

## Swiss watches naming on the Chinese Market An insight of Nomen China

In most Chinese people's minds, some Swiss watch brand names, like **ROLEX** (劳láo: work; 力lì: power; 士shì: man, person), are as eminent as the symbols of high quality watches and even social status.




These collection names of ROLEX, SWATCH and OMEGA must appeal to you as well as Swiss watches' quality and superiority. However, what Chinese name you would expect for them? Should they be just translated literally or vested with a totally new meaning?


A good brand name in Chinese not only helps you with identification, but also casts an impression of dignity and mysteriousness on you. Yet, naming in Chinese is not that simple or arbitrary.

It is evident that most brands and collections of Swiss watches have a special and powerful Chinese name. Nevertheless, some Chinese names are somewhat awkward and inappropriate.

The Nomen China Team together with the Nomen Switzerland team collected 14 brand names and 109 collection names of Swiss watches, and made a close review on them. We make a journey in this article to find out how these mythical names are adapted into Chinese.

	<p><b>AUDEMARS PIGUET (AP) Brand</b>          (爱彼: 爱 · ài, love; 彼, bǐ, that, counterpart; love the other part)</p>
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Despite of the consistent sound with the acronym of its English name, it sounds awkward if pronounced in Chinese, and it even has negative significations in many of Chinese dialects (the pronunciation of 'bǐ' is the same as female's sex organs). What's more, the Chinese name doesn't make much sense and cannot represent this brand's culture. The western brand name could be better adapted to China.

	<p><b>TISSOT Brand</b>          (天梭: 天 tiān, sky; 梭, suō, shuttle; the shuttle moving in the sky)</p>
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Phonetically translated though, this brand name of Swiss watch is equally pinned with a more powerful and striking meaning.

Since English language is alphabetic and arbitrary, a random combination of letters probably conveys no meaning. For example, TISSOT tells little implication about the brands, but the Chinese name "天梭" matches the phonetic similarity and also creates an imaginative meaning. This name not only sounds good to Chinese consumers, but also associates them with a strong feeling of time and space.



### **The Submariner Collection**

(潜行者: 潜 qián, submerge; 行 xíng, move; 者 zhě, person; the person moving secretly)


What's your first impression of the ROLEX Submariner collection name?

Mysterious?

Are you curious and willing to find out what it is about? That's how this collection tries to attract you! When your curiosity is aroused, you are eager to unearth the "secrets" behind the names.


What are the differences, appearance, functions, or properties? Such collection names as **Oyster Perpetual** (蚝式恒动: 蚝 háo: Oyster; 式: shì: style; 恒: héng: permanent; 动 dòng: move), **Constellation** (星座 xīngzuò: constellation) and **Irony** (金属 jīnshǔ: metal, iron) can all magnetize you to find more information about the product.



 A photograph of a Longines watch with a white dial, gold-toned case, and a black leather strap.	<p><b>The Lyre Collection</b> (琴韵, 琴 qín, lyre, 韵 yùn, rhyme, the rhyme of lyre)</p>
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The Lyre Collection is semantically adapted into “琴韵” (琴 qín, lyre, 韵 yùn, rhyme, the rhyme of lyre) in Chinese. "琴韵" is one of collection names of **LONGINES** (浪琴: 浪làng: wave; 琴qín: lyre) in Chinese with obvious filiations between the Chinese collection name and the Chinese brand name: the enclosure of "琴" is consistent with its brand name both in form and connotation, and makes it look perfectly as a subsidiary of LONGINES.


This naming choice is especially well-thought for China as all these brands were quite recently introduced on the Chinese market and requires to hold together to build awareness and reflect strongly their identity. Moreover, the semantic approach extols the feel of softness, grace and elegance further than the English name.

	<p><b>The Dolce Vita Collection</b> (黛卓维纳: 黛, dài, a color for make-up; 卓, zhuó, outstanding, 维, weí, keep, maintain; 纳, nà, accept)</p>
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Quite differently, this LONGINES' collection name was phonetically adapted.

