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SHOT BUSINESS[®]

SHOOTING, HUNTING & OUTDOOR TRADE

GUNS 2012

Although personal defense remains a big seller, manufacturers have ramped up production of bolt-action sporting rifles. In fact, dealers should see a wide range of new guns—in all disciplines—enter the market this year pg.40





This year sees a varied selection of smoothbores that covers just about any shotgun use. A redesigned Citori over/under and a new over/under and a single-barrel trap gun from Ithaca will appeal to fixed-breech fans, while CZ-USA offers two new side-by-side models at attractive prices.

The trend toward task-specific models at popular prices continues with new waterfowl and turkey models from a number of companies. You'll also see a steady mix of 20-gauge chamberings in the turkey lines. A number of new Youth models make an appearance, and while they may be intended for the field, many self-defense experts would cheerfully take those compact models in 20-gauge for home defense. Fans of recoil-operated shotguns will want to take a look at the reintroduced Browning A-5. Whether it's a basic field gun, a high-tech competition gun, or a sturdy home defense gun, there's plenty to see this year.

BENELLI USA

A refined 12-gauge waterfowl gun and an ultralight 28-gauge semi-auto highlight Benelli's new 2012 offerings. The new Benelli Super Black Eagle II (SBE II) Performance Shop Waterfowl Edition (\$2,899) is a highly tuned 12-gauge semi-auto with a 3.5-inch chamber designed for serious waterfowl enthusiasts. It features Benelli's Inertia Driven operating system and a polished trigger system for a crisp trigger pull.

The 28-inch barrel is Crio-treated, with lengthened and polished forcing cones, and fitted with a Hi-VIZ Comp front bead with a variety of colored fiber-optic inserts to allow the shooter to tune the sight for varying light conditions. Rob Roberts Custom Triple Threat interchangeable choke tubes are standard, and each barrel is pattern-tested with Federal Premium Black Cloud ammunition to ensure consistent patterns. Additional features include the Benelli ComforTech stock covered in Realtree Max 4 camo, a large bolt-cocking handle and enlarged/extended bolt release for easier manipulation with gloved hands, and a paracord sling that can provide 50 feet of 550-pound paracord in an emergency. Empty weight is 7.3 pounds.

The newest member of the Benelli Ultra-Light family is a trim 28-gauge that tips the scales at a petite 4.9 pounds.

The Ultra-Light 28-Gauge (\$1,759) uses Benelli's Inertia Driven system with a 2+1 capacity and features a feather-weight two-piece blued alloy receiver, a 26-inch Crio barrel topped with a carbon-fiber raised-vent rib, a mid-rib bead, and a red-bar front sight. Benelli Crio choke tubes in Cylinder, Improved Cylinder, and Modified are supplied. The stock is walnut with a WeatherCoat finish and is fitted with an AirCell recoil pad. (800-264-4962; benelliusa.com)

BROWNING ARMS

The venerable Citori 725 receives a makeover with a new lower-profile receiver, but using the same proven full-width hinge pin and tapered locking-bolt design. Additionally, it now incorporates the new FireLite mechanical trigger, which provides reduced take-up, shorter over-travel, and a crisper break.

It will be factory-set at 3 to 3.5 pounds on the Sporting model, 4 to 4.5 pounds on the Field model.

The Influx II super-soft, yet very slippery, recoil pad, which does not snag on clothing, uses internal directional deflection guides to shift the comb downward and away from the cheek, for softer shooting. Both new Citori models will also use the new Invector DS (Double Seal)



CZ-USA: Left to right: Ringneck Target, 712 ALS (Adjustable Length Stock), and Redhead Target. The 712 ALS makes use of an ATI stock to give a length-of-pull range of between 12 and 14 inches, ideal for young shooters.



choke-tube system.

The new Sporting model (\$3,139.99) will feature a gloss oil-finish Grade II/III walnut stock with a close-radius pistol grip, a trim forend, and a silver-nitride-finished receiver with gold-accented engraving. Browning's Triple Trigger System allows shooters to fine-tune the length of pull and switch between three different trigger shoes to suit the index finger of the shooter. Available barrel lengths are 28, 30, and 32 inches. Other features include Browning's Vector-Pro lengthened forcing cones and a tapered ventilated rib with a HiViz Pro-Comp fiber-optic front sight and an ivory mid-rib bead. It will ship with five extended DS choke tubes. The average weight is 7.5 pounds.

