

WINTER 2024/2025



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Culinary delights & essentials

CURATED BY KATKA GRIESBACH



SKNIFE PRECISION CRAFTSMANSHIP AT ITS BEST!

The Swiss knife maker sknife, based in Biel, has been writing a success story for over 20 years now. Damask knives are the premier class of kitchen knives and are precision-manufactured. Sknife uses corrosion-resistant torsion damask to produce its pocketknives. This is one of the most sophisticated forms of damask steel forging. In addition to the classic folding process, the material is also twisted. The full damask version of the pocketknife is made with over 1,600 layers, while the etching then creates this filigree pattern. For all lovers of bling-bling, there is an extravagant version with a blade back set with 51 diamonds. If you would like to experience this masterful knifemaking art up close in Biel take part in one of the guided tours that take place every two months.

- sknife.com

Sharp Swissness

WORDS ALEX KÜHN

In the watchmaking town of Biel, Michael Bach produces knives that are as flawless and precise as a luxury watch. The S in the name sknife is no coincidence. Read on to find out more about steel, wood and emotions.

Do you like it when people compare your knives with premium Rolex watches? Very much so! A good half of our employees previously worked in the watch industry. In addition, we use a special steel alloy that is also used by leading watch manufacturers. The head of quality of a very well-known brand, which I won't name here for the sake of discretion, once said to me: You work with the same attention to detail as we do, and what you produce is actually a premium watch without the movement.

sknife has been around for ten years now. What are the most important factors in this success story? In addition to our uncompromising commitment to quality and the pleasure we take in

what we do, we also have excellent connections within the gastronomy industry. Back when we were producing the first prototypes of our knives, we engaged in intensive dialogue with professionals from the kitchen and service sectors. We learned what the optimum weight distribution is and how the knife should lie on the table – specifically, with the knife edge being contactless with the surface to be protected.

You mentioned Swissness. How much of Switzerland is in a sknife knife? The steel comes from Klein SA Biel, also a supplier of the watch industry, which is then processed at the Flükiger forge, a family-run business in Oberburg in the Emmental.



The knife blanks are subsequently transported from there to our factory. Unlike our competitors, we do not use tropical wood for the handles. Instead, we use ash and walnut from Switzerland and have it compacted by another family-run business, H-Tech in Neuenegg (Canton of Bern), using a special stabilisation technique that gives it the necessary stability and colouring: consequently the sknife knives are predestined for the gastronomy.

One of your prominent customers is Sven Wassmer from Memories Restaurant at the Grand Resort Bad Ragaz. You have created an individual series of knives for him. That's right. When he was awarded his third star in 2022, he wanted something that no one else in Switzerland had: light-coloured wood with a special structure. Beechwood that has been soaked in water for a long time has such a structure, and Sven was immediately impressed. Initially, we sourced this driftwood from Switzerland. As we aim for beautiful wood grain, we meanwhile source it from European countries.

sknife knives can now also be found at the most prestigious establishments outside Switzerland, for example at the Hôtel du Cap-Eden-Roc on the Côte d'Azur. How did you manage to accomplish that? Fortunately, word gets around about the quality we offer. It wasn't easy at first, however, as we are not a global brand. Nevertheless, to get our knives used in the best establishments, I made several journeys to the Côte d'Azur, with knives in our luggage, on which we had engraved the name of each chef. We have been equipping the Lou Roc restaurant with Executive Chef and Michelin-starred

chef Sébastien Broda with our sknife steak knives. The great enthusiasm of his guests led to the request from the Cap-Eden-Roc to produce an exclusive cutlery collection.

Do you watch for the reactions of guests at neighbouring tables when you sit in a restaurant that uses your knives? Of course, that is very direct and valuable feedback for me. Incidentally, I always recognise restaurateurs immediately. They turn over all the crockery and look for the brand name on the cutlery. Knives always attract special attention.

What makes a sknife knife so special and unique? Both are sharp, but an outstanding knife is a shade sharper. Above all, it stays sharp for longer. Something else that is very important is the craftsmanship. Compared to industrial products, our handcrafted knives stand out by cleaner transitions being manufactured in high precision with attention to detail – our tolerance is not 0.5 mm, but almost exactly zero. Sharpness is meant to be enjoyed every day. That's why we offer a sharpening and care set, ensuring sknife knives maintain their first-day sharpness for a lifetime.

Finally, let's take a brief look into the future: When will sknife next launch a new product? Knife lovers are also delighted with the pocket knife – especially the luxury version in damask steel adorned with 51 diamonds. The launch of a special sommelier knife is planned for early 2025. We like to do things thoroughly and, when in doubt, prefer to take a little longer. ♦

