

Kitchen Knives: The New Bling

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ABSTRACT: We would like to think that every kitchen knife purchased will be put to good use slicing and dicing, but most knives see little use and many become *objets d'arts*. As such, they transform, for their owners, into a form of bling. This is a relatively new phenomenon, and occurring mainly in the United States.

In another time, this guy would have been called a dandy, or even a macaroni, but instead of an outlandish eighteenth century, powdered wig, his hair was bleached to an albino shade of yellow and spiked with gel. And this being the first decade of the second millennium, his shirt of crushed, brown silk, with a top button closer to his navel than his neck, revealed more bleached hair behind a number of heavy-looking, gold medallions suspended from equally heavy-looking, gold chains. The fingers on his hands were spread gently outward due to the rings on each one except for the ring finger on his left hand, which appeared conspicuously naked. During class, I had pleaded with him to remove the rings for both safety and sanitation reasons. Now each was back on its perch. He spoke with a pleasing southern, probably Texas, accent in a soft voice that was barely audible at times.

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The class he attended was basic knife skills. It was taught in a cookware store that is part of a large chain in the United States. Although the class was presented to the students as a learning experience, it was organized by the corporation to bring more potential customers through the front door. As an instructor, I was told what products to push and how a significant portion of the class time should be devoted to the students perusing the sales floor instead of being in the kitchen learning the day's subject.

Now the class was over, and this gentleman was about to help the store manager meet her sales quota for the day. He stood on the customer side of a countertop-high display case. I stood behind it. Behind me, in a locked, glass display, was a selection of knives ranging in price from expensive to more expensive. The store did carry a small selection of inexpensive but good quality knives. These were sealed in plastic and hung from a rack close by but out of view from where my current customer stood. It didn't matter. It was obvious that his intention was to purchase the fanciest looking knife in the cabinet. The fact that it was the most expensive was inconsequential. I removed the knife from its current position in a knife block and handed it to him. I suggested that he use the techniques he had just acquired in class to dissect the carrot that sat on the counter in front of him.

As he sliced with the knife, demonstrating that he grasped the techniques taught during the previous two hours, I decided to talk him out of that dandified knife. I knew from the outset that I wouldn't be successful, but it seemed like something I should try. One after another, I presented him with knives that were only slightly plainer and had smaller price tags. He politely tried each one, anyone of which would have been a better knife to use for slicing and dicing a few vegetables. I pointed out differences in each handle, curve of the belly, feel of the spine, and weight and balance. As my supply of alternatives ran out and the evening ran on, he politely insisted on purchasing the fancy knife he originally requested. Since he was receiving a small discount as a class member that evening, he requested a second knife that was almost as expensive as the first. In the end, his bill for the two knives ran to over £500 (\$800).¹ He now had two knives that matched the bling² that hung around his neck and adorned his fingers.

That night, I began to notice that many of the knife customers I helped, although not dressed as gorgeous as the customer that evening, still were more interested in the appearance of the knife they were purchasing rather its than functionality.

As a self-styled knife evangelist, I am often asked: 'Which knife is best?' or 'Which knife should I buy?' My answer goes towards each individual's unique need for the knife: 'Buy the one that feels the best to you.' I want people to take a knife for a 'test drive', but all too often, the purchase decision is made by the eyes and the mind, not the hand.

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The bling-buying customer described previously, when asked if he would like to purchase a pair of inexpensive plastic sleeves to protect his new investment, politely declined. It seemed that he had a magnetic bar on his wall, and that he planned to put the knives on display. I thought that it would be like sculpture art for his guests to enjoy. They wouldn't need to ask the price since these knives looked very expensive.

Looking at a wall of knives for sale in a modern cookware store, it is easy to see how different styles of knives could attract different personalities. German-made knives designed to look traditional, with their squared-off edges and massive bolsters, tend to imply the same precision that car buyers may visualize when considering a Mercedes-Benz or BMW.³ Japanese-made knives intended for the American market may imply softness and artistic intentions. In these knives, aesthetics may be as important as performance.⁴ Knife manufacturers are well aware that two important factors in customer appeal are sex appeal and uniqueness.⁵ I wonder how many customers pick up this knife or that one and have Walter Mitty-like visions of using the knife on food television. Maybe not in Ikea where the knives are displayed in a utilitarian, hands-off manner and sold for typical Ikea prices, but when handling one of the fancier models gently removed from the wall of cutlery by a sales 'consultant' at Williams-Sonoma, it's hard not to imagine the knife doing something more heroic than slicing carrots.

