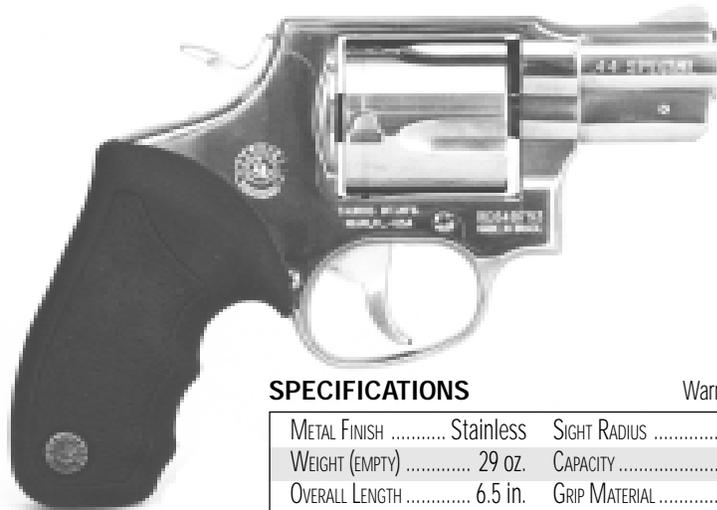


Taurus 445 .44 Special

Retail Price...\$351



SPECIFICATIONS

Warranty: 1 Year

METAL FINISH	Stainless	SIGHT RADIUS	3.75 in.
WEIGHT (EMPTY)	29 oz.	CAPACITY	5 rds.
OVERALL LENGTH	6.5 in.	GRIP MATERIAL	Rubber
OVERALL HEIGHT	4.75 in.	ACTION TYPE	SA/DA
MAX. WIDTH	1.4 in.	TRIGGER PULL Wt. SA	5 lbs.
BARREL LENGTH	2 in.	TRIGGER PULL Wt. DA	8+ lbs.

Our recommendation: Buy. This gun is a good mixture of size and function. Its low price is also a positive.

Some shooters won't like the shiny stainless finish on the steel Taurus 445. Too bad. It cleaned up easily, and we believe it would resist the elements (including sweat and body oil) better than blued metal.



Built on Taurus's smallest frame, the 445's all-steel construction lends welcome heft to create a sensible package of dynamite.

In our opinion the all-steel version of the Taurus 445 series makes the most sense. Yes, it's heavier than the alloy and titanium guns, but its compact design balances the gun well, making for a neat center of gravity that should sit well at the belt line. There's enough grip and enough backstrap for most sizes of hands. The barrel on this model is not compensated, but the efficient grip and well distributed weight do a nice job of killing recoil. Add to this a front sight that is tall with serrations that diffuse enough light for accurate use despite being satin stainless, and you've got a revolver

that is fun to shoot fast. The extractor is shrouded and all edges are nicely beveled. While a bobbed hammer would be better, the supplied tang does not protrude beyond the contour of the backstrap and sighting notch.

Taurus's patented locking system is included, activated by one of two supplied keys. The finish on the gun is polished and durable. One argument against this type of finish is its flashiness, based on the assumption that a sudden reflection will make the presence of a gun known prematurely. The other side of the argument is this finish will hold up better when exposed to body acids and sweat, an adversary more prevalent than the criminal element. Our only complaint was

one common to the older Taurus guns. That is, when the gun heats up, the trigger suddenly becomes hard to pull. One answer is to enlarge the cylinder gap so that expansion from heat avoids dragging the cylinder face on the forcing cone. We measured the cylinder gap on this sample to be an outrageously tight 0.0015 inch. Somebody in Brazil must have thought this revolver was built for Bianchi Cup competition. The other answer, one Taurus has found with its alloy guns, is to use a different quality material that resists expansion at higher temperatures. Yet another answer might be to make the cylinder and the frame of less-alike steels, assuming this malady is a case of galling. Otherwise, the steel 445 is a happy, willing shooter that we felt displayed the best combination of power and size of all the .44s in this test.

Taurus 445 Ultra-Lite

Our recommendation: Worth buying if the sights will shoot to point of aim. The Ultra-Lite series is a good balance of weight and controllability in a slightly bigger package than the company's Model 85s.

Snubbies used to be simple. If a bobbed or concealed hammer was not available, you simply lopped off the offending tang and voilà, a custom concealment gun. Here is a list of features crammed into the 445UL: Brushed alloy frame, satin finished barrel shroud and cylinder, shrouded ejector, six-port compensator, black anodized serrated front sight, crane ball-detent lock-up, the Taurus security system, and ribbed neoprene grips. What does all this add up to? Sub 3-inch groups (on average) from a sandbag rest at 15 yards for all ammunition tested. What's the catch? A poor point of aim. The results on target suffered from being low left for the most part. While the groups were consistent, the elevation changed little from the lightest bullets at 180 grains to the heaviest at 246 grains.