TURKEY COUNTRY

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PREMIER ISSUE!

FALL TRADITIONS
LONGBEARDS & BUSHYTAILS
TURKEY TACTICS FOR ELK
TURKEY DOGGING
FINDING FALL FLOCKS

THE BOBWHITE QUAIL SAGA
NWTF Paving the Road to Recovery

PLUS
Tonging for Texas Oysters
Accessible North Dakota Wildlife
Tom Kelly's Wit & Wisdom
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Benelli’s Vinci: A Work of Art

How would you like to have a turkey gun that shoots turkey loads with 72 percent less recoil and up to 60 percent less muzzle climb than your current shotgun? What if it has a total case finish? What if it’s almost maintenance-free, but when it needs cleaning, you could disassemble and clean it within minutes, without tools? What if it weighs less than 7 pounds and breaks down quickly into three parts for easy traveling?

Is it the stuff of dreams?

I just returned from a dove hunt in Argentina, where I shot one more than 4,000 times in three days and never had a malfunction. In fact, my hunting group shot more than 67,000 rounds out of 12 production shotguns without a single malfunction and with very little cleaning. It was one of the most intense shotguns worthy of its Italian heritage and nameake.

The Vinci is a totally innovative design, built around three unique modular components: barrel/receiver group, trigger group, and stock. The barrel/receiver module houses Benelli’s trademarked In-Line Inertia Driven action completely within the upper receiver. The entire operating system, including the bolt and return spring, functions on the same axis as the bore. The barrel — available in 26- or 28-inch lengths — and choke tubes, are made in the Benelli’s Croo metal treating system, which means they freeze the non-slip surface molded into the forearm and an improved ergonomics relationship between the wrist position and the trigger angle. The safety is conveniently located in the front of the trigger guard, ideal for turkey hunting, requiring minimum movement to operate. The third module is the polymer Quadra Fit Buttstock with Comfortech Plus recoil reduction system. According to Benelli engineers, this, plus the gun’s unique design, reduces recoil by as much as 72 percent and muzzle climb from 14 to 42 percent. The stock can be custom fitted to the shooter using comb and butt pads. The Comfortech Plus System gives a constant level of recoil reduction throughout the complete range of loads from 2½-inch dove loads to 3-inch heavy turkey loads. Also, I should point out, no adjustments are required when switching from light loads to heavy loads.

The three modules come in a high-impact plastic carrying case that makes traveling with the Vinci easy as traveling with a case of water. The shotgun goes together quickly using no tools. Cleaning is a breeze, and the simple bolt is just as easily disassembled for deep cleaning.

Five other gun writers and editors visited the executive staff of Benelli and two executive engineers who designed the Vinci for three days of hunting Argentina’s cordon dove. According to wildfowl officials, more than 80 million doves reside in the agricultural area in which we were hunting. The birds reproduce year-round, and the females mature quickly. The high populations of doves are the local grain farmers out of business. The farmers problems were our targets, and the harvest was donated to a mission for underprivileged children. We had non-stop shooting for three full days.

Impressed with the Vinci’s performance on the dove hunt, I ordered one of the camo models with a 26-inch barrel for some range testing using an X-Full choke tube and a variety of turkey loads.

Shooting a mixture of 2½- and 3-inch Federal, Remington and Winchester turkey loads, once again I appreciated the greatly reduced recoil of the Vinci. The gun I was using shot the tightest patterns at 40 yards with Federal Premium Mag-Shok Heavyweight Turkey with ½-ounces of No. 6 shot. They virtually destroyed the head on the turkey target. It was, however, a pleasure to see this gun produce excellent turkey patterns with all of the tested loads.

“At this writing, I have yet to lure a gobbler in front of the Vinci, but based on conversations with others, it slams them down with authority. The Vinci received highest marks for accuracy, low recoil and ease of carry. Based on my three days of all-day dove hunting, I can say that the Vinci is a joy to carry, thanks to its lightweight design and balance.” — J. Wayne Pears

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CALLING ALL HUNTERS: Searching for the Ultimate Turkey Chair?

Benelli Vinci: The details

- **Finishes**: black, Advantage Max-4 HD or Realtree APG
- **Barrel lengths**: 26 inches or 28 inches
- **Overall length**: 48½ or 47½ inches, depending on barrel length
- **Sight options**: Features a vent rib with red-bar front sight and metal mid-sight; drilled and tapped for scope mounting and comes with a set of Croo System choke tubes
- **Additional features**: Turkey hunters will appreciate the no-missing gobbler features
- **Price**: $1,379 to $1,479
- **Tester's note**: I think it is safe to say that in the coming months there will be a shorter-barreled turkey Vinci, and high on my wish list is a turkey version in a 20 gauge.

The Benelli 12-gauge Vinci is a newly designed lightweight shotgun that reduces recoil by as much as 72 percent.