

WOMEN'S WEEKEND GETAWAY WITH GUNS

A Women-Only Firearms Course Is A Good Idea

BY KRISTEN WILLIAMS



I've heard people talk about the difference between firearms training for men vs. firearms training for women, and I always dismissed it. As a girl who grew up with guns and a woman who dove head first into the firearms industry by training with a mixed-gender class of law enforcement and civilians at Gunsite, I just didn't see the need for a "ladies only" firearms course. I was recently enlightened and now I understand why it is a good thing after all.

Living in California, I can't always have a gun on me and I am sorely lacking in any other skills to defend myself. I decided to change that, and signed up for the "Ladies Pistol and Self Defense Awareness" course at Firearms Training Associates. I mostly wanted the self-defense instruction, but as a handgun enthusiast, I wanted to get some rounds in and keep those skills sharp.

I've trained with Bill Murphy before at Surefire Institute in Las Vegas. In serious classes with military and law enforcement students, from low-light handgun tactics to AK-47 operations, and was interested to see how his style would differ leading a class of mostly novice female shooters.

There were over 30 women in attendance, and Bill led the class along with Cheryl Murphy and a whole team of trainers for an impressive student-to-instructor ratio. Immediately, Bill made it fun with anecdotes and humor during the opening in the classroom portion, making all the women comfortable. He kept it interesting but thorough while covering the all-important fundamentals, from safe gun handling to explanations of semi-automatic weapons and revolvers, and how to load and unload as well as ammunition basics. Most of the women



Christina Lotter assists student with shooting.



Bill Murphy supervises the firing line as multiple coaches work with the women on their skills.

were brand new to weapon handling and had various reasons for taking the class. Of prime importance was the discussion of mindset for self-defense, having a plan in daily routines, and how to avoid trouble in the first place.

I WAS SURPRISED TO LEARN that some of the women had actually attended “handgun training” elsewhere and were never even taught how to unload a gun without shooting every round. Murphy’s training is comprehensive and only takes a weekend to complete. However, the power of good instruction goes beyond making sure the curriculum is complete. I found his fun and comfortable teaching style, along with the professionalism of the entire team, individual coaching on the firing line and in the weaponless self-defense portion, to be thoroughly effective for every type of learner. I talked with

many of the women throughout the program and they all felt the same.

Firearms Training Associates has all the guns and gear necessary for students to use during class. Each woman got the opportunity to try multiple weapons so they could get a feel for the different pistols. They tried many revolvers and semi-automatics so they could get a feel for what was comfortable for them before making a decision on what to go out and purchase rather than just taking random advice from their spouses or their local gun shop owner.

This course also featured a group discussion led by Cheryl Murphy with no male instructors in the room, so the women could ask questions, share their personal concerns and stories, and learn some important lessons in a female-only environment. The prior training classes I’ve taken with Firearms Training Associates, Surefire

Institute and Gunsite would have been wholly inappropriate for most of the women in this particular class. There definitely is a need for exactly what this course offers. Sure, some women don’t require a kinder, gentler Bill Murphy, or a more temperate entry into shooting sports and self-defense, but some definitely benefit from the lighter touch to be comfortable enough for the lessons to absorb effectively.

I’ve always been an advocate for quality firearms instruction and this course is a great initiation for beginners or people who have had poor quality training in the past. I’m eager to get back to some more advanced tactical shooting, but I definitely see the need for this type of class and recommend it highly to any woman interested in entering the world of handguns or self-defense. **WSJ**



Editor’s note: For more information or to register for a class: Visit ftatv.com, or contact Firearms Training Associates at (714) 701-9918 or info@ftatv.com. Kristen Williams has a PR agency with clients in the firearms and golf industries and is a freelance writer. Her site is thegolfchick.com/www.thegolfchick.com.

CABELA’S LADIES’ NIGHT OUT

Cabela’s retail stores nationwide will focus on the growing population of women enjoying the outdoors by hosting Ladies’ Night Out on Saturday, October 5, 2013 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. This event will present hands-on seminars, giveaways, shopping discounts, sweepstakes drawings and free samples. Ladies in attendance will also be eligible to enter a drawing for six hours of private handgun lessons at a local range, all safety accessories, ammo, gun rental and a \$200 Cabela’s gift card. The first 100 women to check in at the retail store on Saturday will receive a commemorative gift and everyone will enjoy shopping discounts and refreshments. Classes will be taught by local experts and as always, are free of charge.

With more than 5 million women participating in shooting sports, an increase of 46.5 percent since 2001, this growing demographic will enjoy classes ranging from Handguns and Heels, An Introduction to Personal Firearms to Choosing a Handgun to Fit your Personality. For those looking to expand their knowledge in other areas, seminars will span from Dutch Oven Desserts and Campsite Cooking to WOW Your Family to Casting for Dinner: An Introduction to

Fishing Techniques. All classes will be taught by local experts and are all free of charge.

Product specialists and industry experts will be on hand to answer questions and make recommendations while offering suggestions to help make the ladies’ next outdoor experience a successful one.

According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation Firearms Retailer Survey Report, 2011 Edition, 61 percent of retailers surveyed saw an increase in female customers in their store in 2010 over 2009.

Seminars at Cabela’s Ladies’ Night Out include:

- Handguns and Heels: An Introduction to Personal Firearms
- Choosing a Handgun to Fit Your Personality
- Campsite Cooking to WOW Your Family
- So You Want to Carry Concealed: Laws and Options
- Dutch Oven Desserts
- Casting for Dinner: An Introduction to Fishing Techniques

A full schedule of Ladies’ Day Out events is available at Cabelas.com/stores. For more information about Cabela’s Ladies’ Night Out, visit www.cabelas.com and click on the store nearest you.