

The Emperor's Elite Escort

Turning Andrea Miniatures' 90mm Chasseur Officer into a Member of Napoleon's Bodyguard

*Photos and Story by
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The horse chasseurs were Napoleon's most devoted personal bodyguards. They were used as an imperial escort, for liaison duties, and a physical shield for Napoleon himself. They were hand-picked, lavishly uniformed and equipped, and showered with honors and prestige.

They were always the closest ring around Napoleon and he knew many of them personally from the old days in Italy and Egypt in the 1790s. When Napoleon became emperor in 1804, he renamed them the Chasseurs of the Imperial Guard.

The Imperial Guard was a superb instrument of war and the cavalry of the guard. Above all, they stood out as an elite within an elite.

The kit is from Andrea Miniatures. It is a 90mm Chasseur Officer, and it consists of white metal parts and a resin base. Andrea puts out some nicely-detailed kits, and this one is no exception, although the horse had some big seams to contend with. After filling those nasty seams and getting rid of the mold lines, the horse was primed with Tamiya gray primer. I decided to paint the horse to represent a dappled gray as depicted on the box art.

I airbrushed the horse with various shades of Model Master grays

and aircraft interior black. Artist oils were used for the shading and the highlights. Titanium white was used for the spots. The leopard skin was base-coated in tan acrylic paint. The tawny color was done with burnt sienna oil paint and the spots with brown and black enamels.

White oil paint was used for the highlights. The whiskers were made from a deer tail. The green fringe around the leopard skin was Testors beret green. The gold is Testors enamel with a brown oil wash.

The horse's tack or harness took almost three hours to do. It was painted with acrylics. The tail and mane were painted and glued in place. The hooves were painted with khaki, brown and gray. The ground work was done last, after the horse was securely mounted.

The rider had some mold lines that had to be cleaned up. He was mounted onto tube stock to make painting easier. I primed him with Tamiya white primer. The eyes were painted first. I painted the white of the eyes with a pinkish white. I then painted the dark ring around the iris with dark brown, followed by a medium brown for the iris itself. Finally, I painted the pupil with a tiny bit of black. After the eyes were dry, I ran a wash of burnt sienna in them so they

looked a little bloodshot around the edges. I added a little gloss clear to give the eyes a shiny look. With the eyes finished, the face was undercoated with flesh acrylic. I used burnt sienna mixed with brown oils for the shadow tones, flesh colored oils for the mid tones, and titanium white oil for the highlights.

The uniform for the chasseur officer of the guard consisted of a green dolman or jacket with scarlet cuffs and gold lace and braid. A pelisse or overcoat was usually worn over the shoulders. It is scarlet with white flannel lining and white fur trim. The lace and braid were the same as the dolman. The pants were usually tan deer hide. The boots were black leather with gold trim and tassels.

The dolman was painted with Testors beret green enamel with Napoleonic red acrylic cuffs. Testors gold was used for the lace and braid. Dark green oils were used for the shadows, and light yellow/green for the highlights.

The pelisse was painted Napoleonic red acrylic. Dark red oils were used for the shadows and orange for the highlights. The lace and braid was done the same way as the Dolman.

The colpack, or bearskin hat, was done in black/brown with a black plume and red tip. The flamme is red with gold trim and tassel. The boots were painted very dark brown with black shadows and light brown highlights to give them a worn in look. The gloves were painted light gray.

The pants were painted light tan with brown oils for the shadows and white for the highlights.

The scabbard, tas-



The sculpting captured the Chasseur as he was wheeling his horse around, perhaps in preparation for another saber-wielding pass at the enemy.

sels, and sabretache were all painted first, then applied in such a way as to appear to be in motion. The sabre was polished and a wash of black oil paint was applied.

The last thing to be glued onto the rider was the pelisse. He was then mounted onto the horse.

Now came the fun part. The reins all came as strips of white metal and had to be cut and bent to the correct length and positioned without knocking anything off the horse. They were painted after being glued in place. I painted and installed the stirrups last.

After spending some time on touchups, the model was finished. It took about two and a half months on and off to complete. ■

REFERENCES

- Osprey Men at Arms - *Napoleon's Guard Cavalry*, by Emir Bukhari
- Osprey Men at Arms - *Napoleon's Line Chasseurs*, by Emir Bukhari

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Mike started building models in 1964 at the age of four and has been building ever since. He has been building figures since 2000. Mike is a member of the Igor Sikorsky Chapter in Stratford, which meets in his hometown. He works as an auto technician at a Toyota dealership in nearby Westport, Connecticut.



The leopard skin was first painted tan, then given a tawny coat of burnt sienna and spotted with brown and black enamels. The leopard got whiskers made from a deer tail!