



Big Bore Hunting Across the Globe: Why Serious Hunters Take Big Horn Armory Rifles Abroad

There's hunting—and then there's confronting animals that can turn the tables. Cape buffalo that stare through you before charging. Brown bears that vanish in the brush only to reappear ten yards closer. Water buffalo that soak up bullets like rain. When you step into the world of big-bore global hunting, the stakes shift. It's no longer about how well you shoot—it's about whether your rifle

hits with enough authority to end the encounter decisively.

Why Choose a Big-Bore from Big Horn Armory?

Some rifles are meant to impress on the range. Others are meant to perform when everything else has failed — when an animal comes through thick cover, when bone and

hide laugh at lighter bullets, when the first hit must count. That's the space Big Horn Armory builds for. BHA's big-bore rifles are not aftermarket conversions or up-rated toys: they're engineered around heavy cartridges, modern metallurgy, and field-first reliability.

Walk the line between an honest lever-gun and a modern semi-auto, and you'll see the design thinking: stout receivers, robust feeding, corrosion-resistant finishes, and ergonomics tuned for real recoil management and fast, repeatable handling. The result is a rifle that gives you confidence in close brush and authority at moderate range — exactly what global big-game hunting demands.

This isn't marketing copy — it's what hunters living with big bores already know: a purpose-built rifle changes the margin. Whether you prefer the one-hand, point-and-drive control of a lever gun (think [Model 89 family](#)), the flatter reach of a high-velocity lever ([Model 90/.460 S&W](#)), or the rapid follow-up capability of a semi-auto ([AR500/.500 Auto Max](#)), BHA provides platforms that match real scenarios, not hypothetical ones.

Choosing the Right Combo for the Animal and Terrain

Big-bore hunting across the globe is a matching game: species behavior + engagement distance + environment = cartridge and rifle choice. Below are practical, field-tested pairings to help you think like a guide before the first stalk.

Africa — Cape Buffalo, Sable, Eland (Thornveld & Mopane):

These animals punish marginal hits. Engagements are usually inside 20–120 yards in brush. You want mass and penetration more than velocity. The Model 89 in .500 S&W or .475 Linebaugh with a 450–550-grain bonded or monolithic solid is a classic choice — heavy bullets that break through ribs and shoulder bone, and a lever action that delivers the intuitive follow-up shot in tight quarters.

Arctic & Boreal — Brown Bear, Moose, Muskox (Open Tundra, Forested Ridges):

Ranges can swing long on ridgelines, and bears can come in close hard in timber. A Model 90 in .460 S&W or a fully-configured Model 89 running a high-energy 400–500-grain bonded load gives you penetration and a flatter trajectory for 100–250-yard work, while still keeping the brute force needed at contact ranges.

South America & Jungle Edge — Water Buffalo, Wild Boar (Wet Savanna, Thick Fringes):

Hogs and buffalo are often short, violent encounters with muddy hides

and heavy shoulders. A tough bonded bullet in the 350–450-grain band is ideal. Where surprises are likely and a second shot matters, the AR500 in .500 Auto Max is compelling: magazine capacity and semi-auto follow-up reduce the chance a second hit won't be there when you need it.

Australia & Oceania — Water Buffalo, Feral Hogs (Swamp/Monsoonal Country):

These hunts call for durability in wet conditions and bullets that hold together. Nitride finishes and stainless components on BHA rifles resist corrosion; paired with a stout solid or bonded projectile, you get the penetration to stop a heavy, water-soaked buffalo in its tracks.

Eastern Europe / Russia — Eurasian Brown Bear, Stag (Mountain Forests):

Country road distances and dense forest shots mean you'll want a balance of speed and mass. The .460 S&W in a Model 90 or a Model 89 set up with a higher-velocity load lets you reach 150–250 yards with confidence, while retaining the close-quarters authority needed when cover closes in.

Across all regions, think like this: shoulder/lung or broadside shots are the most reliable; avoid small cross-body or high-neck shots unless you're certain of angle and distance. Match bullet construction to the threat: solids and monolithics for heavy bone,

bonded controlled-expansion for large soft-tissue targets where both penetration and expansion matter.

Practical Considerations

The hunt itself is the center of gravity — everything else supports it. Here are concrete practices to make your big-bore rifle a tool, not a liability.

- **Ammo selection & testing:** Take your hunting load to the range under conditions similar to the hunt, if possible. Test for grouping, expansion, and reliable feeding. Bring at least 40–60 rounds of your primary hunting load, plus a backup load and sight-in rounds. Don't rely on local availability.
- **Zero & engagement planning:** Zero for typical encounter ranges, not theoretical max range. In dense brush, a 100-yard zero keeps holdovers manageable at 150; on tundra, you might choose a 200-yard zero for a flatter trajectory. Mark the maximum comfortable effective range for each day in your notebook — fatigue, wind, and light erode accuracy.
- **Recoil conditioning & handling:** Practice with the actual weight and recoil impulse you'll encounter. Big Horn Armory rifles are

balanced for real shooting, but that doesn't substitute for conditioning. Off-hand reps, steep-angle shooting, and rapid-follow drills will build the muscle memory to place decisive hits under stress.

- **Rifle setup for the hunt:** Fit your rifle with optics suitable for the expected engagement window (low-power variable for brush, higher mag for open country), reliable mounts, an aggressive sling for steady holds, and recoil mitigation (recoil pad, muzzle device where legal). Bring a minimal field kit: spare firing pin/extractor, maintenance tools, oil, and solvent. Bring a bore snake for your calibers. Keep daily maintenance light but consistent, cleaning bores and wiping off grit and moisture preserves function.
- **Shot preparation & ethical follow-through:** Big game rarely drops instantly. Anticipate tracking and trailing. Train to recognize wound signatures, make immediate follow-up shots when necessary, and coordinate with your guide for safe recovery. The ethical hunter plans for recovery before the trigger is squeezed.

Final Roundup — Which BHA Rifle for Which Global Giant?

- **Model 89 (.500 S&W / .475 Linebaugh):** The quintessential close-to-moderate range big-bore workhorse. Best for Cape buffalo, large moose, heavy brown bears, where mass and penetration trump rate of fire. Ideal in brush and mixed terrain where quick handling beats long reach.
- **Model 90 (.460 S&W emphasis):** When you need a lever platform but want a flatter trajectory and more retained velocity at distance. Great for mountainous moose/bear work or mixed hunts where 150–250-yard shots are realistic.
- **AR500 (.500 Auto Max):** For fast, aggressive encounters where follow-up shots are mission-critical: driven hogs, charging buffalo in tight cover, or multi-animal scenarios. The semi-auto form factor and magazine feeding make it the tactical big-bore choice.

Each rifle represents a philosophy more than a spec: choose the tool that complements the way the animal fights and the way the terrain forces you to shoot. And

don't forget fitness, training, and ammunition choice turn a good rifle into a successful hunting system.

Closing Thoughts

Big-bore hunting across the globe is equal parts respect, preparation, and humility. The animals you pursue are massive and will test every decision — from bullet selection to shooting posture. That's precisely why putting a purpose-built Big Horn Armory rifle in your hands matters: these rifles are

born from a simple idea — if you're going to take on the planet's most formidable animals, do it with tools engineered for the job.

If you're planning a hunt and want a rifle configured to your species and country — from barrel length and sighting to specific load recommendations — the BHA team can help you spec it right. Drop us a note, tell us where you're headed and what you expect to face, and we'll recommend the rifle, load, and setup to go with it.

www.bighornarmory.com.



©2025 Big Horn Armory Inc.

www.bighornarmory.com