



SUMMER 2022

# Lac Léman Where summer is *easy*

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TRAVEL GUIDE

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# *super*-sharp story



The knife was developed in collaboration with top chefs looking for a Swiss product of the highest quality and perfection. Countless such knives have now found their way into the world's best restaurants with over 90 Michelin stars. Michael Bach, sknife's founder and owner, looks back on a seven-year success story with the production of the 20,000th product and sees uniqueness in the interplay of innovative design and the challenging material combination of wood and surgical steel.

The black ash wood is used by Grant Achatz in Chicago, the walnut by Mauro Colagreco – the world's best chef 2021 – in Menton. The light wood was developed for the Roca brothers in Spain and the grey for Franck Giovannini – to match the decor. The knife, fork and spoon, were recently honoured in London with the fourth international design prize as the world's best cutlery 2022.

Stabilised wood does not swell in contact with water and surgical steel has four times the corrosion resistance, which is a major advantage when used in seaside establishments or on yachts, such as in restaurants and hotels on the Côte d'Azur or at the Yacht Club de Monaco.



The production of a forged-steel knife begins with a blank heated to over 1000 °C and forged into the desired shape with a weight of 3.5 tonnes under a blacksmith's hammer. Each knife is finished in over 40 working steps in the sknife manufactory in Biel. In addition to surgical steel, we also manufacture all products in damask steel for knife collectors.

Regular exchange with top chefs provides sknife with important input and supports our product development. For some chefs, we have developed specially produced series – a joint process starting with an early sketch and ending in the production of a prototype. Regular visits in Biel by many chefs working in the region give us good insight into their needs and desires, and the exchange of ideas provides us with valuable input for improvement and added products.

More than 90 per cent of wood used in knife handles is of tropical origin as it is more suitable owing to its higher density. A newly developed process based on research carried out by the Bern University of Applied Sciences permits the use of local wood, such as ash and walnut. In this process, the wood's pores are closed by introducing acrylic resin in a vacuum-pressure procedure, making it suitable for use in a restaurant kitchen. As an interesting side effect, the wood can be designed with decorative colours, for instance, ash in black and grey. The grey colour was developed for Franck Giovannini and adjusted to the colour of the natural ceramic plates.

The higher the carbon share, the harder the blade. Unfortunately, it also lowers the corrosive resistance. A recently developed type of surgical steel stores nitrogen instead of carbon, reaching the hardness of Japanese knives while simultaneously improving corrosive resistance by a factor of four – ideal for use in a hotel kitchen or at the ocean, such as at the yacht club in Monaco.

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