

Worldwide Directory to Hunting & Angling Destinations

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Over Top

for Angling & Hunting
Gear in 2025.

GRAY'S BEST

GRAY'S BEST awards are anticipated by long-time readers of *Gray's Sporting Journal* and coveted by hunting and angling manufacturers. The reason? GRAY'S BEST carries the weight of authentic sincerity. Many sporting magazines publish an end-of-the-year roundup of new products. Gray's publishes a distinguished selection.

Our editors cover areas of expertise and experience—Angling, Shooting, Apparel, and Accessories—and select gear that not only makes good first impressions, but also satisfies during repeated use. We make choices of our own volition, absent encouragement and incentive from the manufacturers. Further, GRAY'S BEST winners deliver on the claims of their makers but also have an extra attribute, an extra something that triggers a tenor of feel, remembrance or aesthetic, and can be defined only as...satisfying. Much like Gray's itself.

Chowca



BUILD ME A BOAT FOR TWO, BY ROD CROSSMAN

CAESAR GUERINI INVICTUS

It's not often one can use the word "remarkable" to describe a new shotgun, but the Caesar Guerini Invictus 12-gauge competition over/under is one of those times. I was with a couple of guys who, tiring of Skeet on a sweltering August day, wanted to shoot a round of trap. Sure, says I, why not? I hadn't so much as pulled the trigger on the Invictus yet, so I took it to the line just as it was and, using the lower (I/C) barrel, proceeded to break the first 13 targets I saw and finished with a 22. Normally, a new gun presents some hitches that require you to adjust: trigger pull, comb height, that kind of thing. Not the Invictus. The redesigned trigger mechanism was crisp, the gun was responsive and, altogether, it did nothing to get in the way. Opening, closing, ejecting, all smooth as glass, and the gun even has an adjustable forend that allows you to set the stiffness the way you like it. Guerini says the gun's revolutionary modular construction has solved the problem of break-action guns wearing out (coming "off the face") and that it will last, not just your lifetime, but several more, all the while breaking every clay at which it gets a fair chance. No way to measure that, but I've seen nothing to suggest otherwise. Oh, I almost forgot to mention, it's classically, stylishly, beautiful. Starting at \$22,000, it's not cheap, but amortized over several lifetimes? A bargain. www.gueriniusa.com

GRAY'S
BEST



SYREN ELOS N2 ELEVATE (TRAP COMBO)

As fun as the challenge of acquiring “the right tool for the job” can be, my dad sparked in me an admiration for the Germanic attitude that seeks to find the right tool for many jobs. Think, for instance, of the three-barreled drilling and its capacity to serve as a rifle or a shotgun. Or the versatile German Shorthaired Pointer and its relative, the Weimaraner, both of which are bred to point and retrieve on land and water. Though Italian, not German, the Syren Elos N2 Elevate Trap Combo (\$5,675) seamlessly joins this gang of all-purpose all-stars. This is a shotgun designed for lady shooters dedicated to the discipline(s) of trap, Skeet and/or sporting clays. Though it’s touted by its maker, Caesar Guerini, as customizable in “all critical specifications,” I found the gun to be fine-tuned right out of the box. The Elos fit like a glove and made my confidence soar with every broken bird; there were a lot of them, and the very few I did miss were diagnosable to human error. This shotgun for all seasons is a pretty little thing (7 lbs., 11 ounces) with walnut grain, and the only subtle clue that it is a lady’s gun is found in a few tiny touches of periwinkle on the receiver. This adaptable, versatile firearm is all the sporting woman needs. www.syrenusa.com - *TM*

