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FABARM INFINITE RS

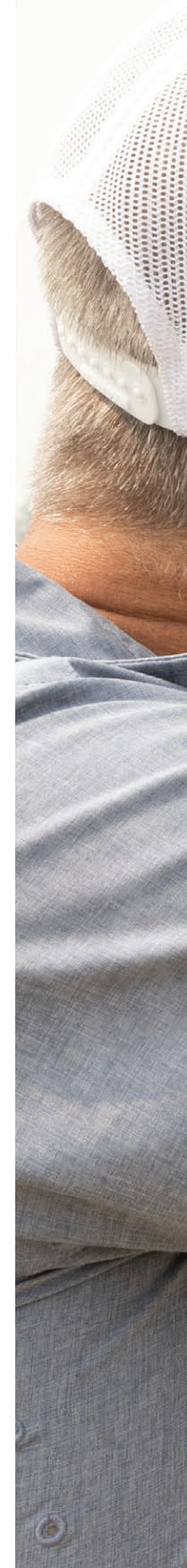
FABARM'S STYLISH INFINITE RS IS A **MODERN TAKE ON THE CLASSIC SIDE-BY-SIDE SHOTGUN.**

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THOUGH MOST HUNTERS and competitive shooters carry over/unders, pumps, and autoloaders, there may be no more stylish shotgun than a fine side-by-side. And while most hunters agree that double guns have unmatched panache, there are some downsides to classic side-by-side shotguns. Their design doesn't lend itself to cheap, efficient manufacturing, and competition shooters didn't have a readily available sporting side-by-side designed for off-season clay target shooting.

Fabarm is challenging the notion that side-by-sides can't keep pace with modern competition guns with the release of their Infinite RS. Designed to be a modern competition gun that holds its own with other action types, the Infinite RS is ready for clay target competitions right out of the box. In creating a modern side-by-side with a sporting bent, though, Fabarm hasn't strayed away from the styling or handling that make classic doubles so appealing, and the Infinite RS manages to perform just as well in upland fields as it does on the range.

Fabarm has a long history of shotgun manufacturing dating back to 1924, when Fabbrica Bresciana di Armi was founded in Italy's famed Valley of the Gun near Brescia. Mercifully, the company shortened its name to Fabarm, and the first products the company manufactured were side-by-side shotguns.





Under the ownership of the Galesi family, Fabarm continued to expand their product line during the mid twentieth century, offering semiauto and over/under shotguns. During the 1970s, Fabarm added a four lock action to their side-by-side shotguns, which helped improve the longevity of the gun.

That same four lock design has been a key feature on Fabarm shotguns for decades, and it has been licensed by other major brands. Not surprisingly, the new Infinite RS comes with the same four lock design. Traditional side-by-sides comes with two locks that, over time, can loosen. This allows for lateral movement between the locking lugs and the pin, which results in slight movement of the barrels. Unsurprisingly, accuracy suffers. Unlike some classic side-by-sides that are designed to be field guns and were never intended to fire tens of thousands of shots during their lifetime, the Infinite RS is built to withstand the rigors of competition shooting.

The four locks are machine from premium steel and lock in place in a precision manufactured forged steel frame. Lockup is rock solid, and the black satin finish and Infinite RS engraved logo on the receiver provide an austere by striking aesthetic. The Fabarm's single inertia adjustable trigger is simply outstanding, breaking at an average 3.25 pounds on the test gun, when measured with a Wheeler trigger gauge. That's good for a factory centerfire rifle and exceptional for a scattergun.

Another key feature that sets the Fabarm apart from other side-by-sides is the addition of the Quick Release Rib. Like other Fabarm QRRs, the rib can be removed and replaced quickly, but that modularity is not the only benefit the QRR offers. Most side-by-sides have soldered ribs that are designed for field use but not for competition, but the Fabarm's rib is elevated above the barrels. It offers a wider field of view, and it is very much like shooting a competition over/under shotgun.

Perhaps most importantly, though, it eliminates the forward weight bias common on side-by-sides. The Infinite RS is available

in 12 gauge with 30- or 32-inch barrels. Normally, such a gun would be noticeably nose-heavy because of the steel rib and solder, but since the QRR rib is aluminum and doesn't require soldering, the Infinite RS is beautifully balanced. On the model I tested with 30-inch ribs, the balance point was right at the front of the receiver—noticeably farther back than 12-gauge side-by-sides with similar length barrels. The QRR tapers from 10mm to 8mm and includes a white Bradley style front sight and a silver mid-bead, an ideal setup for sport shooting.

The Infinite RS comes with TRIBORE HP barrels, which offers several important benefits. For starters, they are deep drilled, and this results in a consistent, accurate pattern. The benefit is that the barrels shoot very close to point of aim, and the combination of TRIBORE HP barrels and EXIS HP choke tubes results in consistent, even patterns. As an added benefit, the barrel/choke design works well with steel shot, and the ability to use tighter EXIS HP chokes with steel makes these guns more effective with non-toxic shot. That's good news for duck hunters, but also for any competition shooter who uses non-toxic shot at the range. Five EXIS HP extended choke tubes (S, IC, M, IM, F) are included with every Infinite RS gun.