The Citori 725 Field (\$2,469.99) features a gloss oil-finished walnut stock with a close radius pistol grip and a trim forend with cut checkering. The silver nitride receiver has high-relief engraving.

It will be offered in 26- or 28-inch lightweight-profile barrels, each of which bears a ventilated rib. Average weight is 7.3 pounds. It ships with three DS choke tubes.

This year will see the reintroduction of Browning's classic A-5 "humpback" recoil-operated 12-gauge, but the familiar humpback profile is about the only thing the new A-5 shares with its predecessor. The receiver is a lightweight

aluminum alloy with an anodized bi-tone finish. Available in barrel lengths of 26, 28, and 30 inches (3-inch chambers), each is a lightweight profile mounting a ventilated rib. The new A-5 has Vector-Pro-lengthened forcing cones and is threaded for the new DS choke system. The recoil-operating action is a hand-honed Kinematic Drive that handles a wide range of loads. (801-876-2711; browning.com)

CIMARRON ARMS

The Cimarron 1881 shotgun is a classic side-by-side 12-gauge designed for Cowboy Action competition or hunting. It features authentic frontier styling, with 3-inch chambers and manual ejectors, and is threaded for interchangeable choke tubes. It will be available with 20-, 22-, 26-, 28-, and 30-inch barrels. All models have a Turkish walnut stock and forend. SRP: \$740, standard; \$908, deluxe. (830-997-9090; cimarron-firearms.com)

CZ-USA

Five new model variations of existing designs enter the CZ shotgun line this year. The 712 Target 12-gauge (\$660) is built on the proven gas-operated aluminum-alloy 712 action with target-grade enhancements for the price-conscious shooter. Chambered for 3-inch shells (with a gas system that will reliably handle 2.75-inch

target loads), it features a 30-inch chrome-lined barrel with a fiber-optic front sight on a 10mm stepped rib. Magazine capacity is 4+1, and interchangeable choke tubes in F, M, and IC are included.

The 712 Adjustable Length Stock 12-gauge (\$562) is the basic 712 action with the polymer ATI adjustable stock that provides a 12- to 14-inch length of pull to allow easy fitting to shooters of differing stature. The 28-inch barrel features a fiber-optic front sight. Magazine capacity is 4+1, and interchangeable choke tubes in F, M, and IC are included.

The Redhead Target 12-gauge (\$1,299) is built on the Redhead over/under model and features a boxlock frame system, a single selective mechanical trigger, coil-spring operated hammers, auto ejectors, a 3-inch chamber, chrome-lined barrels, a polished silver receiver with polished blued barrels, and a Turkish walnut stock. This new Target version adds additional features that include a 30-inch barrel with a 10mm stepped rib, Schnabel forend, smooth rounded heel, 14.75-inch length of pull, and a Monte Carlo buttstock with cast-off for right-handed shooters. It comes with five flush-mounted interchangeable choke tubes (C, IC, M, IM, and F).

Fans of side-by-sides will want to check out two new versions of CZ's Ringneck SxS. The Ringneck Straight Grip 20-Gauge (\$993) features 26-inch barrels chambered for

3-inch shells, a Turkish walnut stock with a straight English pistol grip, a case-hardened receiver, polished blued barrels, a single selective mechanical trigger, and extractors rather than auto ejectors. The Greener Top Cross Bolt system and bottom-locking action make for a strong action. Five interchangeable, flush-fitting choke tubes (C, IC, M, IM, and F) are included.

The Ringneck Target 12-Gauge (\$1,143) provides the same features, but in a 12-gauge with 3-inch chambers, a full-size target grip, and 30-inch barrels. Designed for a shooter who wants a longer sighting plane, CZ-USA notes that it is an excellent choice for the SxS events, which are becoming popular in many Sporting Clays matches. (800-955-4486; cz-usa.com)

FRANCHI USA

The Franchi Affinity (\$849 to \$949) is a new, lightweight Inertia Driven semi-auto that will be available in 12-gauge (6.9 pounds, 28-inch barrel) or 20-gauge (5.8 pounds, 26-inch barrel). It is constructed with an aluminum-alloy receiver with steel inserts to ensure a steel-to-steel lock-up.

Chambered for 3-inch shells, Franchi notes it handles all loads, from target (light 1½-ounce in 12-gauge and 7⁄8-ounce in 20-gauge) to full magnums. The synthetic stock is available in Black Synthetic,



Cimarron Arms: The 1881 is a classic side-by-side 12-gauge designed for Cowboy Action or hunting. All models have a Turkish walnut stock and forend.