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Gun Digest

WE KNOW GUNS SO YOU KNOW GUNS **THE MAGAZINE**

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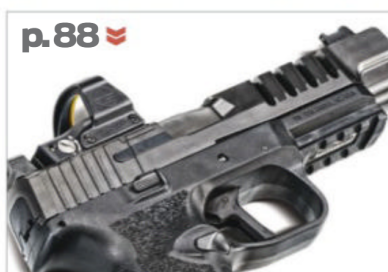
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GUNS GREEN

European brands producing guns right here in the States.

With manufacturing becoming more global every year, it can be hard to know what's made in the USA and what's imported, especially since some of the manufacturers you might associate with Austria, Germany, Belgium and the Czech Republic have either moved production to the U.S. ... or are in the process of doing so.

There are several reasons that a manufacturer might move production to the United States, but if they win a U.S. Government contract and the maze of laws surrounding the import and export process. With more red tape being added every year by lawmakers, it makes more sense than ever to establish manufacturing in the States.

Over the last decade, BATFE reports indicate that the six manufacturers chosen for this article produced

13.8 million firearms in the U.S. To give you an idea how many that is in comparison to the Remington 870, there were only 11 million of those produced for the entirety of the 70-year production run.

But does the nationality of the company ownership matter to you if you're set on an American-made gun? That's a question you're going to have to answer yourself, but I'm all for anything that expands firearm production in America. Not only does it keep Americans working and trains them how to make guns, but it also makes further legislation affecting firearms harder for politicians.

Just imagine if Kalashnikov Concern had a sister factory here in the States building Saiga rifles. The executive order issued by President Obama in 2014 would've had nearly no effect on the availability of Saiga-based AKs domestically!



WITH CARDS



American engineers have taken modularity to a new level. This customized FN America 509 Midsize sports a 509 Compact Tactical slide fitted with a Holosun red-dot, Streamlight TLR-1 HL, ARC compensator and Apex trigger.



Innovative American-made pistols, like the popular P365 series, have helped Sig Sauer's growth immensely.

Initially produced in Italy, Beretta set up a production line in the United States to meet the needs of the U.S. Military when they were awarded the M9 pistol contract in 1985.

SIG SAUER:

6.5 MILLION U.S. PRODUCED

The very first Sig Sauer P220 was imported into the United States in 1977 as the Browning BDA. Since then, Sig has become one of the largest gun manufacturers in the U.S., with 6.5 million made domestically in the past decade.

While the U.S.-based Sig Sauer Inc. is relatively young, the company can trace its roots to the oldest German gunmaker on record, J.P. Sauer & Sohn. Dating back 270 years, the Sauer name has been on countless firearms. It wasn't until the Swiss company, Sig, purchased J.P. Sauer & Sohn in 1976 that Sig Sauer as we know it was a thing.

Unfortunately, 1984 brought a bittersweet moment in company history with the loss of the U.S. Military's

M9 contract to Beretta ... by being a mere \$6 per unit more expensive than the Beretta. However, that near win propelled the P226 to become one of the more popular pistols with police departments and set the stage for the wild success of the P320.

Today, Sig Sauer Inc. is the current supplier of the M17 and M18 pistols to the U.S. Military, as well as proudly producing the P320 for countless police contracts in New Hampshire. Virtually the entire line of Sig Sauer firearms carries a U.S. birth certificate these days, which is a huge win for American gun buyers as well as gun-toting professionals.

Since firearms are such a large part of American culture, Sig has been free to innovate at a rate rarely seen in the industry. Between innovative approaches to government contracts, their impressively accurate ammunition line and world-class optics, Sig Sauer isn't likely to be dethroned anytime in the foreseeable future.

FN AMERICA:

2.8 MILLION U.S. PRODUCED

When most people hear the brand "FN," the first thing they think of is the Belgium-based FN Herstal, which isn't technically incorrect because FN

America is a subsidiary of the Herstal Group.

That said, FN America's roots go back to 1978 when FN Manufacturing was established to build firearms for the U.S. Military, which our troops have been carrying into combat for the past four decades; but that's only a small part of what the Herstal Group manufacturers in the United States.

The Herstal Group acquired Browning firearms in 1977 after a longtime partnership, dating back to 1899 when they started producing the FN Browning M1900, the first handgun to use a slide designed by John Moses Browning. Today, U.S.-made Brownings are built in Salt Lake City, Utah, a mere 40-mile drive from the company's birthplace.

Today, FN America builds the FN SCAR, M16 and M4 rifles, as well as the M249, M240, MK46 and MK48

The FN America 509 LS Edge is the latest iteration of their 509 series, designed and produced in Columbus, South Carolina.



machine guns, for the U.S. Department of Defense in their Columbus, South Carolina, facility alongside the civilian line of firearms.

BERETTA:

2.2 MILLION U.S. PRODUCED

Like Sig Sauer, Beretta's lineage goes back hundreds of years with Beretta-produced weapons being present in every major European war since 1650. Beretta holds the distinction of being the oldest weapon maker in the world—their first product being arquebus barrels made in 1526.

