

HAMMER DOUBLES

In Argentina

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #294 —

If you are going to Argentina to hunt doves, one thing you might consider is taking your own guns. Not that the outfitters don't do a great job of providing guns, but you are likely going to shoot one or two 20-gauge semi-autos if you shoot their guns. Of course, you can use one gun and re-stuff the magazine or have your loader do it for you. If you are going to Argentina just to shoot doves, using their guns is a good choice, and it does take extra time to take your own guns.

Now, Americans aren't set up to have two guns of the same gauge—just one. So, you might have to jump through some hoops to have two guns. You might take two Beretta over and under guns or Browning's, or two semi-autos, but nothing works like a true pair of fixed breech guns, whatever make they are.

Perhaps I was a bit eccentric on this trip, but I took a pair of Charles Lancaster (of London, England) hammer guns, made in 1875. These guns were made just before the invention of the "hammerless" action and before the invention of automatic ejectors. Yes, I did take an extra set of firing pins (which I didn't need), but not an

extra pair of main springs. It's true, I go to Argentina as much for the guns as for the doves.

Shooting hammer guns in Argentina is very interesting. You will absolutely have to have ammunition that you feel comfortable with: in this case a 24 gram load of #7 shot, with a velocity of 1200 feet per second, was my first consideration! Then, you will want to "cock" or "recock" the hammers yourself, after fresh ammo is inserted into the



They shoot! Just like they were made to do—150 years ago.

chambers by your loader. This to be perfectly safe—once the hammers are back, and with no safety—so that you control which direction a loaded gun is pointed. Firearm safety is your responsibility.

The guns were a little short and a little high and I missed a few birds in the beginning.

But I shot 3950 rounds in three days and figured out quickly how

**“...I shot 3950 rounds
in three days...”**

to hit doves. The chokes were “none,” cylinder bore, but I shot birds as close as 15 yards and as far as 50. Although my thumbs got sore (through the gloves), I would definitely take the hammer guns back to Argentina.

Midway^{USA}

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*Unusual to be sitting down,
normally I am standing.*



*Normal cocking requires no gloves,
but dove hunting in Argentina does.*