

WATCHES

# Another Epic Rolex Daytona Auction Is Coming in 2018

## Can Phillips best its \$17.8 million record for a single watch?

By **Stephen Pulvirent**

27 dicembre 2017, 11:55 GMT+1

From



Source: Hodinkee

Originally published by Stephen Pulvirent on [Hodinkee](https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/phillips-announces-daytona-ultimatum-thematic-sale) <<https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/phillips-announces-daytona-ultimatum-thematic-sale>>.

Phillips has just announced that this spring it will host a thematic sale called "Daytona Ultimatum," focused exclusively on the well-known Rolex chronograph. The auction will take place in Geneva on May 12, 2018, and will offer "an extremely limited selection of the finest, rarest, and best-preserved Rolex Daytona wristwatches known to exist." This of course comes in wake of [Phillips selling Paul Newman's Rolex Daytona in October](https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/paul-newman-rolex-daytona-auction-most-expensive-watch-ever) <<https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/paul-newman-rolex-daytona-auction-most-expensive-watch-ever>>, when it became the most expensive wristwatch ever sold.

While Phillips has not done a Daytona-themed sale before, Aurel Bacs hosted one when he was running the Christie's watch department back in November 2013. "Rolex Daytona 'Lesson One'" in many ways kicked off the era of super-hyped thematic sales that we're in now. It's also worth noting that the Daytona madness isn't limited to just the auction world – mega dealer Davide Parmegiani has just published a catalog called [111 Fabulous Daytona](http://davideparmegiani.ch/publications/) <<http://davideparmegiani.ch/publications/>>, which is exactly what it sounds like.



Sold at Phillips in May 2017 for \$3.7 million, this gold Oyster Paul Newman is the most expensive Daytona other than Paul Newman's own. Source: Hodinkee

For your daily dose of pedantry, can we please examine the name of this sale? "Daytona Ultimatum" is a pretty bold moniker. Beyond the colloquial use of ultimatum, it's also the singular accusative form of the Latin *ultimatus*, meaning the last or final bit of something. Is Phillips saying that it is planning on writing the final chapter in the story of the Daytona's journey into completely irrational, over-hyped territory? God, I hope so.

There's no question that the Daytona is a great watch and that there are many interesting and value-worthy examples from its more than five decades of continuous production. I'm not debating that. But the current state of the market, where every year someone seems to find a new tiny dial variant or previously unknown configuration, and that watch then pushes all Daytona prices up over the course of a two or three hour auction, is unsustainable. At some point, reality and rationality have to prevail.



Aurel Bacs during the "Rolex Daytona 'Lesson One'" sale at Christie's in 2013. Source: Hodinkee

For now, Phillips isn't saying anything about the exact watches that will be in the sale. That information will be released over the coming months as we get closer to the actual auction date. Considering all the big Daytona results we've seen over the last 24 months alone though, there are going to need to be some seriously insane watches in that catalog for Daytona Ultimatum to make the splash I'm sure the auction house is hoping for. All of that said, the Phillips team has given me no reason not to believe that they'll put together a group of watches that will create huge buzz and generate strong results. This will definitely be an interesting one to watch.

We'll obviously be following this story closely and will share more information with you as soon as it becomes available.

For more, visit [Phillips Watches online <http://www.phillipswatches.com/>](http://www.phillipswatches.com/).

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