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FABARM AUTUMN

SIDE-BY-SIDE FANS ARE GOING TO FALL IN LOVE WITH FABARM'S CLASSICALLY STYLED ITALIAN DOUBLE GUN.

FOR SOME upland hunters nothing but a proper side-by-side shotgun will do, but the number of available side-by-sides has dwindled considerably since the days when you might walk into your local gun shop and find a brand-new Winchester 21 for sale under \$100. This is due largely to the fact that fine double guns are more complicated to manufacture than other types of shotguns and require more hand fitting of parts. Nevertheless, hunting with a fine side-by-side is a special experience and every upland hunter should, at some point, own a fine double. There's a magic to these guns that you must experience to appreciate.

Fabarm understands that, and they've listened to a cadre of their customers beg them to build a good side-by-side for years. If you happen to be one of those double gun fans who tried to coerce Fabarm to release a double gun for U.S. hunters your wish has been granted. The Autumn has arrived.

To be clear, Fabarm isn't new to the side-by-side game. The Italian company was founded in 1900 by the Galesi family in Brescia, the city most closely associated with fine shotgun production in the world. Fabarm has been building fine side-by-sides for over a century, so the brand has a deep well of knowledge regarding how to build a proper double gun.



The Autumn is a beautiful piece of art with ornamental scroll engraving and a color case hardened finish.

THE DETAILS

Like any fine double, the Autumn is an elegant and understated machine. The rounded action rests nicely in the hand. It features ornamental scroll engraving and a beautiful color case hardened finish, and gold accents on the receiver and trigger guard. Most Fabarm Autumn shotguns feature a splinter forend and English-style, straight grip stock, though a handful of guns will be available with a pistol grip and beavertail forearm. If you want the beavertail/pistol grip model, you'd better get in line at your local Fabarm dealer right away. Both models are only available in 20-gauge for the time being.

The Autumn's lightweight barrels feature Fabarm's TRIBORE barrel technology. TRIBORE barrels feature an overbore area designed to reduce recoil and friction. Further down the barrel, there's a conical area where the bore diameter narrows. According to Fabarm, this narrowing causes pellet

speed to increase, a principle known as the Venturi effect. These overbore and conical barrel sections combined with Fabarm's hyperbolic INNER HP long screw-in choke tubes are designed to increase shotshell performance and reduce recoil. The barrels themselves are constructed with high temperature solder and a swamped rib with a single bead and texturing on the top of the rib helps reduce glare. Buyers can choose from either 28- or 30-inch barrels.

The Autumn's monolithic action is machined from steel forgings for long lasting durability. One reason that good side-by-sides cost so much is that these guns require a sturdy, well-engineered locking system to survive years of hard field use. Fabarm utilizes a special four lock design for

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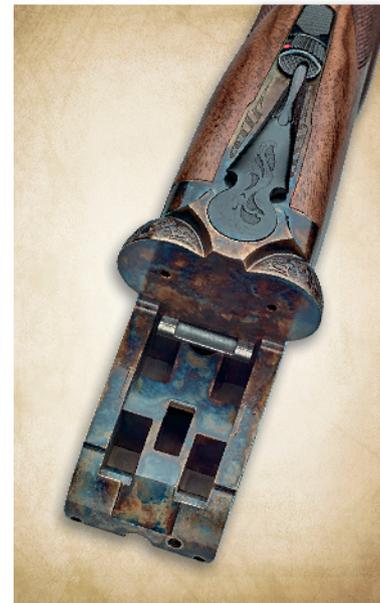
AUTUMN

Action	Side-by-side boxlock shotgun
GAUGE	20
BARREL	28-in. (tested), 30-in.
OVERALL LENGTH	45 in.
WEIGHT	6 lbs., 3 oz. (as tested)
CHAMBER	3 in.
FINISH	Color case hardened receiver, blued barrels
STOCK	Hand oiled deluxe Turkish walnut
CHOKES	5 INNER HP
MSRP	\$3,995
WEBSITE	fabarmusa.com



their Autumn shotguns that greatly increases the amount of steel-to-steel contact in these guns, and that translates to many years of field use without the worry of lock failure. These guns are also equipped with rebounding hammers.

