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Member

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Szanto 1003 and 2402 - a double review and tons of photos



Recently, I received two new Szanto watches, the 1003 field watch and 2402 Officer's chrono. Szanto is a relatively new watch startup, run by the founder of Luminox Barry Cohen. The watches are designed in California and manufactured in China. As all of Szanto's current offerings, these contain quartz movements. Movement details are included with the review for each watch below. In general, Szanto has really nailed their designs (this will be a recurring statement in the reviews). Their collection is consistent throughout, clearly targeting a vintage aesthetic.

The watches each arrived in a rather nice box, reminiscent of a vintage steamer trunk, with faux leather panels. The top is emblazoned with the clever Szanto logo. The inside is lined with a neutral color, the logo appears again, and it contains a nicely sized pillow on which your watch can rest. The packaging is quite nice. Again, the style carries through with their vintage designs.

An important distinction between Szanto and many other start up watch brands: you can get all touchy feely with Szanto before you buy. They sell in brick and mortar stores, in addition to online websites. I can go to my local mall, walk into Time after Time and try on Szanto next to Tissot and Hamilton. That's a huge advantage to me, I like to try on watches before I buy them and a lot of times, the micros and affordable brands aren't accessible like that.





Szanto 1003, from the 1000 series

The Szanto 1003 is a simple, cleanly designed field watch. It has a full Arabic numeral dial. The subdial at 6 is smartly placed so that none of the numbers are cut off. The losange style hands fit the design well. In fact, the overriding feeling I get when looking at this watch is that the design is... perfect. The dial is simple, only the Szanto name adorns the dial below 12. It's not too large, it doesn't stand out unnecessarily. There is a single color for the hands and dial markings.

The lume is all the same color. And speaking of the lume, the numerals, hour, minute, and seconds hands are all lumed. The lume is sufficient, though not out of this world. It's very clean looking in the dark, too, though.



The 40mm case is well proportioned. I was worried that the 22mm lugs would look too wide, but they don't. The tapered strap helps alleviate this, I think. The crown has the Szanto S logo and is nicely sized for the case. The case for the 1000 series is black ion plating (PVD) and in the week that I have been wearing them on and off, I have yet to find a ding or scratch. I've got a two year old son and I'm on the floor a lot. I've heard my share of clinks and dinks while playing and the watch has come out unscathed. I change straps quite a bit and there are no marks from the spring bars or tool. That's pretty impressive. Though the crystal is mineral instead of sapphire, it's holding up well and there are no marks. The watch is 10.9mm thick based on my caliper measurement.



The case is water resistant to 100m, though there is no screw down crown. I don't swim or shower with my watches, though I do often do the dishes and wash my hands with my watch on my wrist. I haven't had any trouble and I don't expect to. The case back is screwed on.

The movement is the quartz Miyota 1L45, which should be accurate to +/- 20s per month according to Miyota specs. I've had no noticeably accuracy issues, though I've set the watch a few times because of photos.

The 1000 series has 5 model numbers. 4 of them (1001, 1002, 1003, 1004) are essentially the same watch with a different color strap. The 1005 has a green dial instead of black. The PVD buckle is tastefully signed.





As I've said, I'm really in love with the Szanto designs and this is no exception. I enjoy looking at the watch, in all its perfect simplicity. It looks good on a wide range of straps. (I got the green canvas that comes with the 1002, as well.)

I've come away from the 1003 impressed. This is a great grab-and-go watch. It's attractive, it's well designed, it's classically styled. I can't find anything to complain about, except for maybe the mineral crystal. It's really just a great watch.

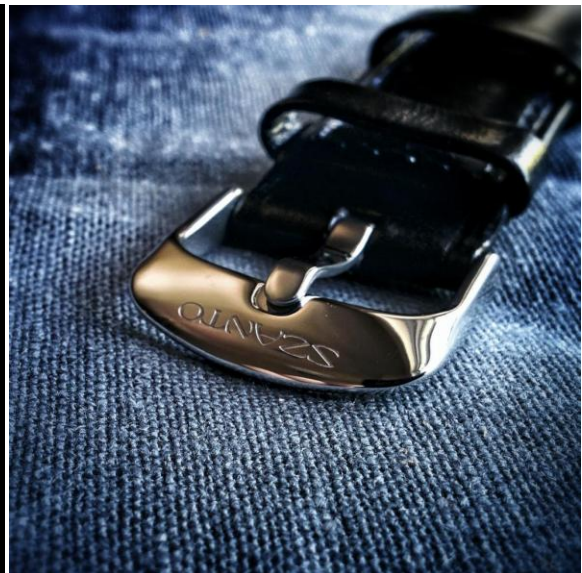


Szanto 2402, from the 2400 series



The Szanto 2402 is a vintage styled chronograph. They call it their Officer's chrono. This model also has a full Arabic numeral dial. Again, the subdials are smartly placed and no numerals are cut off. The 12 is slightly larger than the rest of the numbers, not distractingly large however. Even with the subdials, the overall feel is simple. It's not cluttered. The Szanto name rightly sized.

The poire squelette (flattened Mercedes) hands, along with the dial numerals, invoke a vintage trench watch element. It's another design feature that is carried through the watch. The subdial hands break from this a bit, but I'm not sure what type of subdial hand would be appropriate. Perhaps simple stick hands, like the central seconds that is activated with the chrono. The lume is on the hour and minute hands and on the tips of the subdial hands. There is no lume on the dial or numerals.



The cream colored dial gives off the pre-vintaged look that is certainly trending these days. The running seconds subdial at 6 is black, nicely contrasting with the rest of the dial. The watch comes on a black leather strap with a signed buckle, but it looks good on any number of straps.



The onion crown is certainly appropriate. I can't help but think that the chrono pushers would be better off round instead of squared, but that's a nit pick really. They don't stand out and actually continue the shape of the case.

Speaking of the case, it is rather large at 46mm. I was hesitant because of the size, but it doesn't wear large. My wife has complimented me on the watch and she usually notes when I'm wearing a big watch. She's even expressed interest in wearing it herself. I'd like to see this come in under 42mm, but that might clutter the dial too much.



It uses the Miyota OS20 quartz chronograph movement, which is solid and dependable. One advantage of a quartz chronograph is the ability to keep the watch relatively thin. Case in point, the 2400 series is only 12mm tall and that includes the impressively domed mineral crystal. The thinness of the case helps the watch wear a bit smaller as well, I think.



As noted several times, Szanto's designs are pretty spot on. They clearly take careful consideration of the design cues. On one of my Instagram photos, fellow WUS member Jelliotz commented, "...It has a Patek feeling of less is more. Beautifully rounded case, well spaced, small design cues... It feels like the everyman's Patek." This really sums it up better than I could put into words at this point. The watch is just so well thought out.



Conclusion

Szanto is producing well designed, dependably quartz-powered watches. They have clearly defined their line to be firmly rooted in vintage aesthetics and they have stayed true to that design. Their watches are reasonably priced. They are available in brick and mortar stores. They have an industry veteran behind the brand.

I'm very happy with my two Szantos and I wouldn't hesitate to recommend them to someone looking for such watch.

