



BETTINSOLI DIAMOND DE LUXE 20 Gauge

//// by matthew gay

|Initial Impression

The Diamond Deluxe comes furnished with an ABS breakdown case branded with the maker's name. Upon opening the case the first thing that "pops" is the intricate engraving on the side plates accented with gold game birds. The barrels are cradled by a nicely figured forearm and the kit is rounded out with an accessories case, warranty card and manual. The accessories case contains the additional three choke tubes and a choke tube wrench.

Bettinsoli is an Italian manufacturer located in the center of the world in terms of firearms manufacturing. For more than five centuries, the valley town of Gardone Val Trompia, in Brescia, has stood at the forefront of firearms manufacturing innovation and technology. Many Italian manufacturers call this picturesque mineral rich area at the foot of the Alps, home.

|The Stock

The stock is Turkish walnut and very well figured with a hand rubbed satin finish. When putting the shotgun together, the forearm fit tight and securely to the barrel lug, and wood to metal fit was excellent. The edges are well rounded to reduce the potential for snagging during a mount or when maneuvering tight brush. There is a gentle right-handed palm swell on the pistol grip stock allowing for excellent control. The factory butt pad is $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick with medium density rubber and rounded at the top of the comb for quick mounting. Checkering is laser cut and offers more than adequate grip characteristics without being rough on the bare hand.

|The Receiver

The receiver on this model is truly

the star of the show. Side plates offer a nice canvas for the engraving which bears beautiful scroll work, framing the gold game bird accents. The action design on this model utilizes the time-tested and proven underlug locking mechanism made popular by John Moses Browning's superposed design. Being a field gun, this model comes with an automatic safety which can easily be disconnected by a competent gunsmith if so desired. While the barrel selector is installed in typical Italian fashion, atop the tang safety selector, Bettinsoli has integrated a simple yet brilliant feature to this selector switch.

Occasionally, with the typical Italian design, the barrel selector can get bumped slightly out of battery, rendering the gun un-fireable until the switch position is corrected. Such a thing is impossible with the Bettinsoli


Bettinsoli
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/// ...a dream to carry.

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Diamond Deluxe. The barrel selector can only be moved when the safety is on, meaning when it's set to fire, the selector is locked out.

The barrels articulate on replaceable trunnions, as opposed to a hinge pin, integrating two of the most durable design features ever conceived by manufacturers of over/under shotguns. This model has a single selective mechanical trigger which has little creep and broke right at five and a quarter pounds for the bottom and five and a half pounds on the top. Lock-up is very solid and absolute, as is expected from fine Italian manufacturers like Bettinsoli.

The Barrels – The Heart of a Shotgun

This model's 30" barrels are finished in a deep rich bluing and are chambered for three-inch shells. Barrels feature a solid mid-rib while the flat 6mm vented top rib is fitted with a fiber-optic front pin and no mid-bead. The barrels are threaded utilizing a Mobile

style choke. This shotgun comes with five flush mounted stainless-steel chokes in: cylinder, improved cylinder, modified, improved modified and full constrictions.

Performance on the patterning board was excellent, throwing properly regulated patterns. The barrel construction was well done with seamless solder joints and uniform contour. When fully assembled with 30-inch barrels and the choke tubes installed, this shotgun balanced about an inch and a quarter in front of the trunnions.

Shooting the Diamond Deluxe

I put this model through its paces on a sporting clays course and later at a pheasant preserve near me. First on the sporting course: with standard 1200 feet per second target loads, recoil was very manageable for a sub seven-pound gun. The balance was noticeable when starting from a FITASC mount as the barrels moved easily to the desired

breakpoint. The lighter weight was also noticeable when engaging longer targets. It was important to remember this was not a 10-pound sporter, the barrels moved swiftly.

On the pheasant preserve, the Diamond Deluxe was a dream to carry. Light and agile, yet stable. This model was quick to mount and comfortable to shoot with high velocity game loads. The medium density pad did its job well and the rounded top, made for seamless mounts. All controls on this model performed perfectly and the ejectors were well timed, removing spent shells with just the right amount of force.

The Bettinsoli Diamond Deluxe 20-gauge is a solid performer with an excellent pedigree. The aesthetics of this shotgun are quite beautiful. It would not be under-dressed on any gun rack in the country. ■

For additional information or to find a dealer near you visit bettinsoliusa.com



//// SPECIFICATIONS	
MODEL:	DIAMOND DELUXE
Gauge:	20G TESTED 12 G AVAILABLE
BARRELS:	30"
LOP:	14 ½"
DAC:	1 ½" *
DAH:	2 ¼" *
WEIGHT:	6 LBS 12 OZ
CHOKES:	5 FLUSH MOUNT (CYL, IC, M, IM, F)
SUGGESTED RETAIL:	\$2849
*as tested	