Autumn shotguns come with deluxe grade Turkish walnut stocks with hand oil finishes. In keeping with traditional side-by-side styling, the engineers at Fabarm elected to outfit the Autumn with a hand-fit walnut butt plate. It's an elegant, practical touch and unlike rubber recoil pads with pronounced heels, the Autumn's butt plate won't hang up in clothing when you mount the gun. Both the straight and pistol grip models come with diamond point checkering that is even and clean, and the forend features an Anson-style push button release found on high-end side-by-sides from brands like Boss and Purdey. Both Anson and Deeley latches work well on shotguns, but there are many shooters who prefer the look and simplicity of the Anson push rod design, and I'm one of them. Autumn shotguns come with a steel insert in the forend that connects to the barrel lug and that allows Fabarm's service team to tighten the gun should it ever loosen. That's not likely to happen for many years and thousands of rounds, but if it does you can send the gun off to Fabarm to have the forend tightened. It's also worth mentioning that Fabarm and its sister companies Caesar Guerini and Syren have earned enviable reputations for top-flight customer service, something CEO Wes Lang prides himself on (and rightly so). Sending most guns back to the factory for repairs means you'll be without your firearm for an unknown length of time, but Fabarm does an excellent job getting firearms fixed and back in the customer's hands in very short order so you won't lose half your hunting season. Odds are you won't need that service for many years, but it's always nice to work with a company who stands behind their products and appreciates their customers.



Gold accents, ornate scroll work, and a deluxe grade Turkish walnut stock makes the Autumn a beautiful double gun.





The Autumn features Fabarm's TRIBORE barrel technology. This means an overbore area is designed to reduce recoil and friction.

The Autumn that I tested weighed in at 6 pounds, 3 ounces, which is slightly more than the listed weight on Fabarm's website. Weights of these guns will vary based on wood density, but you can expect the Autumn to weigh right around six pounds unloaded. That's light enough for all day carry in big, open CRP fields and western mountains, yet not so light that recoil is abusive or that the gun's balance suffers. Speaking of balance, the Autumn's balance point lies at the leading edge of the receiver. That makes it a smooth-swinging, sweet-handling upland bird gun. Since it offers a 3-inch chamber, the Autumn is capable of handling heavy magnum loads, and like all Fabarm guns, the Autumn's barrels are pressure tested to 1,630 BAR, well beyond Italian proof house standards.

The Autumn's gold-plated single trigger is nicely curved. Fabarm claims that the trigger breaks at 4 pounds, and the test gun's trigger averaged 4.1 pounds for an average of 10 test pulls using a Wheeler trigger gauge. It's smooth and consistent, certainly one of the best triggers I've encountered in an upland gun. The barrel selector is built into the non-automatic sliding tang safety. The tang moves forward to the fire position and the barrel selector can be moved left or right to fire the corresponding barrel first. Every Autumn shotgun is equipped with automatic ejectors.

At 45-inches long, the Autumn I tested is a compact upland gun. It's almost 3-inches shorter than my 20-gauge Benelli Montefeltro, a gun

that has served me well in dense cover. That makes the Autumn an ideal gun for hunting grouse and woodcock in dense coverts where shots are fast and long guns are hampered by branches and brush.

The MSRP for the Autumn is currently set at \$3,995 for both the pistol grip and English stock models, which is more than some competing shotguns but a fair price for an elegant Italian side-by-side of this quality.

The Autumn's balance point lies at the leading edge of the receiver, giving it a nice, smooth swing.

AT THE RANGE

All Autumn shotguns come with five interchangeable INNER HP choke tubes (C, IC, M, IM, F) and a durable, lightweight zippered case. For initial testing, I set a pheasant target at 25 yards and fired the right barrel first, marking each pellet with a yellow dot. Then, switching to the left barrel, I fired again using the same choke constriction (IC), marking each of those pellets with a different color to determine how well regulated the barrels were. Ideally, good doubles will shoot both barrels close to the same point of impact. I've seen inexpensive side-by-sides that were poorly regulated with barrels that shot to very different points of impact even at moderate ranges. The Autumn, by contrast, is very well-regulated and the point of impact of both barrels overlapped generously at 25 yards. Like most field guns, the Autumn shoots flat with a 50/50 point of impact.

I tested the Autumn with Federal's Top Gun target load pushing 7/8 ounce of lead at 1,210 fps, as well as the hotter Baschieri & Pellagri one ounce loads at 1,350 fps. With the lighter loads recoil was insignificant, but with the hotter B&P loads recoil was noticeable. It wasn't abusive, but it's more setback than you'll experience when shooting a seven-pound gas gun. Minimal added recoil isn't a major factor when hunting wild birds, and the Autumn's light weight, superb handling, and excellent trigger make it a great option if \$4,000 isn't out of your price range.

Fabarm didn't launch the Autumn simply to play in the side-by-side market. This gun is well thought-out and beautifully appointed. Fit and finish are excellent, and material quality is on par with guns costing more. It's a solidly built double gun that's practical enough for field use without losing that special side-by-side magic. If you're a double gun devotee or simply looking for an elegant new bird gun that's as practical as it is pretty, the Autumn is worth a close look. 

