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Szanto 2401 Chronograph Watch Review

August 6, 2014 By L J. S

Szanto (sahn-tow) is a new, independent venture by industry veteran, Barry Cohen, co-founder of Luminox. The idea came when a friend of his showed him a 1940's vintage Gruen field watch that he had just purchased. While both of them loved the design of the watch, they realized its 34mm case was tiny by modern standards. It occurred to Barry that many people might enjoy the look of a vintage watch in more contemporary size – even more so if it were delivered at an affordable price point. Thus, Szanto was born. The line uses workhorse Miyota quartz movements, and they significantly larger than most vintage pieces. They incorporate design elements from a broad range of pre- and post-war watches, and use a muted color palate to underscore their retro origins.



The subject of this review is the 2401 chronograph, which has suggested retail of \$325. As promised, it is larger than most vintage men's watches. The polished stainless steel case measures a whopping 46mm across. Remarkably, it does not wear as large as it sounds. It is a very reasonable 12mm thick, and its smooth, rounded sides minimize its bulk, contributing to the illusion of a smaller watch. The case back is decorated with the Szanto "SZ" logo.



Water resistance is 50 meters, which is appropriate for a dress watch. The chronograph pushers are polished rectangles that engage with a firm click. The fluted diamond shaped, push-pull crown is proportionately large, lending a touch of pilot's watch to the case design. Topping it off is a lovely domed mineral crystal. There are few things that warm my heart like a domed crystal, and while the purist in me wishes it were acrylic, my pragmatic side tells me that for most buyers, mineral is the right choice.

The dial is white-on-black with minute and hour sub dials on the left and right, and a black-on-white small seconds sub dial at 6 o'clock. I'd call it a panda dial, but with the single white sub dial, it is more of a Cyclops panda. The white is not as bright as you might expect on a brand new watch. Instead, contains the slightest tinge of yellow that one might expect with age. It is a subtle but important detail. The Arabic numerals are printed in a delicate serif typeface. Poire svelte hands mark the hours and minutes, arrows handle the sub dials. The large second hand is a simple polished baton. A round date window peeks through between 4 and 5 o'clock. The only text on the dial is the Szanto brand in the upper half. The size of the dial allows ample room for its features, so everything is balanced and none of the numerals are cut off, although the small seconds dial slightly overlaps the other two. A finely delineated black-



on-white "railroad track" index frames it all. It is a legible, attractive dial, and it is easy to imagine that it might have once graced your great-grandfather's pocket watch.



The watch is supplied on a 22mm, glossy black leather strap that is lightly padded and tapers to polished, signed buckle. It is fitting for a dress watch and proved to be comfortable fit with plenty of room for further adjustment. I found the watch easy to wear even on my 6.5" wrist, and perfectly appropriate with a suit – or at least, it could be. The fact is, this is a big watch and I am not a big guy. You can style a watch to streamline its appearance, but at the end of the day, mass is mass, and a 46mm case is simply too large for me to pull off as a dress watch, although others may feel differently. Personally, I think this could be a perfect size for a large gent as it deftly pairs elegance with size. If you find most dress watches are undersized for your physique, the 2400 series could be the answer.



The company web site is not yet active, but you can find more information on their [Facebook page](#), and they are available for purchase at a number of stores and online retailers.



The Time Bum (L J. S) - Contributing Writer

The Time Bum is an avid watch enthusiast and unrepentant cheapskate. His blog, thetimebum.com, focuses on watches in the affordable end of the spectrum, particularly those that sell for under \$1,000 — as far under as possible. When not playing with watches or writing about them, he is a lawyer, husband and father who enjoys good food and old cars. [Read his articles](#)

