

CZ 97B .45 ACP¹¹

1911, 1/8" thicker, and one ounce heavier. It has a 10-round, double-column magazine, so the grip is thicker, more like the double-column Paras. The slide rides *inside* the frame rails, which makes for a bit more bulk than the 1911. The gun has an even matte black polycoat finish with checkered wood grips. The sights have three illuminated dots and are square and quite clear. The rear sight projects up high enough so you could hook it into your belt and cock back the slide one-handed. Like the CZ 75, this is a conventional double-action on the first shot, single-action on following shots system, which can be carried cocked and locked. There is an ingenious spring-loaded pin that pops up to indicate a cartridge in the chamber. Takedown for cleaning is quite similar to that of the 1911.

At the range, the first cartridges I tried were Federal 230-grain Hydra-Shoks, just to see if the gun would function well with jacketed hollow points. No problems whatsoever. Same with a box of 1960s-issue G.I. ball ammo, Winchester 185-grain Silvertip HPs and some 230-grain copper-plated RN reloads. Shooting the 97B is a very

pleasant experience. It's not the least bit fussy about your ammo selection. I would suspect, though, that lightweight lead wadcutters would not be appropriate. The single-action trigger pull is a bit less than six pounds, but is smooth and feels lighter. Even though I don't have a large hand, I had no problem when I tried the initial double-action trigger pull. I find the weight (48.5 ounces, fully loaded) contributes to a more steady hold, and I was quite happy with my offhand groups. This is a gun that I intend to shoot quite often.

At an MSRP of \$686, the CZ 97B is a whole lot of gun for the money. It's beautifully built, and strong as an anvil. It comes in a lockable hardcase, along with the obligatory cable lock, a barrel bushing wrench and a mercifully brief but clear instruction manual. If you're going to carry it – and that's what it was made for – Bianchi makes an AccuMold holster, Size 15, that fits the 97B quite well.

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