The bulk of the Berettas produced

here in the United States are a result of their narrow M9 contract win in 1985, which propelled the Beretta 92 series from obscurity to a nationally recognized shape. In fact, the 92 series

has been so impactful on American gun culture, many of the no gun “gunbuster” signs use the shape of a Beretta 92 series. You can't go wrong when Martin Riggs and John McClane choose one as their sidearm, right?

It isn't just the Beretta 92 series that's made in the new 160,000-square-foot Gallatin, Tennessee, factory; nearly every model of Beretta pistol offered in the United States since the '80s had at least one variant of it produced domestically. Small-bore pistols like the U22 Neos and the 21A are almost a given, due to the point system a pistol must comply with in order to get the BATFE's thumbs up, as is the case with subcompact variants.

Beretta can thank that M9 pistol contract for giving them reason to set up shop here in the States. Without that requirement, Beretta might not

be as popular on the U.S. market as it is today.

GLOCK USA:

2.1 MILLION U.S. PRODUCED

You might've noticed in 2012, USA roll-marked Glocks started appearing on gun dealer's shelves. This wasn't a result of the great gun panic of 2012; Glock actually received approval from the Smyrna, Georgia, city council in 2010 to build four buildings on 18 acres, which was completed in 2012.

So, what spurred the massive expansion? Probably export laws.

Even though most believe those 2012 USA-made Glocks were the first

While the CZ-USA P10 series was initially produced in the Czech Republic, they are now also produced in Kansas City, Kansas.



of the Austrian-designed pistols to have an American birth certificate, BATFE reports say otherwise. Between 2005 and 2011, before American consumers saw them on dealer shelves, over a quarter-million Glocks were produced between 2005 and 2011.

If you're wondering if a Glock made in the United States is better or worse than one made at the Austrian facility, the answer is "neither." Glock Austria ensures that the quality their customers expect are upheld by making sure that the processes Glock USA uses are identical to the ones used in Austria. Heck, even the raw materials for the slide, frame and barrel are shipped in from Austria to be turned into guns by CNC machines also shipped in from Austria—and programmed by the same people who programmed the

machines in Austria.

After building more than 2 million Glocks in the United States, it's safe to say that the Austrian plastic fantastic has dual citizenship.

CZ-USA:

125,000 U.S. PRODUCED

The bulk of the guns CZ-USA has built in the United States during the past decade haven't carried the CZ name at all, but rather been under their Dan Wesson brand acquired by CZ-USA in 2005. The Norwich, New York, factory is just a small part of CZ's master plan: Keep an eye on what the company does over the next five years; your mind will likely be blown.

While CZ-USA hasn't produced near as many guns domestically as Sig Sauer,

FN or Glock, they've committed to construct a factory in Little Rock, Arkansas, to expand their American manufacturing capabilities. CZ's purchase of the legendary Colt has delayed the construction of the Little Rock factory for up to five years, which is unfortunate but understandable. A delay in the factory's construction is preferable to the Colt brand dying.



While HKUSA doesn't produce as many firearms in the U.S. as the other companies on this list, they have proven able to maintain the level of quality people expect from the Germany-based company.

There are a handful of CZ-marked guns made right here in the USA already, with more models to follow as soon as the Little Rock facility is completed. Currently, some models of the Czech gunmaker's new striker-fired P10 series of guns are made in their Kansas City, Kansas, facility. Once the new factory is finished, the number of CZ pistols made in the United States is sure to increase.

HECKLER & KOCH USA: 76,000 U.S. PRODUCED

It might come as a surprise that Heckler Koch's U.S. arm, HKUSA, produces the fewest guns out of the bunch, but those paying attention to H&K over the past decade or two won't be surprised. You see, H&K is a shadow of its former self for several reasons, the largest being the German government's export restrictions.

In recent years, Heckler & Koch has stated they have "withdrawn from cri-

sis regions of this world." That means that countries in conflict areas or that don't meet their definition of a "green company" are no longer customers the German company is interested in selling to. Since that cuts out a large portion of their customer base, the U.S. consumer market is where they've looked to make up those sales.

The announcement in 2017 that HKUSA was expanding to a 50,000-square-foot facility in Columbus, Georgia, may signify a turnaround for the company, but don't get excited too quickly. Unfortunately, the company's bestselling gun, the VP9, is still made overseas and subject to German export restrictions as well as American import laws, as is most of their product line.

While 50,000 square feet might sound like a big operation, keep in mind that the average Walmart Superstore is large enough to set up nearly four of HKUSA's factories inside. While the space isn't as large as you might expect from a gun company with H&K's reputation, they do produce HK45 pistols, as well as their MR556 and MR762 rifles, in the Columbus facility.

DOMESTICALLY PRODUCED IMPORTS

The next time you're looking at picking up a new firearm, take a look at where it was made; you'll likely be surprised. In an age where gun manufacturers viewed as American companies sell more foreign-made guns with cleverly concealed import marks than they make domestically—and companies that are viewed as foreign produce more guns than you could've imagined—you rarely can guess where a gun was born.

Buying models made in the United States not only supports domestic manufacturing, but it also convinces manufacturers that they need to continue to expand firearm production in the U.S. The bigger the industry gets, the harder time politicians have screwing with gun laws ... and that's a win for everyone. **GDTM**