

Sat Nav is a wonderful thing – usually. However, on this occasion my patience was starting to wear thin. I had put in the ZIP code for the factory of Luciano Bosis and here I was an hour later, down a small backstreet in a rural town sitting outside an innocuous looking Bank with a pair of large green doors opposite me. “*You have arrived at your destination*” taunted the sat nav in exactly the tone of voice that provokes psychotic episodes! Between expletives, I picked up my cell, dialling the factory and asking for help. “So you can see a

bank and opposite you are some large doors – good. I’ll open them for you now,” came the calming voice of Laura Bosis, daughter of founder Luciano. Somewhat taken aback, I drove under the archway that leads into the Bosis inner sanctum – and discovered something quite wonderful.

If you visit one of Italy’s volume gunmakers, the chances are you will be doing so in the built up industrial workshop that is the Brescia region – in Gardone Val Trompia to be more precise. Whether it’s Beretta, Franchi, Benelli, Zoli, Guerini or others, all

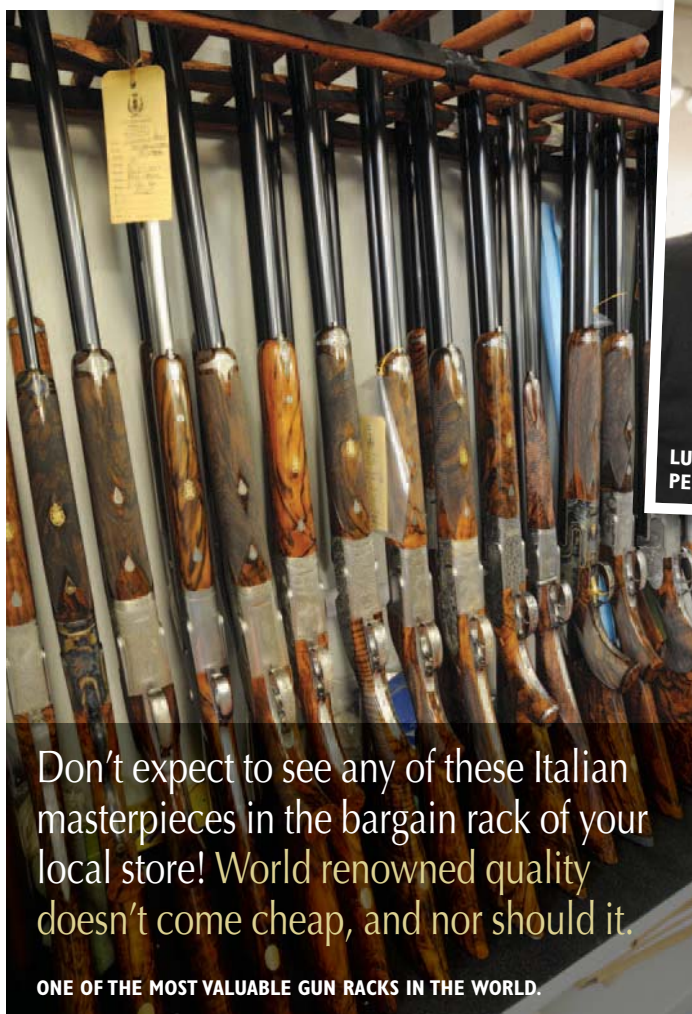
can be found within a few miles (or in some cases within a few yards) of each other with many sharing the arterial supply of parts and stocks that are produced by a clutch of specialist companies to keep the heart of this leviathan of gunmaking beating strongly. Tucked into the narrow valley floor, alongside the winding chaotic ribbon of asphalt known in the least romantic terms possible as the SPBS345, they all share a common geography and despite the individual brands and personalities involved, one could say that one factory looks very similar to another. That could not be said of Bosis.

For starters, it’s located on the wide open plain to the south of Gardone (in the understated town

THE WILD NEW FRONTIER

DON BRUNT TRAVELS TO ITALY TO VISIT ONE OF THE MOST EXCLUSIVE GUNMAKERS IN THE WORLD – **LUCIANO BOSIS**





Don't expect to see any of these Italian masterpieces in the bargain rack of your local store! World renowned quality doesn't come cheap, and nor should it.

