



HYT
PRESS REVIEW

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WATCHES

## HYT H1 ALUMEN BLUE & H1 RED 2

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If there's one watch brand I can't get enough of, it's the "hydro-mechanical horologists" **HYT**. I find their liquid time display concept as fascinating today as I did when they presented their first fluid-filled timepieces over two years ago. Today, we look at two of their new pieces from Baselworld 2014, the H1 Alumen Blue & H1 Red 2.

And while these aren't totally new models this year at Baselworld, HYT CEO Vincent Perriard did assure me that the upcoming H3 is already in development and will supposedly be unlike any other HYT watch to date (you can watch my interview with him at Baselworld [here](#)).

I guess when you set the bar so high two years in a row and at such an early stage of a brand's life, you eventually have to slow things down a little to develop internally. Because HYT's concept is so out-of-the-box and touches upon fields that are as far from watchmaking as pharmaceuticals, it comes as no surprise that the startup brand decided to put an emphasis on working out the kinks in their proprietary micro-fluid movement and stepping up the number of deliverable pieces this year.

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It would be unreasonable of us to expect a totally new watch or concept annually from such a niche player, especially at such an early stage in the brand's development. That being said, I do like how HYT is offering different version of their existing debut H1 model. They're not just doing it with case/dial combinations and different straps, but in totally new materials and treatments (like the [H1 Aze](#) we reviewed last year) as well as new liquid colors.




Just to give you a bit of background, developing new colors for the hour indicating micro-fluid in the capillary system is no simple task of simply switching up the pigments. Because the fluid has to retain very specific physical properties to ensure that the watch operates smoothly and that no residue is left on the inner walls of the capillary, any new color requires almost a year's worth of R&D and development. That's the main reason why HYT can't add a photo-luminescent liquid, which I'm sure many of us would love to see.

This year at Baselworld HYT presented a "hot and cold" duo of new H1 pieces, the H1 Alumen Blue and the H1 Red 2. One features a new case treatment, while the latter is equipped with a new liquid color.



Let's start with the H1 Red 2. HYT's take on the two-tone or bi-metal watch, the H1 Red 2 features a rose gold and titanium case, appropriately paired with a fluorescent red liquid for the retrograde hours indicator. I personally tend to find two-tone watches somewhat dated and tacky, though in this case (no pun intended) it works incredibly well. There's a certain industrial look to it, which I normally wouldn't associate with a gold watch.





The red fluid is incredibly legible. It doesn't have the same "pop" as the original yellow-green fluorescent liquid, but that also means it's much more visible even under weaker and indirect lighting.



The H1 Red 2 comes on a gray alligator strap with black veining, giving it a more luxurious look than the usual rubber strap.



The H1 Alumen Blue is a different beast altogether. Yes, it's the same watch with the original yellow-green fluid, but here HYT have gone with a new case material called "ALUN 316B", an alloy consisting of aluminum, magnesium, titanium and zirconium. I'm honestly not entirely sure whether ALUN 316B is the actual case material or a surface treatment applied onto a titanium base, but either way the final result is seriously cool.



The case itself has both blue and untreated titanium elements like the crown guard and sides of the case, which avoid making it a more gimmicky "all blue" watch. The color scheme continues on to the dial, where the exposed movement parts are done in matte silvered metal, leaving only the off-centered small minutes dial and power reserve markings in blue. Somehow, the blue elements make the fluorescent liquid appear so much more vivid than on other HYT pieces I've handled in the past.



In spite of its uncommon and eye-catching colour, the H1 Alumen Blue is surprisingly very wearable and even conspicuous compared to some of the other versions. Mind you, I tend to wear a lot of blue.



The HYT H1 Alumen Blue comes with a price tag of \$59,000 USD, while the H1 Red 2 is understandably pricier at \$69,000 USD. Both versions will be limited to 50 pieces.