



The World of Beretta: An International Legend

By R.L. Wilson

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The oldest industrial firm and the oldest gunmaker in the world, Fabbrica d'Armi Pietro Beretta, S.p.A., launches its 475th anniversary with the publication of this lavish history and celebration of a unique world of fine guns. Beretta remains under the stewardship of its founding family, headed now by Ugo Gussalli Beretta and his sons, Pietro and Franco. Today the Beretta line of firearms and accessories reigns as one of the few international brands symbolic of unsurpassed quality. But no other firm goes back so far in history, or reaches so many corners of the globe, as Beretta.

The Italian company stands supreme partly because it is on the cutting edge--of design, quality, manufacture, performance, and style. Through the centuries, the family has guided the company in the transition from specialist gun-barrel makers to, in Napoleonic times, creator of sporting firearms, later adding military and law-enforcement arms and importing arms by Colt, Remington, S&W, and Winchester, still later developing one of the first international industrial enterprises.

The Beretta line is the firearms enthusiast's dream: self-loading pistols, rifles, and shotguns; bolt-action rifles; double-barrel over-and-under and side-by-side sporting rifles and shotguns; single-barrel trap guns; and from these, a refined line of premium-grade guns unsurpassed by any gunmaker in the world. All are created with the perfect melding of the most advanced, space-age, computer-generated production machinery, in concert with traditional hand craftsmanship, in the ancient gunmaking village of Gardone, Val Trompia.

In 1985, Beretta's classic Model 92 pistol was adopted as the M9, the official U.S. Armed Forces sidearm, following extensive competition with the designs of other companies, sessions that subjected the pistol to the most rigorous tests. The Model 92 is the most widely used self-loading pistol in law enforcement and the military in the world today.

Beretta shooters dominate national, international, and Olympic shotgun competitions, and are a commanding factor in the rapidly developing world of sporting clays.

This richly illustrated, beautifully presented work joins R. L. Wilson's other firearms classics: *Colt: An American Legend*; *Winchester: An American Legend*; *The Peacemakers*; *Steel Canvas*; *Ruger & His Guns*; and *Buffalo Bill's Wild West*--a collection of books that comprise an unsurpassed tribute to the art, craftsmanship, history, mechanics, performance, and romance unique to fine guns.

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

The oldest industrial firm and the oldest gunmaker in the world, Fabbrica d'Armi Pietro Beretta, S.p.A., launches its 475th anniversary with the publication of this lavish history and celebration of a unique world of fine guns. Beretta remains under the stewardship of its founding family, headed now by Ugo Gussalli Beretta and his sons, Pietro and Franco. Today the Beretta line of firearms and accessories reigns as one of the few international brands symbolic of unsurpassed quality. But no other firm goes back so far in history, or reaches so many corners of the globe, as Beretta.

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About the Author

R. L. Wilson first visited Brescia, Italy, near the site of Beretta's Gardone, Val Trompia, factory, in 1960, following a Carleton College foreign study internship at the Royal Armouries, H.M. Tower of London. Since then, he has visited Gar-done over ninety times.

He resides in Hadlyme, Connecticut, and commutes to a *pied-à-terre* in the Italian section of San Francisco, where books like this one are written over months of uninterrupted concentration, and following years of detailed research and product testing.

Peter Beard is widely known in Europe and the United States, where retrospectives of his photography and art have been held in Milan, Paris, Berlin, New York (The Time Is Always Now Gallery), and Los Angeles.

His work has appeared in *Vogue*, *Life*, *Esquire*, and *Vanity Fair*. He is the author of *The End of the Game*, *Eyelids of Morning*, *Longing for Darkness*, and *Zara's Tales from Africa*. This is his fifth book with R. L. Wilson.

Mauro Pezzotta has photographed numerous spreads for Beretta over the years, and resides in Lonato, Brescia, Italy. His photography has appeared in several magazines and in several books, including *Brescia*. He concentrates on the subjects of Italian guns, architecture, fashion, food, and wine.

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Ida Hamilton:

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Nancy Collins:

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Ron Taylor:

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