

MEN'S

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**One great tradition
pays tribute to another
as purveyor of luxury
writing instruments
Caran d'Ache signs
off on its ultimate
horological hat-doff,
the limited edition
1010**

SWISS SIGNATURE



Caran d'Ache has been registering double digit growth for the past five years under the leadership of its CEO Silvio Laurenti

Think of it as a little bit like The Beatles doing an Elvis Presley cover. Not one to shy away from giving respect when it's due, upscale pen manufacturer, Caran d'Ache, pays an unabashed homage to Switzerland's greatest watchmaking marques with its limited edition 1010 fountain pens; a roll-out that snuggles up so cosily to the handcrafted tenets and aesthetics of high-end watchmaking, you might just forget that it's actually a pen and slap it on your wrist instead of sliding it into your suit pocket.

Named 1010 in reference to a timepiece's upturned hands at 10 minutes past 10 (you'll find this geometrically pleasing configuration in just about every watch ad), the fountain pen collection is really an open love letter to the pantheon of watchmaking heavyweights, decked out from cap to nib in embellishments that watch aficionados will find familiar.

Quite the full-on horological embrace, the pen's dual-case body is wrapped both on the inside and out by lively mechanical motifs of interlocking wheels, cogs and curvaceous bridges to recall the spectacular skeleton watches from Vacheron Constantin and Richard Mille. Look closer and more such references can be found; from a hint of Audermars Piguet's Royal Oak with an exposed screw on the clip, to a touch of Breguet with its discreet salute to mechanical movements by way of a balance wheel tucked at the end of the body. Why, even unscrewing the pen cap with its crimped lines feels uncannily like winding up a watch.



Priced at almost RM386,840 and worth every penny, those who are interested in copping a gold 1010 had better be quick about it, as only one piece (with the auspicious serial number eight, no less) is allocated to the Singapore market

"The great Swiss watch brands have been pivotal in driving the luxury realm that we are also a part of. So this is our way of showing our appreciation for the Swiss watch industry. The idea is also to show to the world Caran d'Ache's version of a high complication pen," explains the CEO of Caran d'Ache, Silvio Laurenti, of the premise behind the 1010. And like all high-end complications worth their exclusive cachet, the 1010 comes in limited editions of 10 pieces in gold set with a 0.11 carat Top Wesselton diamond on its clip, as well as 500 silver plated, rhodium-coated pieces.

Further joining the dots between Caran d'Ache and the Swiss watchmaking industry, the 64-year-old Swiss-Italian says the parallels go beyond both having a shared national heritage. In fact, he likens Caran d'Ache to the country's revered watch manufactures; brands like Jaeger-LeCoultre and Patek Philippe which produce watches in their entirety within their own factories. "Caran d'Ache sees itself as part of great in-house tradition. All our pens are fully developed and manufactured from within our factory in Geneva," he says.

"It's not enough to simply decorate the pen the way other companies do. It's not just a matter of printing a pattern on the pen; we invest in tools and manpower that allow us to create such mini sculptural art," he adds and points out that apart from assembling, testing and adjusting each component of the 1010 by hand, special machinery has also been put in place to engineer the pens' gold and silver-plated case.

That said, Silvio will have you know that his pens are as much a proper writing instrument as it is an objet d'art. "Of course some collectors buy our limited edition pens to be admired. But they are also, above all things, practical products," he says. "You wouldn't buy an Aston Martin just to park it in the garage would you?"

Despite a comparatively more accessible price point at approximately RM64,473, the silver plated, rhodium-coated models look just as stunning with an interplay of silver and gold metallic tones