

“True Luxury is Well-Being”

An Interview with Will Stein, President, Philip Stein



EDITORS' NOTE Before Will and Rina Stein founded Philip Stein in 2002, Rina gained experience in watch design and the details of product development at a Swiss watch brand that she owned and operated. With Will's background in marketing, Rina and Will combined their strengths to create a private-label watch business in 1998. In 2002, they became aware of the concept that natural frequencies can be replicated and launched the Philip Stein line of timepieces incorporating frequency-based technology.



Will Stein

They sold their first watch in August 2003. This multiple frequency technology has been incorporated into their new Prestige Collection line.

COMPANY BRIEF Philip Stein (www.philipstein.com) serves as an industry leader in mind/body wellness by integrating frequency-based technologies in luxury timepieces. This combination of frequency/positive energy and luxury provides a natural source of well-being to wearers. The Philip Stein brand is creating a new and expanded definition of luxury – Responsible Luxury. Luxury in Philip Stein products encompasses both the material – the beauty and quality of a fine timepiece – and the nonmaterial, which is being responsible for yourself and others by taking care of your own well-being. Responsible Luxury is luxury with purpose. Philip Stein watches have been featured in national magazines and on CNN.com and The View.

Why was the timing right for launching this brand and what was your vision?

We started in 2002. My wife and I always led a healthy lifestyle. One day, we were introduced to a technology that was said to be beneficial to the body and we were interested in it. Already working in the watch industry, we saw an opportunity to be the first well-being accessory encased in a luxurious watch. There was no company in the watch industry at the time that occupied this niche. We became known as the “feel good” or well-being watch.

Did the industry accept something so different early on?

It was so different that the industry assumed we would be gone soon after launch, but it has been 10 years and we're getting strong, locally and internationally.

What kind of technology is involved and how has it evolved?

It's called the Natural Frequency Technology and inside the watch is a metal disc that we have infused with frequencies and information that communicates and interacts with your own energy field. With this technology, we have the ability to mimic frequencies that we believe are beneficial to well-being and life.

One of the key frequencies is 7.83 HZ, which is the earth's natural frequency.

So when these frequencies communicate with your own energy field, they also enforce and enlarge your energy field and, as a result, people have reported feeling calmer, more relaxed, and balanced.

How did the collection begin and how broad has it become?

It was important to us to create an iconic watch because the watch business is so saturated. We needed to create a timepiece that had a certain brand DNA, which is why we came up with the dual time zone. So that became the Philip Stein DNA, the eight shape dial, and in the first three years, we only had dual time zone watches.

We wanted to create a watch which when you see it, you can immediately identify it as a Philip Stein watch.

And some of the newer pieces?

We also have pieces now that only have one time zone or pieces that have a square shape. So we have evolved over time. Our customers still sell mostly the Philip Stein Signature watch with the eight shape dial because this is still our bread and butter, but the market demanded other models and shapes.

Are you more focused on the female market?

Yes, not only because the watch is very appealing to the female market but because women are more open to new things, especially when it comes to health and well-being.

One of the first celebrities who came across the watch in 2003 was Oprah Winfrey and that gave us a big boost in the female market.

How do you couple quality with affordability for these pieces?

It's important for us to look at what the market demands. In the beginning, our watches started at \$800, but because of the recession, it was important for us to create watches at a price point of \$450 or \$500, and this gave us a big push, especially in the U.S. market.

Is Europe the primary market?

No, the U.S. with Canada and the Caribbean is our base and where we built our foundation.

But the other strong market for us is Asia, especially China. Whatever marketing action you take in China, there is a global impact, because today Chinese tourists travel everywhere.

Do you distribute through retail partners?

We're distributing in the U.S. through retail partners, and overseas, we have distributors in each country.

How critical is your focus on after-sales service?

It's critical, because a watch needs to be serviced and cleaned. That is also where you differentiate among watch brands. It was important for us to keep customer service within our office so we have control over it and know what the customer demands.

As a result of the recession, is there a flight back to quality today and an appreciation for value in brands?

Yes. Luxury is a very broad expression, and for us, it's not only the material part of the watch but the technology, because our motto is “True luxury is well-being.” So that's a big part of what we do.

Do you foresee natural extensions as you build the brand?

The watches remain our focus. But over the years, we have found the technology can be applied to other product lines as well, like our wine wand, which is an accessory for wine aficionados. It helps to aerate the wine within minutes rather than hours.

Also, we heard from customers that they slept much better with our watches. So I asked our research team to mimic frequencies of the human body when asleep. We did a preliminary clinical study and the results were good so we launched the Philip Stein Sleep Bracelet in 2011 overseas.

How is the brand defined?

We were a watch brand when we started out. Today, we call ourselves a well-being lifestyle brand, because we will come out with more products that will try to improve one's quality of life using the Natural Frequency Technology. ●

Signature Chronograph watch with Ionic Black Case and Dial on a Black Plated Stainless Steel (interchangeable) Bracelet (left); Signature Chronograph watch with a Steel Case and Fashion Steel Dial, Interchangeable Stainless Steel Bracelet (center); Signature Round 40mm Steel Case, Mother of Pearl Dial on Interchangeable Strap (right)