

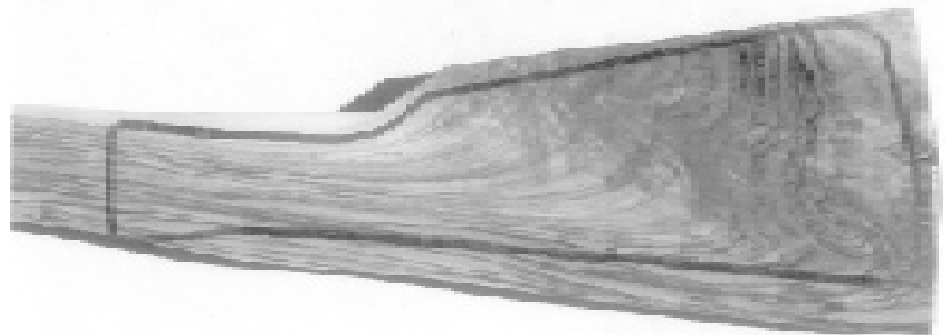
Virtually every shotgun manufacturer today — taking a page out of the Parker Reproductions play book — utilizes upgraded wood somewhere in their marketing program. You have only glance at their colorful print advertising or literature to get a feel for it. Merkel introduced “Luxury Grade” wood” to their line a couple years ago. Browning’s high grade Citoris all feature more engraving and upgraded wood with some of the best of both appearing on Grades III, VI and the new 525 Golden Clays. Franchi’s AL 48 Deluxe semi autos and Alcione over/unders offer “Select Walnut” as standard. Remington doesn’t discuss wood grades much in their catalog, but some of the wood I’ve seen on newer M1100’s has to have come out of their Custom Shop. Ithaca Classic Doubles has a \$28,000 model featuring (as you may have guessed) a piece of highest grade Turkish crotch wood. Both Berreta and FABARM have enhanced wood techniques on some models that give the illusion of high-priced wood, but without the higher cost.

A couple of years ago the head of SKB here in the U.S. told me that he personally hand-picks every piece of wood that goes on SKB’s three shotgun grades and AYA, the great Spanish maker, puts the same grade wood on Bill Hanus Birdguns and model 4/53 shotguns that they put on their \$4,700 Model 53 custom sidelock.

“I’m a bird hunter of course, but...”

That’s it. You’re hooked. When the “but” means you like nice wood on a shotgun (and who doesn’t?) you’re a wood nut. You’re one of us. Welcome to the club.

“Some days life kisses you right on the lips” (from the garfield comic strip)and **applicable to this California English Crotch Walnut blank.** **Hard to find certainly - and pricey when you do — but a smackeroo you’ll never forget.**



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Only in America.....do banks leave both doors open and then chain the pens to the counters.