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> An Intro To Russian Watchmaking: Highlights From Raketa And Konstantin Chaykin

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Posted On August 14, 2020 (<https://Daman.Co.Id/An-Intro-To-Russian-Watchmaking-Highlights-From-Raketa-And-Konstantin-Chaykin/>)

When you want to go off the beaten path in your watch collecting journey, why not take a look at Russian novelties?



While it's probably not a big secret to dedicated watch enthusiasts, plenty of people might still be unaware that there are quite a few watch brands based in Russia. And, more importantly, they make impressive, often unique and, for the most part, highly-dependable timepieces. Basically, if you like watches, this is a whole new rabbit hole to get yourself lost in as you delve into the history, design language and uniqueness of the various Russian watchmakers.

For now, however, we're going to take a closer look at two models from two brands that—in their own unique ways—beautifully capture the appeal and variety of Russian watches.

Raketa "Baikonur" 0247

During the Soviet era, Raketa produced watches for the various branches of the military and also for the space industry. Obviously, reliability and toughness were the hallmarks of the brand's watches. This particular watch—the Baikonur—was designed in collaboration with an actual cosmonaut, Sergei Krikalev, who is also a prominent rocket scientist and holds third

place for the longest time spent in space (more than 803 days).



One of the most unique features of the Baikonur is a special system that disengages the wheels of the automatic winding mechanism. Why? Because in space, automatic winding won't work due to the lack of gravity. Other than that, the watch also features a 24-hour dial (useful when you're in a space station where night and day can be hard to tell apart), a solar compass and a reliable Raketa movement, all packed into a steel case with a titanium bezel.

