
LANGE UHREN GMBH

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The LANGE 31: The Long Path to Perfect Form

Featuring a power reserve of one month and constant force delivery across this entire 31-day period, the LANGE 31 attracted considerable attention when it was launched two years ago. Now, Lange is ready to present a second version with an eloquent pink-gold case. This is an ideal opportunity to outline what stands behind the design of a Lange timepiece.

The eminent Saxon manufactory can take credit for a veritable stroke of genius: Not only is the LANGE 31 the first mechanical wristwatch with a tremendous power reserve of an entire month, it also preserves a stable rate for the full 31-day period. Two stacked mainspring barrels, each with a 185-centimetre long spring, store the necessary energy. A constant-force escapement between the twin mainspring barrel and the going train assures that the balance receives an identical amount of energy every ten seconds, regardless of the state of wind of the springs.



The new LANGE 31 in a pink-gold case



Designer Martin Schetter checks the dials for a presentation

the impressive case and the prominent dial of the LANGE 31.

A high-tech power pack like this requires space. The movement has a diameter of 37.3 millimetres and is 9.6 millimetres thick – quite an unusual challenge for Lange's senior designer Martin Schetter. With his team, the Swiss national has spent nearly ten years designing what observers of Lange watches see first. His objective was to develop a balanced visual vocabulary for

From the initial sketch to final acceptance, the design of the dial alone absorbed two years. That sounds like a long time, but it is part of Lange's heritage to repeatedly scrutinise in-house design iterations. After all, timelessness is one of the requirements imposed on Lange watches. Even after 30 or 50 years, they should not reveal their true age. But how can form be liberated from the influence of zeitgeist? Schetter's answer is surprisingly simply: "We can give things time. Because it is time alone that judges whether something is timeless."



Countless dial versions are discussed by the design team

The first draft of the LANGE 31 was already very close to its current dial configuration. During the past two years, only minor details were modified even though more than 70 variations were considered, some differing from others only in an hour marker that might have been a fraction of a millimetre longer or shorter, or in other hardly perceptible details. But these steps were essential in the quest for true finesse. They showed the

designers which details were not distinctive enough to survive time. So for Martin Schetter, alternatives are the only way to approach timeless design. "Letting ideas compete with each other filters the better from the good."

Then there is one more requirement that must be respected by the designers, indeed perhaps the most important one: The watch must have that typical "Lange look". What is that? Descriptive values such as passion, clarity, perfection, and the never-ending search for a higher level of evolution might point in the right direction. But the definition of "Lange-like" dwells in the hearts of the people at Lange.

It is from this intimacy that principles of gestalt gradually emerge to make Lange watches inimitable. But the principles are not a straitjacket. They give the designers ample latitude to think in various directions and evolve their visions. Each new design must incorporate a genuine innovation. And furthermore, its legacy must remain recognisable. Several facets that were already discernible 15 years ago in the Lange 1, meanwhile a design icon in its own right, have been adopted for the LANGE 31: the stately case format, the off-centre Lange outside date, the elegant lancet hands, and the power-reserve indicator. This display was a prime candidate for reinterpretation because in a 31-day movement, it plays a prominent role that it can fully unfold on the

large, solid-silver dial. It occupies nearly the whole right-hand side as the epigrammatic symbol of a horological revolution. The Lange outside date on the left-hand side safeguards the graceful visual balance of the dial.

One of the factors that Lange designers appreciate most is intensive collaboration with calibre engineers. This is possible only in a true manufactory. Clearing technical hurdles and the odyssey to the perfect form are two processes that take place concurrently. Unlike brands that outsource raw movements and rely on designers to fashion the dials according to the specifications of their



The approved dial of the LANGE 31 with all its dimensions

ébauche suppliers, Lange can indulge in the luxury of asking its calibre engineers to create a watch on the basis of a designer's imagination – precisely the opposite path. Arguably, a superbly balanced dial like that of the LANGE 31 can only be found with this approach. Needless to say, Lange is also an adherent of the maxim "Form follows function" as a modern concept of the 20th century. But at Lange, it never becomes a decree that could potentially prevent the inception of good design

The LANGE 31: The Long Path to Perfect Form – Images



01_LANGE31_PG_130032_FS

The new LANGE 31 in a pink gold case



02_LANGE31_PG_130032_RS

The new LANGE 31 in a pink gold case, movement side



03_LANGE31_PT_130025_PR

The power reserve indicator of the LANGE 31



04_LANGE31_PT_130025_LS

The new LANGE 31 in a platinum case



05_L0341_MS

The movement of LANGE 31, movement side



06_MSchetter_01

Lange head designer
Martin Schetter



07_MSchetter_02

Designer Martin Schetter checks the dials for a presentation



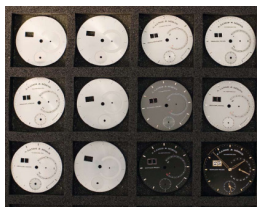
08_Lange_Design_Team_01

Countless dial versions are discussed by the design team



09_LANGE31_Dial_Design_01

Pen and marker drawings are used as the basis for the development of a new design



10_LANGE31_Dial_Design_02

The first sample dials for the LANGE 31



11_Lange_Design_Team_03

The design department checks the fit of their sample dials in a few case prototypes



12_LANGE31_Dial_Design_03

The approved dial of the LANGE 31 with all its dimensions

Datenblatt LANGE 31		
Movement	Lange manufacture calibre L034.1, manually wound, crafted to the highest Lange quality standards and assembled and decorated by hand; precision-adjusted in five positions; twin main-spring barrels; plates and bridges made of untreated German silver; balance cock engraved by hand	
Movement parts	406	
Jewels	61, including 1 transparent sapphire jewel	
Screwed gold chatons	3	
Escapement	Lever escapement	
Balance	Shock-resistant glucydur screw balance, Nivarox hairspring balance with a frequency of 21,600 semi-oscillations per hour, whiplash precision index adjuster with patented constant-force escapement	
Power reserve	31 days (744 hours) when fully wound, with stopwork	
Functions	Time display in hours, minutes, small seconds, with stop seconds, outsize date, power-reserve indicator	
Operating elements	Winding key with integrated backstop ratchet and torque limiter, crown for setting the time, push piece for advancing the date display	
Case dimensions	Diameter: 45.9 millimetres; height: 15.9 millimetres	
Glass and caseback	Sapphire crystal (hardness 9)	
Movement dimensions	Diameter: 37.3 millimetres; height: 9.6 millimetres	
Ref. Nos.	130.032	130.025
Case	Pink gold	Platinum
Dial	Solid silver, argenté	Solid silver, rhodié
Hands	Pink gold	Rhodiumed gold
Strap	Hand-stitched red brown crocodile strap	Hand-stitched black crocodile strap
Clasp	Lange safety folding clasp in solid pink gold	Lange safety folding clasp in solid pink platinum

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