ONE OF THE MOST VALUABLE GUN RACKS IN THE WORLD.

of Travagliato) in the family home of the brand's founder – Luciano. As you enter the double doors you drive into a beautiful cobbled courtyard in which sits an old barn – and there on the ground floor of this weather worn building is the Bosis 'factory'. It's a tiny enclave of gunmaking perfection that probably covers less than 750 square feet.

Early History

Luciano started working in the trade in 1954 at the age of 12, before joining Perazzi where he stayed for five years until 1976. A year later and he had opened a gunshop at his home to repair and sell guns. He ploughed the

proceeds into his first independent gunmaking project – a pair of 12g side by sides which, along with a few more guns, he exhibited at the local gun expo in Brescia. His first orders followed quickly and shortly afterwards, in 1980, he completed his first over and under. It was noticed by a representative of the Pachmayer dynasty which rapidly led to an order for 10 identical guns bound for the US.

From there the brand became quickly established with a reputation for combining aesthetics and craftsmanship to produce the best guns possible without compromise – so don't expect to see any of these Italian masterpieces in the bargain rack of your local store!



LUCIANO BOSIS – A PERFECTIONIST AND PIONEER.

World renowned quality doesn't come cheap, and nor should it.

A production of no more than 30 guns a year means that every Bosis is very special indeed and many are snapped up by collectors. So beautiful are they to look at, and so alive do they feel between the hands, some of us may feel it's a shame to own such a gun and not use it!

The Michelangelo

Those wishing to spend significant money on a gun need look no further than the Michelangelo. This Boss style gun has taken the best features of the 1909 London built gun (a gun often described as the definitive over and under design) and subtly reworked them to produce a gun of exquisite quality and design. These sidelocks are available in all the

gauges from .410 through to 12, all being built perfectly to scale. The locks themselves have been designed to allow the incorporation of modern ideas such as Torx Screws which will not fall foul of the loosening effects of thousands of rounds being fired, while the hinge of the mainspring is positioned further away from the safety sear spring than one might expect (more so in fact than any other gun which allows a spring of greater elasticity to be used). Bosis sources his springs from a specialist in Belgium, ensuring better strength and a longer life.

These sidelocks truly are at the pinnacle of the shotgun world, something reflected in the price which starts at around \$60,000 in the white. To that, the discerning buyer needs to add between \$10,000 and \$50,000 to have the gun engraved.

The sidelocks are neatly engineered and available in scaled actions from .410 to 12 gauge.



A MICHELANGELO IN THE WHITE UNDERGOING FINAL ASSEMBLY.





A WILD SPORTER
READY FOR
DISPATCH.

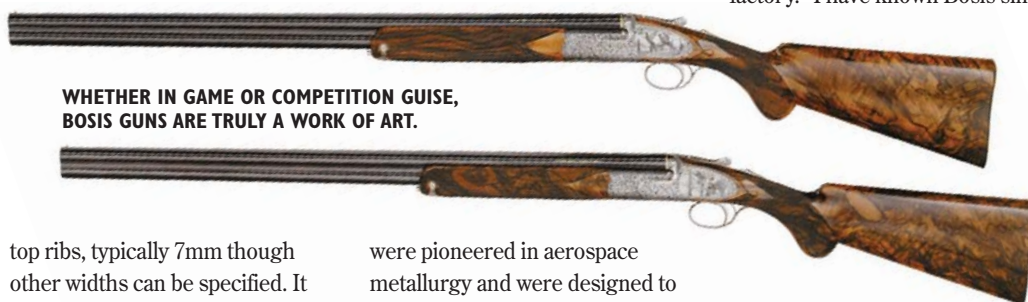
The Wild

For those who wish to have a bespoke gun built to sporting specs, then Bosis can oblige. Most interesting is that they have launched a new model, the Wild, aimed squarely at those looking to shoot competitively week in week out – no matter what the conditions throw at them. It's built on an Anson & Deeley style action using a Boss style locking bolt, intercepting safety sear and monobloc barrels – but is no cut price wannabee. In fact, the Wild should be looked at as a hand built bespoke gun in its own right, with the option of sideplates available for those who really want to give the engravers a free hand.

On the subject of engravers, Bosis uses the finest of Italy's "Engraverazzi" which includes names such as Pedretti, Naida Martinelli, Parravicini, Creative Arts and Galeazzi – all of which are capable of producing truly

brehtaking work. Of course, the choice of engraving has a substantial effect on the price of the finished product, but expect to pay around \$23,000 to \$26,000 for a Wild "in the white". Delivery time for these guns is around a year and currently only 12 and 20 gauge are available on dedicated frames.

