

WATCHES AND JEWELRY

## Omega introduces authentication program as secondhand market grows

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*Omega watches older than 30 years can receive Certificates of Authenticity. Image credit: Omega*

By STAFF REPORTS

Swiss watchmaker Omega is taking steps to improve transparency in the pre-owned timepiece market by certifying the authenticity of its vintage pieces.

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The Certificate of Authenticity is available to Omega timepieces that are 30 years or older. Each watch is personally reviewed by the Omega Heritage Team in Bienne, Switzerland.

"Our ambition is to create more trust for Omega watches within the vintage and pre-owned sector and help to grow confidence for people who are new to the buying market," said Raynald Aeschlimann, president/CEO of Omega, in a statement. "For the owners of the watches, it's a way to add some official assurance when selling, and also add some value to their timepieces."

### Authentication time

Consumers interested in having their Omega watches authenticated can present their timepieces at the brand's Swiss headquarters or at participating boutiques. At launch, only 12 boutiques are participating, including Omega's Fifth Avenue and Bond Street locations, but this is expected to grow.

The price costs 800 Swiss francs, or about \$800 at current exchange.

Omega's heritage team has access to extensive historical production records and servicing policies that are used to evaluate each vintage watch. The current condition of a watch will also be reviewed before it qualifies for a Certificate of Authenticity.



*Extract from the Archives is available to enthusiasts who would like to know more about the production history of their Omega products that are older than 10 years. Image credit: Omega*

The process differs from Omega's "Extract from the Archives" designation, which offers consumers information about when their watch was produced.

Online marketplaces have contributed to the growth of the secondhand market for timepieces, which has made authentication more important than ever.

Launched last year, eBay Authenticate is aimed at giving shoppers peace of mind when buying high-priced goods on the marketplace by having items verified by professional authenticators. Earlier this year, eBay added authentication for around 30 watchmakers, including Rolex, Patek Philippe, Omega, Audemars Piguet, Breitling and Panerai.

These timepieces came from top-rated sellers and are verified by third party experts. The 7,000 new, pre-owned and vintage timepieces available on eBay at launch ranged in price from \$500 to \$50,000 ([see story](#)).

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