that are unlike anything else on earth. And, with only a few thousand researchers and workers on the entire continent at any given time and limited options for rescue or resupply, explorers working on the continent have to trust in their equipment.



Back in the 1970s, Raketa equipped intrepid explorers traveling to Antarctica with watches specially designed to operate in this extreme environment. The first, and most immediately noticeable, element included on these watches was a 24-hour dial. Whether near the summer solstice when light shines unrelentingly day and night, or the depths of winter when the sun never breaks the dark of night, a 24-hour dial is critical for calibrating your mind and body when each day flows unchanging to the next. Though most of us will never experience these extreme conditions, reading the time on a 24-hour dial quickly becomes second nature and a novel way to experience time-telling.



Raketa has never been shy of adding bold designs and iconography to their dials, especially in watches purpose-built for expeditions or to commemorate landmark events. The minimal globe on the dial, with the polar regions highlighted in a snowy white is a simple yet striking design that pops against a light blue dial evoking the glacial hues of the arctic ice. Small pops of red on the dial, seconds hand, and crown contrast against the black markers and handset. The Cyrillic text adds to the charm of the piece, reminding the wearer of the watch's provenance.



If you're one of the roughly 1,000 people that are hardy enough to live in Antarctica throughout the polar winter (and make no mistake, once that last flight leaves in February, you're living there until the following November, like it or not), the luminous hands and indices will come in useful for telling the time in the unending dark.



The Raketa Polar is housed in a 44mm stainless steel that provides the 24-hour display plenty of room to breathe, making telling the time simple and painless. The watch is topped by a sapphire crystal for scratch resistance, is equipped with a screw-down crown, and features 20 ATM of water resistance. Given that each watch is officially certified by the Russian Federal Agency for Technical Regulation & Metrology to survive the extremes of polar exploration, it's no surprise that the watch is overbuilt, robust, and capable.



Behind the display caseback beats Raketa's in-house caliber 2624. Designed and created in St. Petersburg, the 2624 is an automatic, 24-hour movement that contains 24 jewels, beats at 2.5Hz, and features hacking seconds and a 40-hour power reserve. Regulated in 4 positions, the 2624 has an average daily rate of -10 to +20 seconds/day. Raketa has also decorated the rotor with polar lights finishing and a customized rotor. The Raketa Polar is available on a 22mm stainless steel bracelet or leather strap, with prices starting at **792€** (without VAT). To learn more about the Raketa Polar and other Raketa watches, be sure to visit the [brand's website](#).

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