The Sporting version is equipped with ventilated side and



WHETHER IN GAME OR COMPETITION GUISE,
BOSIS GUNS ARE TRULY A WORK OF ART.

top ribs, typically 7mm though other widths can be specified. It also sports a full pistol grip as you might expect and the beautifully figured walnut is polished to a fine luster thanks to an almost countless number of applications of 'True Oil'. Briley chokes are the tube of choice for Luciano when it

comes to offering a multichoke option, though customers can if they prefer specify fixed chokes. Picking up a gun from the rack one can instantly feel its pedigree through the hands. It feels alive, well balanced and like many hand built guns it almost seems to talk to you.

The Challenger

The Wild and the Michelangelo may be at the pinnacle of the bespoke gun world, but Luciano is continuing to push the envelope in his search for perfection.

Currently he's working on the Challenger which breaks new ground in shotgun design. The barrels are made from Maraging 300 VAR Premium Quality steel, a descendant of materials which

compliance with USA AMS 4928-N aeronautic standards. When complete, the Challenger looks as though it will be very special indeed.

This kind of technical exercise gives an insight into the Bosis philosophy. No customer would ever think of asking for something like this, but rather like the mountain climber who is asked why they climb, Luciano does it because the challenge is there to be taken up, to be mastered and to take pride in something which is an achievement for achievements sake.

US Market

Respected gun trade insider, Steve Lamboy, is very familiar with the guns and acts as an intermediary between US customers and the factory. "I have known Bosis since



THE CHOICE OF ENGRAVING IS YOURS.

were pioneered in aerospace metallurgy and were designed to cope with the stresses of supersonic flight. There is a great deal of science behind the name but suffice to say that the properties of these barrels far exceed the capabilities and strength of anything else in production today. Rumor has it that such barrels were made in Sweden back in the '60s, but no guns have ever appeared to reinforce such claims – hardly surprising as the process of machining this particular steel is so difficult.

To add to the Challenger's technical prowess, the action is made from titanium alloy (Ti-6Al-4V VAR Premium Quality) produced with "double melt VAR / Vacuum Arc Remelting" in

the early '90s and always felt that he was one of the best, if not the best, individual gunmaker in the world with almost limitless potential. He has an undeniable thirst for quality and that shows in the finishing of his guns to such an extraordinarily high level. Personally, I adore the guns and we have a list of very satisfied customers here in the States that would be very happy to recommend them.

"When he started working on the Michelangelo it was obvious that it would be something special. In the last 10 to 12 years he has really perfected his sidelock design – it's neat, compact and



LUCIANO IS KEEN TO PASS ON HIS KNOWLEDGE TO THE NEXT GENERATION.

very well thought out. I also like his philosophy. He takes full advantage of the extensive and ever-changing metallurgical and machining technology available in the high tech manufacturing sector in Brescia area. Instead of investing in his own machining centers which become outdated regularly, he focuses this investment on research to make certain the Bosis guns utilize the very best materials available,” says Lamboy. “A \$500,000 CNC machine would be a pointless waste of cash for a manufacturer that only builds 20-30 guns each year, not to mention that the number of machine made parts used are so few that such machinery would never be utilized fully”.

As to being the American dealer for the marque, Lamboy is adamant that the word ‘dealer’ doesn’t really apply “They make so few guns per year that having a network of

dealers doesn’t make sense – so we encourage customers to order direct and we ship the guns through a few select shops. We facilitate the sales and marketing, help people make arrangements to visit the factory and help to overcome the language barrier. Those customers that don’t want to visit the factory in Italy can be measured up here in the States by Chris Batha, John Woolley or Lars Jacob.”

Some would say that Bosis is an anachronistic anomaly in a modern world of high tech precision mass manufacturing. For me though, every bespoke manufacturer, and Bosis in particular, stands out like a beacon of light, showing that while computers and machines can produce fantastic competition guns which are technically proficient, they can never equal the flair, imagination and passion for excellence that only the human mind can achieve. Long may the beacon that is Bosis burn strongly. ■

(For more information contact srlamboy@rochester.rr.com or visit www.bosis.com)



STUNNING WOOD.
