

Caesar Guerini Ellipse Evo Sporting



It was last March at the Barnsley Resort in northwest Georgia where I first met up with the Caesar Guerini Ellipse Evo Sporting. There were a number of other Guerini sporting clays and hunting guns to shoot and drool over on that outing, but I remember liking the looks of this new Evo Sporting, and I did shoot it better than the other over-unders I tried. Consequently, I couldn't wait to get my hands on this newest Evo to put to the test in my own backyard.

The first Ellipse Evos were 20- and 28-ga. hunting guns, lightweight, easy-swinging smoothbores that would be ideal in the woodcock bottoms, for grouse in the grapevines, and quail in the pines and sedge. I got to test one early on in their introduction and in fact wrote about the 20-ga. Evo in my July column. The brand-new 12-ga. sporting model nevertheless bears a review this soon thereafter.

With these Evo models, Caesar Guerini has taken a different approach with a round-body receiver. To most of us, the round body has a most appealing look, eye candy of course since that receiver configuration doesn't make the gun shoot any better. Most of you already know that more than a century ago, the world was introduced to the round-body action. Scottish maker Dickson is most often referred to as that receiver's innovator in classic side-by-sides, but I think there were a number of double gun manufacturers in Scotland who also made such receiver contours.

Wes Lang at Caesar Guerini USA tells me that a lot more



The Ellipse Evo Sporting's trigger can be moved back and forth to select your perfect grip-to-trigger distance.

has gone into the Evo receivers than merely grinding away metal at the action's bottom edges. The locking system remains the same as with all other Guerini over-unders, the barrels pivoting on trunnions, a receiver-wide bolt moving forward from the bottom of the receiver to engage lugs milled in the bottom rear of the monobloc. But other innards had to be redesigned. Evo receivers are actually a bit wider, so barrels from other Guerini over-unders will not interchange.

But it's not merely the round-body receiver that gives the



Caesar Guerini's new Ellipse Evo Sporting features a unique round body and superb engraving.

SPECIFICATIONS

Action: Over-under; barrels pivot on trunnions; lock up via receiver-wide bolt that engages lugs milled into the bottom of monobloc

Gauge: 12 only

Weight: 8 lbs., 10 ozs.

Barrels: 32" tested; 30" available

Chokes: Six extended screw-ins supplied

Stock: Dimensions: length of pull—14.75", drop at comb—1.5", drop at heel: 2.25"

Suggested Retail Price: \$6,120

Manufacturer/Importer: Caesar Guerini in Italy/Caesar Guerini USA, 700 Lake St., Dept. SC, Cambridge, MD 21613; (410) 901-1131; www.gueriniusa.com



The barrel selector is part of the top-tang safety, with exquisite engraving also on the fences and opening lever.

Evo models their visual appeal. The engraving will catch your eye at first look. There's one heck of a lot of it, it's extremely well done, and the pattern is different than any you've ever seen before, a combination of deep relief and tight (not scroll) bouquets unlike what I've seen before. Intricate engraving further covers the top tang and the fences just behind the barrels, there's deep-relief engraving on the opening lever, and the trigger guard is engraved as well.

Compared with the Caesar Guerini Impact and its very high adjustable rib, perhaps the best-selling over-under of 2010 and still on backorder by many gun shops, the Evo Sporter comes back to a traditional look incorporating the round body and that special engraving pattern. Note that the engraving pattern wraps around the receiver for a constant flow from receiver sides to receiver bottom. Engraving on the bottom of traditional receivers is separate and often different than the engraving pattern on the receiver's sides. Lang told me that he and Italy sweated this detail to get it right and that the first few tries didn't work to their scrutinizing eyes.

My test gun wore 32" barrels, but 30" are also available. It appears that 32" barrels in sporting clays guns are far out-selling those shorter. Both tubes were over-bored, measuring .733". Six screw chokes are included in the Evo's impact plastic case, although my test gun came only with the .727" skeet and .723" improved-cylinder chokes already screwed in. The screw-ins were blued, long at 3 1/8", and knurled. Unless I tightened them with the wrench provided, they would loosen slightly. In measuring the amount of choke, I could tell that there were long taper sections as well as long parallel sections. With many of the screw chokes I check these days, there's no parallel section at all.

The long barrels only weighed 3 lbs., 5 ozs. I've been told that all Caesar Guerini competition shotguns balance just ahead of the hinge area, and this is true of my test gun. My shooting took place on all very hot days, and those barrels did seem to get heated quickly—and stay hot. I could even feel the heat through the fore-end. Maybe this has something to do with barrels' lightness and resulting thinness. Most if not all 30" barrels sets I weigh heft more than these 32" tubes. The rib between the barrels is solid, and there's a solid rib on top. Unusual for a target gun, there is no mid bead, with a white bead at the muzzle. The top rib tapers from .350" at the breech to .295" at the muzzle, with top serrations running the full length to guard against distracting glare.

The fore-end is rounded off at the front and weighs 11.7 ozs. Like most Guerini over-unders, you detach the fore-end by depressing the button at the front. The gun weighs 8 lbs., 10 ozs., including the company's Kinetic Balancer installed in the buttstock. The walnut wears an oil finish, and



The fairly open grip on the Caesar Guerini Ellipse Evo sports very fine line checkering.

there's beautiful straight grain on both the buttstock and fore-end. The recoil pad is non-vented, and a thin black spacer separates it from the stock. The checkering, always well done on Italian shotguns because of their laser engraving procedures, is also very fine line at 32 lines per inch. If there's a grip swell, it's a tiny one. The grip is also quite open compared to many styles we see on sporting guns these days with significant curves.

I shot a variety of loads through the Evo Sporting with nary a hiccup. Like all Caesar Guerini double guns, the triggers are inertia, the pulls nice and crisp, at just a hair over 3 lbs. a little too light to my liking, but I'm betting that the pulls will suit most of you. The trigger itself appears to be stainless steel and can be moved back and forth to select your perfect grip-to-trigger distance. The barrel selector is part of the top-tang safety.

As of this writing, the Evo Sporting is so new that there's nothing on the company's website, so I measured the stock dimensions listed in the specifications sidebar. I particularly enjoyed shooting this one. You will, too. And then there's the eye candy of the round-body action and that distinctive, super-well-done engraving. This new sporter is definitely one to check out.

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