



OVERALL RATING

★★★★

WORKMANSHIP A+

PERFORMANCE A+

PRICE/VALUE A

Testers' Comments: A lot of gun—in terms of quality, durability, class and performance—for the price.

* Gorgeous engraving, checkering and wood. * Has one of the most striking engraving patterns of any production gun on the market. * Great triggers.

* Doesn't have especially trim lines—kind of boxy, but that's okay on a sporting clays gun. * Those 32-inch barrels love to swing. * Great fun on long crossers.



Testers' Comments: A dependable work-horse firearm that gets the job done. * Very nice gun for the money. * Cycles smoothly.

OVERALL RATING

★★★½

WORKMANSHIP C+

PERFORMANCE A

PRICE/VALUE B+

Remington 887

Any new pump gun carrying the Remington name will face inevitable comparisons to the iconic 870, which for more than 50 years has set an industry standard for affordability and reliability. So it is quite an ambitious undertaking to design a shotgun with the goal of improving on these two qualities, but that is exactly what Remington is attempting with the new 887.

The 887 is billed as a go-anywhere, do-anything gun that's intended to appeal specifically to new shooters. Think of it as the pump gun for people who would consider the 870 too complicated. While that might sound like a backhanded compliment, it really isn't meant that way. The 887 breaks down more easily than the 870 does, and requires even less care because of the plastic overmold-

ing that surrounds the exterior metalwork on the receiver and barrel, as well as plastic components, such as the trigger and trigger guard.

The overmolding gives the 887 a bulky and blocky profile, but in this case, looks are deceiving. The 887 surprised us with its light in-hand feel and lively swinging characteristics on the skeet field. The action cycles smoothly and rapidly, so follow-up shots on clays or birds are a snap. Features like the slide-release button on the front of the trigger guard and plain-English wording on the choke tubes (ours read "over decoys") go a long way toward making the 887 more intuitive to use and attractive to new shooters, and for that Remington deserves credit. (\$532; remington.com)



Caesar Guerini Apex Sporting

When it comes to building shotguns that blend beauty, performance and value, no one is doing a better job than Caesar Guerini, which has again earned top honors in our annual shotgun test, this time with its new Apex Sporting over/under.

The reason for Guerini's success is not a secret—the company delivers stylish and smartly designed guns at better prices than its double-gun competition. Whether you look at the quality of the wood, the overall fit and finish, the intricate engraving or the nuts-and-bolts ergonomics and handling, it's difficult to find fault with Guerini's products.

At nearly 8 1/2 pounds, the Apex is a big gun. Its 32-inch barrels and substantially proportioned stock are geared specifically for sporting clays. Once its barrels get moving, they track smoothly, which is a benefit when a target's line of flight is pre-established. The heft of the stock makes shooting hundreds of targets over the course of a

day less punishing, as do the innovative adjustable recoil-reducing weight inserts embedded in the stock, which also let the shooter fine-tune the gun's balance by changing the amount of weight he employs.

The only hiccup in the Apex's performance, and one that we've seen with other Guerinis that happen to share a common action design, is a tendency for somewhat erratic shell ejection.

The sharp and fine checkering on the grip and forend provide solid gripping areas, and the palm swell on the right-hand side of the grip adds a measure of control for the shooter as well.

Its crisp triggers, the best of the shotguns tested, add considerably to the shootability of the gun. The Apex is one of those guns that seems to glide toward the target, the end result being a satisfying cloud of orange shards raining across the field. It's a winner by any measure.

(\$7,550; gueriniusa.com)



*Testers' Comments: Performance far exceeded the appearance and craftsmanship of the gun. *Balance is far forward.*

OVERALL RATING	★☆☆/2
WORKMANSHIP	C
PERFORMANCE	C+
PRICE/VALUE	C

Brno 801.2

Whereas most shotguns destined for the uplands aspire to be as smooth and refined as a dram of 21-year-old Scotch, the Brno 801.2 goes down like a shot of Soviet-era vodka. Put another way, this shotgun gets the job done, but is a bit rough around the edges.

In the hands of our test team, the Brno broke its fair share of clays and handled well enough over the course of a couple days of shooting, but its muzzle-heavy balance will not suit everyone's shooting style.

On paper, the 801.2 has the features you'd expect in a bird gun costing \$3,000—better-than-average wood, an engraved receiver, a checkering pattern with some design flourishes, an automatic safety, removable choke tubes and the like—but the execution of these elements in the

final product leaves much to be desired. For example, the barrel-to-action fit, engraving and jewelery do not reflect the quality you'd expect in a gun of this price, and the inexplicable presence of exposed Torx screws on the bottom of the action are unflattering, to say the least.

Such indifference to aesthetics and craftsmanship puts the 801.2 at a disadvantage when compared to similarly priced shotguns, though the Brno did exhibit some favorable characteristics.

The trigger-mounted barrel selector and mechanical triggers were both well received by the test team, and the gun's ejectors are strong enough to toss a boulder over a castle wall. But it will take some design refinements for the 801.2 to reach its potential. **(\$3,007; cz-usa.com)**