However, the whole name, which has a sort of exotic taste, is immediately associated with something about romance and happiness when you first saw it. Apart from the reflection in feature and target consumer, these Chinese characters entail rich implications and sound in correspondence with the original name.

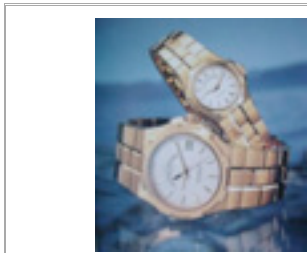
Doubtless, this is one of the most impressing and appropriate identifications for a watch.

	<p><b>The La Grande Collection</b> (嘉岚: 嘉 jiā, nice, beautiful; 岚 lán, mist in the mountain; the pretty mist in the mountain)</p>
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The naming of this LONGINES' collections is quite independent. It applies neither semantic nor phonetic adaptation. Even so, with the expression of nature and elegance, it well matches the artistic and aesthetic theme of LONGINES' constant style.



江诗丹顿: 江 jīāng: river; 诗 shī: poem; 丹 dān: red, loyal; 顿 dùn: sudden, flash



### The Overseas Collection

(纵横四海: 纵横 zònghéng: length and width, able to move unhindered; 四海: sìhǎi, everywhere, worldwide; tread unhindered in the world)

With a Chinese idiom as the series name, VACHERON-CONSTANTIN signifies this collection of watches with a broad and profound vision. If you are a male, you'll be doubtlessly impressed by the spirit beyond this name.



### The Royal Eagle Collection

(皇家鹰: 皇, huáng, royal; 家, jiā, home; 鹰, yīng, eagle; royal eagle)

This collection name is a complete semantic translation. However, its pronunciation sounds like an ordinary person's name "黄huáng: one of Chinese family names; 家jiā, home; 英yīng: excellent people" or something common in Chinese. Consequently, this name may be introduced to you in written form, but its pronunciation fails to get an effect of distinction and privilege of a Swiss watch.



欧米茄: 欧ōu: Europe; 米mǐ: rice, meter; 茄jiā: exotic meaning



### The De Ville Collection

(蝶飞: 蝶 dié, butterfly; 飞, feī, fly; the flying butterfly)

In choosing the means of adaptation, this collection name of OMEGA is only switched well in sound rather than in meaning. Although the meaning in Chinese is totally differently from its original version, this collection is given a beautiful sense which conveys you natural and imaginative scenery.



### The Seamaster Collection

(海马: 海, haǐ, sea; 马, mǎ, horse; the sea horse)

Seamaster is divided into 'Sea' and 'Master', and they are switched by both means of semantic and phonetic translation. Sea is literally put into '海' in meaning, while master is put in to '马' in sound. Translated in such a way, this collection name of OMEGA is concise in form and sound, also easier to remember and identify.



Last but not the least, it is worth of mentioning SWATCH's (斯沃琪: 斯sī:this; 沃wò: rich, fertile; 琪qí: pretty jade) efforts on naming.

Besides the Chinese naming of brands and collections, SWATCH not only names for each collection, but also gives a special or poetic Chinese name to every watch style in that collection.

One style called Squirrel Time(忙碌的花栗鼠: 忙碌mánglù: busy; 的de: of; 花栗鼠huālishǔ, squirrel) tells a story about a squirrel family playing games, and another Folkloral Chic(田园诗: 田tián: field; 园yuán: garden; 诗shī: poem) style expresses the beauty of countryside with simple and crude designs.



Squirrel Time (left) and Folkloral (right) Swatch watches

At present, the Swatch group is the big brother of watches in the globe, and it leads quite ahead in China's market as well. When we're paying attention to Chinese brand naming about Swiss watches, we can't help considering that whether Swatch's success and its concentration on such details of naming is only a coincidence or not...