



# Blue Steal

Beat the holiday rush with our early gun-shopping guide

As everybody knows, the must-have item this holiday retail season will be a firearm. And when it comes to deadly weaponry, you, as a consumer, could not be more in luck. Guns are to metro Atlanta what papal bobbleheads and pope-on-a-rope are to Vatican City. Jackpot!

Obviously you already have your Georgia concealed-carry permit so that you can slip your firearm into your purse or waistband and take it to dangerous places around town such as the mall, Publix, or your kid's soccer game. If you ride MARTA to work and wish to lock and load for the commute, all the better—that's legal now, too. While other states have tightened their firearms laws, Georgia legislators have conveniently *loosened* ours.

Now you can carry concealed weapons not only on public transportation but also in restaurants that serve alcohol, and at state parks and historical sites, which are among the deadliest attractions a person could ever visit.

Bonus! Now that the U.S. Supreme Court also backs your decision to pack, you can shop with confidence—your piece may be in style forever!

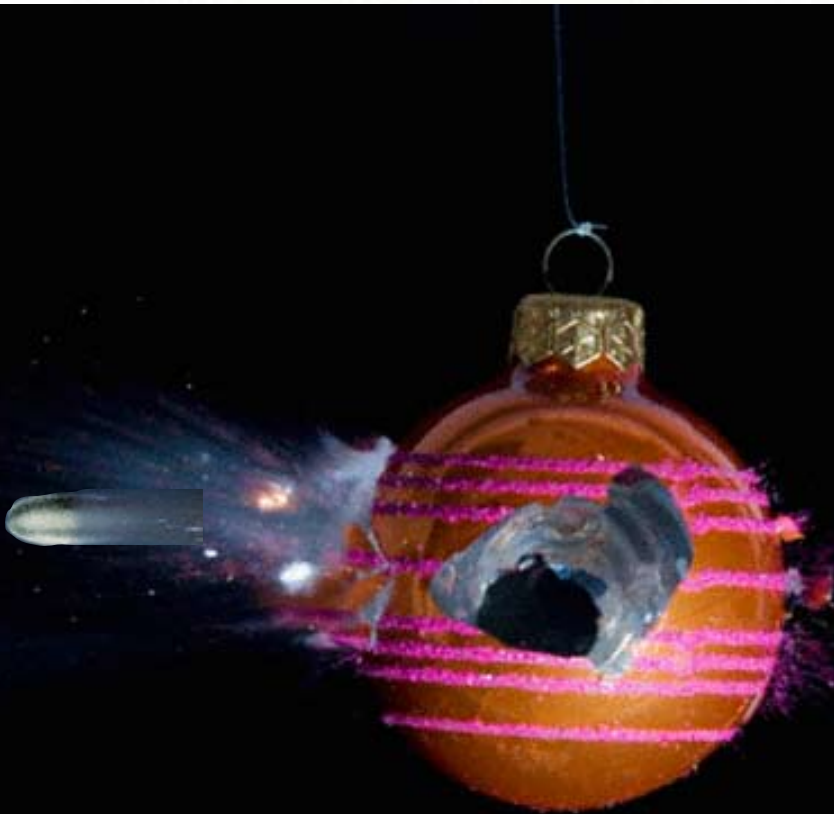
If you are like me, you are new to gun-slitting. For a starter gun (and I do not mean the kind that signals the beginning of a footrace), consider the lightweight Taurus 85, a .38 special made of titanium (\$499.99 at Adventure Outdoors in Smyrna), or the Taurus PT-22, a vintage .22-caliber pistol available with a mother-

of-pearl grip (\$219.99). If you are thinking of busting a cap in someone's ass at, say, the opera (*Madama Butterfly*, Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre; October 4, 7, 10, 12; single tickets \$25-130), the pearl number would go great with something like the Carolina Herrera bishop-sleeve ball gown in Italian silk habutai (\$4,690, Saks Fifth Avenue, Phipps Plaza).

Another eye-catching option is the Desert Eagle .50-caliber semiautomatic pistol (\$1,649, Adventure Outdoors). The Eagle, whose "obscene stopping power" is more than capable of "blowing people's heads into mush," as one reviewer put it, is really, really big and really, really gold. You

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might have noticed it in video games such as *Resident Evil 2* (\$24.99 used, GameStop.com) and in American film classics such as *I'm Gonna Git You Sucka* (\$3 rental, Movies Worth Seeing, North Highland Avenue).

FYI, this gun would also work on a woolly mammoth. Maybe.

But let's say you are thinking about murdering only a grizzly bear. Smith & Wesson's .50-caliber revolver could more than handle the job (\$1,299, Piedmont Pawn Shop in Morningside). Now, this is probably not something you would want to carry on your person or even in the roomy Chloe Heloise Python East-West Satchel (\$4,495, pre-order, Neiman Marcus, Lenox Square), because this S&W measures more than a foot long and weighs fifteen pounds, almost as much as the average Thanksgiving turkey.