The Fabarm comes with a beautiful semi-deluxe Turkish walnut stock with a matte hand-oiled finish and adjustable comb. The pistol grip is deep and more vertical than traditional side-by-sides, but ideal for a competition gun. There's very fine diamond point checkering on the pistol grip and the semi-beavertail forearm, and the Fabarm comes with a dense Microcell 22mm recoil pad that does a good job reducing recoil.

With 30-inch barrels, the Infinite RS measures 48.25-inches long and weighs eight pounds, four ounces (depending upon wood density). MSRP for the Fabarm Infinite RS is \$6,175, and, as with other Fabarm guns, there's option for a left-handed stock (\$205). The Infinite RS is covered by a five-year warranty like other Fabarm shotguns.



The Infinite RS has a semi-deluxe Turkish walnut stock with adjustable comb.



FABARM
INFINITE RS

GAUGE	12
ACTION	Side-by-Side
BARREL LENGTH	30 in. (tested), 32
TRIGGER	Single, inertia, 3.25 lbs.
WEIGHT	8 lbs., 4 oz. (depending on wood density)
BUTTSTOCK	Matte oil finish Turkish walnut, adjustable comb
FOREARM	Semi-beavertail
MSRP	\$6,175
WEBSITE	fabarmusa.com



RANGE TESTING

Normally, I test shotguns for GUN DOG at my home range, but the evaluation of the Infinite RS was a bit different. The Fabarm team was attending the SCTP Nationals at the Cardinal Shooting Center in Marengo, Ohio, the week that I planned to test the Infinite RS. I made plans to meet with Shaun Burkowski, director of marketing for Caesar Guerini (Fabarm's parent company) at the event to test the Infinite RS first-hand.

It's refreshing to see thousands of young shooters from around the country toeing the line at the SCTP Nationals, but the Cardinal Center had an eerie, post-apocalyptic look on the day that I shot the Infinite RS. Major wildfires across Canada produced heavy smoke that blew into the event. The haze didn't help the air quality, but it didn't slow down the event, and after meeting with Shaun, we headed out to one of the Cardinal Center's many trap fields to test the Infinite RS.

My first impression of the Fabarm was that it handles recoil very well. Side-by-sides produce lateral recoil when the right and left barrels fire, but the Fabarm, with its four locks and beautiful balance, diminished lateral recoil. The gun also does a very good job reducing recoil impact, and it's a very soft-shooting 12 bore. It's a gun that you could shoot routinely in competition without having to consult an orthopedic surgeon about shoulder issues. In fact, it recoiled noticeably less with standard trap loads than the 20-gauge autoloader I'd been shooting at the range a couple days prior.

The Fabarm's trigger is superb, and exactly what you need for a dedicated competition gun. The break is smooth and predictable, and the Infinite RS's drilled barrels shot consistently to the proper point of aim. Having the ability to adjust the comb height is another major benefit of this gun, a feature rarely found on side-by-sides. A manual tang-mounted safety with barrel selector is included with the gun, but buyers can opt for an auto safety if they prefer.

You aren't a real side-by-side enthusiast unless you've been burned by scorching hot barrels, usually the result of a splinter forearm that doesn't adequately prevent the shooter's fingers from contacting the barrels after prolonged shooting. The Fabarm's semi-beavertail forearm manages to prevent

accidental barrel contact, but it's not as large and heavy as most true beavertail forearms. It's a thoughtful design, so you can leave your shooting gloves at home.

The Fabarm was engineered to serve as a competition side-by-side, and after shooting the Infinite RS it seems hard to imagine that any shooter who regularly competes in side-by-sides clay competitions around the country wouldn't be attracted to the many benefits this gun offers for competition shooters. But while the Infinite Rs will certainly allow you to bring home some hardware at side-by-side matches, this gun holds its own against other action types that have traditionally dominated competition. And while it isn't designed with hunters in mind, there's no question that the Infinite RS would make an excellent upland and waterfowl gun. It wouldn't be my first choice on long, hard hikes or in dense cover, but for short hikes after pheasants in CRP cover, dove hunts, and preserve birds, the Infinite RS would be an excellent choice. And although it's not at all a conventional choice for waterfowl, the Infinite RS with its three-inch chamber, excellent balance, TRIBORE HP barrel, and EXIS HP extended chokes would make a fine duck gun. It would also contrast nicely in your gun rack beside your camo-clad autoloading duck gun.

Like other Fabarm guns, fit and finish is superb, and the Infinite RS is mechanically solid. \$6,175 certainly isn't pocket change, but the Infinite RS (and it's cousin, the field-ready Fabarm Autumn) strike a sweet spot in the current side-by-side market. The materials and build quality are better than budget-priced doubles, but the Fabarm doesn't cost nearly what most fine British guns demand. It's also worth noting that Fabarm offers exceptional customer service, so if something does happen, you can expect to be treated fairly and have the problem resolved in as short a span of time as possible.

A side-by-side for your next sporting gun? A few years ago, such a thing seemed unlikely, but the arrival of the Infinite RS has changed the side-by-side market for the better. It seamlessly blends classic double gun styling with modern features, and that makes it one of the most appealing new shotguns in years. **GD**