

AT LARGE



MARKING QUALITY TIME  
BR 01-92 Radar

Bell & Ross are one of the surprise successes of recent times, having established a distinctive design language grounded in highly functional, oversized and square watch cases. With their cool credentials firmly in place, the brand is entering a new phase of development, incorporating a more diverse range of models that is still unmistakably Bell & Ross in aesthetics and ethos.

The more conventional round watch cases recall many of the signature details of their angular predecessors, yet it is the limited-edition examples of horological hocus-pocus released at this year's Baselworld watch show that are most likely to get juices flowing, none more so than the BR 01-92 Radar.

Just 500 of these models will be produced worldwide, ensuring exclusivity is included in the price tag. Buyers may be more interested in the instruction manual initially, though, as making sense of these readouts takes a little practice.

As with many a Bell & Ross, the aesthetics are inspired by professional aircraft cockpits, yet the BR 01-92 Radar sets itself apart by challenging established conventions of what a watch display should fundamentally look like. Doing away with the hands completely, three concentric black disks with green, red and yellow markers (for seconds, minutes and hours respectively) rotate around a central point. Two perpendicular axes — marked with 15, 30, 45 and 60 seconds on the inner ring and 3, 6, 9 and 12 o'clock on the outer ring — then translate the rotating discs into a meaningful readout.

As a result, the hands and dial of this watch are inseparable. The only immovable design elements of the 46mm case front are the four prominent screws located at each corner, also made of stainless steel and coated in a stealthy black carbon finish.

The playful interpretation of a watch's display might be expected from a Japanese-made digital timepiece, not a high-end manufacturer based in the heart of Swiss watch-making territory. Bell & Ross are full of youthful exuberance, and this is just the kind of watch to help the industry reach out to a younger audience of consumers who might not otherwise have "traded up".

The BR 01-92's exterior belies the complexity of its inner workings. Not only does it house a reliable ETA 2892 movement, but the three discs had to be constructed from an innovative ultra-lightweight material so as to minimise their impact on the watch's power reserves. Swiss craftsmanship and playful irreverence, you say? Who'd have thought it? MATT MORLEY

Retail price: R55 000;  
Movement: ETA 2892  
Case: carbon-coated stainless steel, 46mm diameter  
Features: disk-based display, water resistant to 100m  
Available at Bellagio stores, (011) 883 2215/7



PASSING THROUGH  
Grand Dédale Country Estate on Doolhof Wine Estate

Wellington, for me, is the new Franschhoek, or rather what Franschhoek once was, sans the oversubscribed, over-marketed strip of award-winning restaurants, constructed cellars and picture-perfect allotments of vine-addled, whitewashed courtyards serving overpriced haute cuisine and tasting menus. Wellington has more honesty about it; it's proper farm territory, without the estate agents and developers, and it hasn't yet been besieged by agri-tourism.

Below the spectacular Bainskloof Pass is the verdant 380ha where the Doolhof Wine Estate and, on it, Grand Dédale Elegant Country House recline in a lush cul-de-sac of renosterveld, orchards and vineyards. The name Doolhof has two meanings: a "maze" and "a place where one has to retrace one's steps", or a cul-de-sac. It is almost certainly the latter meaning that led a young Jacques Portier from Moscroon in Flanders, in 1709, to bestow the name upon the land on which he had settled, for the property ends high on the rugged slopes of the Palmietberg.

Grand Dédale takes its name from the French word for "labyrinth", and, 300

years later, with its gracious, pillared verandah, oak-lined landscaped gardens and modernised French renaissance interior, one has to agree that the name is appropriate.

The manor house, with its six individually designed and appointed en-suite bedrooms and attendant freestanding stone cottage dating from 1707, has been renovated and decorated to a standard that would likely befit an upmarket French country hotel. There are three suites downstairs and three upstairs in the loft.

Coir carpets and under-floor heating (and air-conditioning) run the length of the room, while the polished, heated, tiled bathroom, with its deep Victorian bath and view out over the oaks and the winery, is a pleasure to loll in.

The clever use of mirrors, printed wallpapers and eclectic furniture pieces offsets exposed yellowwood beams and the Cape historical setting, giving one a feeling of being an extra in Sofia Coppola's *Marie Antoinette*.

Resident chef Heila Basson has a deep love for the Wellington area, and it is reflected in her cooking, which is largely inspired by locally sourced

produce, whether vegetables, cheeses or meats. Her passion and care comes through in the taste and presentation of her food, neither too fancy nor too easy. Accompanied by the palatable, award-winning Doolhof wines, the meals are comprehensive.

The valley in which Doolhof lies, between Bainskloof and the Groenberg mountain range, has soils that are finer, more balanced and deeper than in the surrounding countryside, with the clay content evenly distributed. A mixture of Malmesbury shale, homogenic Glenrosa and Clovelly soils ensure the vine roots are able to descend to a depth of 4m and beyond. Two white varieties, Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay, are grown, with a substantial number of reds, including Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Malbec, Merlot, Pinotage and Shiraz.

I left heartened and content that I had been welcomed into and had blissfully engaged with a part of Cape history. DAVID ALLARDICE

For information call (021) 873 4089, email [info@granddedale.com](mailto:info@granddedale.com) or visit [www.granddedale.com](http://www.granddedale.com)