But hey, the heavier the box, the better the gift, right? If that is your theory, you may as well go for the Steyr semiautomatic tactical rifle (\$4,299.99, Adventure Outdoors)—it cannot be beat, particularly if your after-dinner plans call for vaporizing a squirrel.

For a conversation piece, how about a nice Ruger Charger? This .22-caliber semiautomatic pistol (\$319.00, Adventure Outdoors) is weird looking in the way anteaters are weird looking, but with wood-grain butt embellishments that will help it blend into nature if you are planning a perilous trip to the Atlanta Botanical Garden (adult admission, \$12; children, \$9).

Some of these prices probably sound a little steep to you. But think about the potentially greater cost of leaving your property underfortified. Your television and stereo are *far too important* to leave only to deadbolts, window bars, a monitored security system, and the police. Surely you have seen that television commercial featuring the creepy hooded figure trying to break into the attractive couple's house in the middle of the night. Your conclusion is correct: Crime happens even to people who are good-looking! *There is no such thing as too much firepower.*

Why? Because of gun violence, of course. For reasons no one can figure out, gun violence is a national crisis, one that puts big-city dwellers at disproportionate risk. More than 340,000 homicides were committed

in America's large cities between 1976 and 2005, according to the U.S. Department of Justice—64 percent involving firearms, as Mayor Shirley Franklin noted recently in a newspaper op-ed. Last year, 79 percent of Atlanta's homicide investigations involved a firearm.

That is why you had better go out and buy a Calico M950 9 mm submachine gun (\$699.99, Adventure Outdoors). If you lock the Calico in your trunk or nightstand, no one will steal it and use it illegally or anything. That never happens.

Let's say you are into current events. You might enjoy owning a Bushmaster .223-caliber semiautomatic rifle (\$679.99, Adventure Outdoors), which has been called a "formidable personal defense weapon" whose shot is like "firing a tracer out of a handgun." The Bushmaster proved its formidability in 2002, in metro Washington's Beltway sniper attacks. Bushmaster: ten. Accountability and reason: zero.

Of course, the Bushmaster is not really concealable unless you are hiding in the trunk of your Chevy Caprice, scouting for unsuspecting human prey through a cutout hole. No, for portability you might consider the Kel-Tec Sub-2000 .40-caliber pistol-caliber carbine (\$329.99, Adventure Outdoors), which can fold away for convenient storage. This type of gun would never fit into your average waistband or purse, of course, but a Beretta pistol would (prices vary, available at almost any of the more than 600 gun shops throughout the metro area), as would many products by Glock, whose assembly and test-fire facility is located in Smyrna but whose gift shop, sadly, is online. Glock travel mug, anyone (\$14, teamglock.com)?

Chances are your purse or waistband is already crowded enough. If you choose to hide the heat on your ankle, we recommend jeans whose leg flare can accommodate a holster while offering quick-snatch accessibility for those occasions that call on you to fire first, ask questions later. By the way, the law totally supports you on this. If your elected leaders believe allowing civilians to walk around with concealed weapons isn't asking for more gun violence, more death, more rampant idiocy, you should believe them. They are highly intelligent. State Representative Tim Bearden (R-Villa Rica), for instance, carries his own piece; when the city warned concealed-weapons carriers to not even *try* bringing their guns

to Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, Bearden basically said, "Screw that! I'm packin'!" Then he said he'd just let the courts figure it out.

Since we're on that subject, if you are purchasing your roscoe, rod, or biscuit at the aforementioned Adventure Outdoors, you might like to contribute, at checkout, to the Bloomberg Fight Back Fund. Bloomberg is the mayor of New York City. He recently sued Adventure Outdoors and four other Georgia gun dealers for selling guns that wound up involved in NYC crimes. Adventure Outdoors sued Bloomberg right back. By the time it's all over, everybody will be suing each other or shooting each other. In the meantime, you can go ahead and dismiss as ridiculous any talk of gun availability affecting teen violence or suicide. What do researchers and crime statisticians know, anyway?

Speaking of statistics, we are *way* ahead when it comes to guns. Georgia's gun death rate—11.7 for every 100,000 people—is higher than the national rate of 10.4. Booyah! And we beat *everybody* last year when it came to "crime guns": More guns used in crimes—2,631—were traced to Georgia gun stores than to stores in any other state, according to the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence. (Some argued that the Brady Center misinterpreted federal statistics, but they are such haters.)

But back to the chrome. After purchasing your firearm you may want to pause for a beverage. Make My Day Cafe' has been running a special: Flash your gun permit and your first six shots are free. For the ladies, there is Annie Get Your Glock Night, with half-price Tequila Boom Booms, Bloody Marys, and Ammo-retto Martinis. There again is that tedious law-thing against drinking alcohol while wearing iron, but what are they gonna do, pat you down for ordering a Lemon Drop?

And do not worry whatsoever about the fellow next to you with the bulge in his jacket who is halfway through his twelfth whiskey. He is probably a really good shot.

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1      **Technically, Make My Day Cafe does not exist. Yet.**

