

There's no doubt about it. Brescia, Italy, is the 'home' of shotguns. There's plenty of choice available from a long list of fine Italian shotgun makers – with pricing aimed at the most frugal to the highest roller and just about every other budget in between! Now and then something unique from this 'land of shotguns' comes along that makes one do a double take, and Caesar Guerini has certainly produced one of those "let's take a closer look at that one" range of over and under shotguns.

I recently had the privilege of taking a test drive in one of about eight models of Guerini creations. It was named the Summit Limited – and Wes Lang and Tom Smith of Guerini USA were nice enough to send it to me with a spare left handed stock. Actually, they sent me two guns. One with a double plated nickel finish called Tinaloy, (which wouldn't be my first choice as a name for a finish, but...) which was the color very close to 'French Grey' and the other sported an absolutely beautiful 'Color Case' hardened finish on the receiver. Both guns came straight from the

TRULY SOMETHING
NEW FROM ITALY!

STEVE FISCHER REPORTS

GUERINI



Shot Show in Las Vegas and were without firing pins. Bummer! I had to wait two days for the pins to arrive before I could get it on the range. Since I had to change stocks and install the firing pins, I figured I might as well take a good look at the inner workings.

A CLOSE LOOK AT THE BARRELS

I started by getting out my bore gauge and tape measure for

checking out the barrels. Overall length was 32 inches and the bore diameter measured .725. In comparison to some other manufacturers, the .725 bore is a bit on the tight side – with many other guns using diameters all the way to .750. Not that the smaller diameter is a problem, because it pretty much coincides with other Italian shotguns. The bores were chrome lined utilizing the innovative design 'DuoCon' forcing cones. The first conical section, as stated in the

Guerini catalog, is to maximize chamber pressure for the use of fiber wads and the remaining 4.5" forcing cone section reduces recoil and increases pattern uniformity. That, of course, would get tested when at the range. While at the chamber end, I couldn't help but notice the nice jewelling on the sides of the chamber area and the Boss-style ejector system, making for very positive ejection.

The barrels were manufactured by Guerini and were made from

solid bar N-42 CrMo-4 and sport a low 10 mm wide rib, ventilated side ribs and, I might add, a beautiful hi-luster blue finish. Six extended and knurled screw chokes come standard and the barrels are not expanded at the end to accommodate the threading for the screw chokes, giving the barrels a very slim and graceful appearance at the muzzle. Another special feature regarding the screw chokes is that they are designed not to shoot loose when tightened finger



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tight – and have no choke wrench slots in the end. They measured spot on for constriction as labeled.

AT THE RECEIVER

Quickly, my eye got caught on the Color Case hardening on the Summit Limited model. It was very reminiscent of the old Colt Single Action Army revolvers. Rich dark tones of brown and beige as well as mottled blacks and blues over the entire receiver body makes it stand out on the gun rack. Tasteful etching on all sides with the name Caesar Guerini in gold letters on both sides of the receiver was just enough. The recoil plate area was nicely sculptured in the Boss-style even though the action was a box lock. The Color Case hardening is encased in a baked clear finish to help it fight handling wear and the hi-luster blue finish on the lightly engraved trigger guard completed

hammer spring system, very similar to the Beretta line, and a similar styled safety/barrel selector on the top tang of the receiver. The internals were nicely blued and some polishing was done on these parts – such as the hammers and inertia block – which pivoted on ball bearings. The safety lever also contained the barrel selector with one red dot for the bottom barrel and two red dots for the top. The hammer pin was large and highly polished, as was the cross pin for the firing pins. A close look at the sears showed where the hammer could catch the safety notch of the anti-doubling feature – something that anyone who has ever had a double fire on an over and under will certainly appreciate! The hammers are the rebounding type, clearing the firing pins from the face of the receiver without leaving a drag mark on the rear of the shell.

The gold plated trigger was

remarkable in that it has three (count ‘em!) adjustments. Pre-travel, over-travel and for length of pull. Now that’s neat! The locking system is similar to Browning’s Citori box system with the addition of two lumps in the bottom of the receiver to add strength. No hinge pin either. The barrels are hung on trunnions and should the unlikely event occur that the barrels needed to be re-fitted, these trunnions are rotatable and or replaceable. The cocking rod runs right down the middle of the receiver, eliminating the need for any holes in its bottom.

STOCK AND FORE-END

This Summit Limited model came to me with a very nice Turkish Walnut stock and fore-end. The checkering was about 20 lines per inch in the traditional style of a right and left panel on the buttstock and a nicer (and costlier) wrap-around

style on the fore-end, leaving a diamond border around a tear shaped inletted fastener for one of the screws on the under side center of the fore-end iron. The takedown lever on the schnable shaped fore-end was a push button type latch. Another nice feature!

