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ZRC 1964 “French Navy” Reissue



The watchmaking brand ZRC, founded in Geneva in 1904, has reissued the famous “Grands Fonds” dive watch. In 1964, it became the official watch of the French Navy. The new, robust and reliable model features all the technical features developed by ZRC and has everything you need for a safe deep-sea dive.



ZRC was founded by Edmond Zuccolo and Joseph Rochet in 1904. The firm first launched the Grand Fonds model in 1958. In 1964 the watch was chosen as the French Navy's official watch, with the approval of NATO. The robust model with cutting-edge technical features adapted to deep-sea diving was also used by combat swimmers from the Commando Hubert, the French Diving School, the mine-clearance divers of Toulon, the Paris Fire Brigade and the Italian Navy.

Half a century later, the GF300 (GF standing for Grands Fonds and 300 for the depth of watertightness) was reissued and adopted by the Mediterranean Mine-Clearance Divers' Unit as its official watch. The model was such a big success that Georges Brunet, the great-grandson of ZRC's co-founder, Joseph Rochet, decided to make it more widely available.

The 1964 "Royal Navy" Reissue looks like no other timepiece in the watchmaking world. The monobloc case, made of 316L steel and watertight down to 300m, is 40.5mm wide. The design stands out due to the solid bevelled lugs, while the crown, at 3 o'clock on most watches, is here shifted to 6 o'clock, removing the risk of inadvertent handling and providing more comfort on the wrist. To guarantee even greater safety, ZRC developed the Crown Protection System™, a steel link with a half-moon cut-out preventing the strap from being attached if the crown is not safely screwed in.

The new GF300 is a real diving tool, completed by innovations that are specifically designed for people working at sea, such as the unidirectional rotating crown

with 60 notches. The watch is equipped with a steel ring coated in black DLC (Diamond-Like Carbon) with phosphorescent dots providing vital reference points for divers. And to prevent the bezel from being blocked by crystallisation from sea salt, ZRC has included one of its many inventions: the Easy Clean System (ECSTM). With a patent pending, this system makes use of fresh water to dilute and evacuate salt and dirt.

The matt black dial is protected by a curved anti-reflective sapphire glass. Large Arabic numbers at the cardinal points are linked by bevelled hour markers and encircled by a row of luminescent dots. Moving above them are two magnum hands for the hours and minutes. Super-LumiNova® X1 covers the wide, rectangular hands, with an arrow at the tips to make them perfectly visible even in the darkest sea depths. The seconds are shown with a "lollipop" style second hand and phosphorescent dots.

At the heart of the impressive screwed caseback is a sophisticated version of the calibre ETA 2824-2. This famous self-winding mechanical movement – a guarantee of Swiss watchmaking excellence – runs at the standard frequency of 28,000 vibrations an hour (4hz) and provides a power reserve of 38 hours.

Because "life is adventure" the 1964 "French Navy" Reissue can be worn on dry land or at sea. To adjust it to your wrist, to slip it under a shirt cuff or over a wetsuit, ZRC has developed an ingenious extensible strap. Two links on either side of the case can be extended using an embedded spring system, so that you can set it automatically without further ado.

The ocean awaits.

