



Luxury Flintlock Hunting Rifle - Jean-baptiste Thomas, Saint-étienne, 18th Century

6 750 EUR

Signature : Jean-Baptiste Thomas, circa 1755-1785

Period : 18th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Mahogany

Length : 121 cm



Description

Overview

A rare and highly refined French flintlock sporting gun, crafted by Jean-Baptiste Thomas, a master gunsmith active in Saint-Étienne during the second half of the 18th century, the golden age of French arms-making under the Ancien Régime. This prestigious civilian hunting firearm stands out for its exceptional craftsmanship, noble materials, and elegant proportions.

Attribution and dating

Jean-Baptiste Thomas is recorded among the Saint-Étienne gunsmiths active circa 1755-1785. The signature "B.T. Thomas" on the lock, together with the "St Étienne" marking, allows a consistent and credible attribution to this maker. Stylistic and technical features support a dating circa 1760-1790.

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Barrels

The gun is fitted with long, high-quality barrels, bearing a gilt inscription "CANON CORDU", denoting superior forged and twisted iron barrels. Such barrels were reserved for luxury firearms and prized for their strength, flexibility, and performance. The gilded lettering further emphasizes the prestigious nature of the piece.

Lock

The French-type flintlock is finely engraved with floral motifs and exhibits excellent mechanical balance. The form of the cock, the precision of the mechanism, and the quality of the engraving reflect the high level of skill achieved by Jean-Baptiste Thomas, whose work was intended for discerning clients.

Stock and mounts

The stock is made of finely carved walnut, displaying elegant sculptural decoration characteristic of late 18th-century French taste. The firearm is richly mounted with solid silver fittings, including decorative plaques and reinforcements, bearing early workshop control marks. These silver mounts clearly place the gun in the category of luxury arms.

Condition

The gun is preserved in excellent original condition, with an even, attractive patina, clearly legible inscriptions, and strong overall coherence. Signs of age are consistent with an 18th-century object and enhance its authenticity without detracting from its visual appeal.

Conclusion

This flintlock sporting gun represents a highly accomplished example of Saint-Étienne luxury arms-making in the 18th century, attributable to an identified master gunsmith. A distinguished collector's piece combining technical excellence, refined decoration, and historical significance.

Overall length - 121 cm