Now came the time to put on the left-handed stock, install the firing pins and make a trip to the patterning board – a first stop to make sure the barrels shoot to point of aim.

ON TEST

I tested each barrel at 30 yards distance from the patterning board and each barrel printed center (50-50). I also shot an overlap with the majority of the shot pretty much filling the 30 inch circle on the patterning board. No problem there, so off to the sporting field.

My test course for the Guerini



and complimented the rest of the beauty of the receiver.

As I dove into the inner sanctum of the receiver, I found lots of nice little surprises, many of which are missing on even higher priced over and under shotguns. The first thing I noticed was the captive coil

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was fairly stiff as Glenn, the owner of Sporting Clays International, sets targets for those of us who like to compete, as well as some softer ones for the regular daily crowd. There is usually a sign posted on the counter telling which stations or course is set more difficult, so the



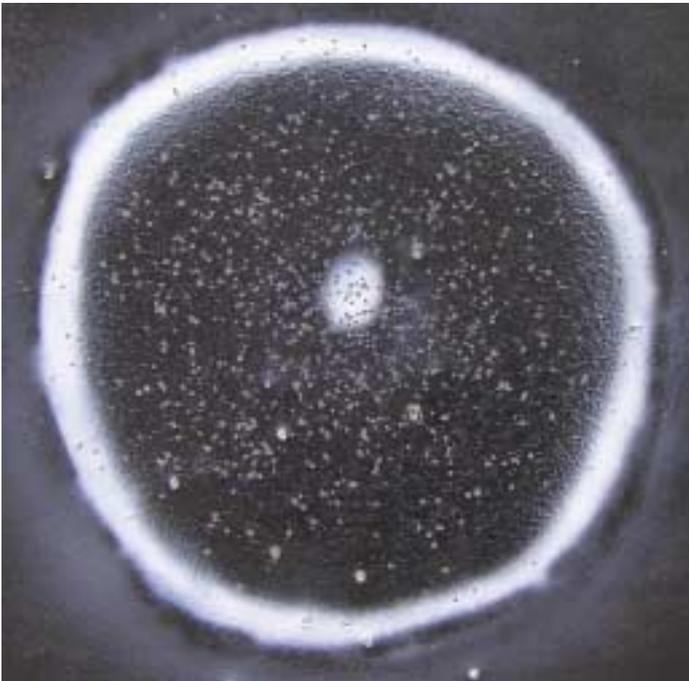
PATTERN TESTING THE GUERINI.



NICE PATTERN FROM THE TOP MODIFIED BARREL.



CENTERED PATTERN FROM THE BOTTOM BARREL (LIGHT MOD).



BOTH BARRELS SHOT OVERLAPPING (DEAD CENTER).

made a quick trip back to the car, changed to the 'righty' stock, and turned it loose. Here is a list of some of the comments: "Wow, nice trigger pull!", "Man, it moves really fast with these long barrels!", "How much is it?", "How much is it?" and finally, "How much is it?"

When I told them the price they were frankly quite surprised, expecting a much higher sticker than the one that comes on that model. The Summit lists out at \$2650 in the Tinaloy finish, while the Summit Limited is \$2995 with the Color Case finish. Both come with molded plastic cases, six chokes and choke box, a stock wrench and soft velveteen cloth containers for the stock and receiver and the barrel and fore-end.

Barrel lengths run 30, 32 and 34 inch lengths in these two models. Other gauges available are both 20 and 28 gauge, with barrel lengths out to 32 inches. There are several other models in the Caesar Guerini line, including field models with 3 inch chambers and some versions with engraved side plates – unique in that they have no screws passing through them. Pricing at the retail level starts at \$2295 and goes up to \$6995 at the higher grade end.

The Caesar Guerini guns have the look and feel of the more expensive Boss-style action guns and the features of the models tested were more than one would expect at this price range. Although not exactly thrilled at the name, the Tinaloy finish is good looking and should wear very well for heavy competition use. The Color Case finish is a knock out and my personal choice as a favorite. Call Caesar Guerini for more information and a brochure, or check out their web site. ■

The gun had an excellent 'feel' to it in that it felt good between the hands with the balance point about an inch in front of the hinge. I started on a fast quartering left to right and right to left report pair and with the light mod/mod combination of chokes got solid hits on both of the pair – and completed the eight bird station one down after swinging a bit fast through one of the left to right targets. As I shot the round, I found the gun moved very quickly for a 34 inch gun, but felt very comfortable with it after a few stations. About half way around, a few of my regular shooting buddies showed up and were fairly drooling over my shoulder wanting a chance to play with "another one of Fischer's test guns!" Knowing full well that I could never get away with a new test gun without passing it around for the troops to try, I

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