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I've even observed this fantasy-producing effect in line cooks and chefs when they ogled a fancy knife at a commercial exhibition or even in the knife roll of the next person down the line. With professionals, as they bounce the dream knife in their hand, it is almost as if having this big beautiful example will move its owner higher up the professional ladder. I remember querying one chef de cuisine⁶ after he handed me, still housed in its handmade wooden sleeve, his custom-made, Japanese *gyuto* (牛刀)⁷ to use. The knife was in very poor condition with a number of large voids in the cutting edge. The blade was badly stained. He had used it one day to chop some bones when he couldn't find a cleaver. He said that he bought the knife just out of cooking school with a fantasy that the knife would help him succeed, but he found that an inexpensive, plastic-handled knife of the same size was more appropriate for his career. The knife had become bling.

I frequently experience a similar situation with my students. I teach knife skills in many different situations, but one location that I have been at for many years is a vocational school⁸ where new students start the first Monday of each month. I show up the following Wednesday or Thursday to provide their basic knife-skill training. It takes about four months for the students to complete the 350 hours required for fulfilment of the program, so I see the same students in the school's kitchen for a few of my visits. As these students approach the end of their training and start working in commercial kitchens, they'll often ask me for advice regarding what knife they should purchase. My advice is always the same: 'Buy the one that feels the best to you.' For these students, I will go on to suggest that they seriously consider a certain Swiss-made chef's⁹ knife that can be obtained online for less than £20 (\$30). It's an excellent knife and well suited for commercial use. Alas, the knife they purchase is some fancy, high-end knife that looks impressive but isn't suitable for their work environment. Their new possession will not serve them well on the job, but it works great as bling.

My experience after many years is that professionals are often no better than amateurs when it comes to knife purchases. They may actually use the knife they buy, but then again, maybe not. One of the chefs I was a *stagiere* for in France used to keep a super-sized chef's knife on the magnetic bar above his work station. The blade was 30 cm (12 in) long. Most cooks have either a 25- or 20-cm (10- or 8-in) long knife. One day I asked him why he never used the knife. He initially gave me a song-and-dance about how the carbon steel discoloured onions, but one night, after some serious imbibing of *eau de vie*, he admitted that he kept it around as a symbol that he was the chef and everyone else were cooks.¹⁰ It was his symbol of office. It hung on the wall as a warning. He was the big *kabuna*. It was bling.

This chef may have been the head of his kitchen and even well known in his region, but he was no celebrity chef. For those we need to check our local television listings. Here we find a slew of celebrity chefs that have rented their name and image to a knife or housewares manufacturer. There are knife products bearing the names of Martha Stewart,

Emeril Lagasse, Rachael Ray, Alton Brown, Paula Deen, Cat Cora, Guy Fieri, Giada DeLaurentis, and Masaharu Morimoto in the United States and Nigella Lawson, Gordon Ramsay, and Jamie Oliver in the United Kingdom.¹¹ Some products are only available through select outlets, such as the shopping channels on cable television or certain stores such as Martha Stewart's line of products at Macy's. Most of these celebrity-created and or endorsed knives are crap.¹² Also, most are quite inexpensive. Macy's sells a Martha Stewart sixteen-piece set for under £50 (\$80), thirteen of which are knives.¹³ This is an average of about £4 (\$6) per knife. There are exceptions to the poor quality and low price of most celebrity-chef knives, but not many. Myabi-brand knives with Morimoto's name are a significantly better quality with an appropriately higher price. At the high end are the knives manufactured by Shun with the name of Michel Bras, not a well-known celebrity in the English-speaking world. The complete set of ten knives is a mere £2,194 (\$3,376).¹⁴ Those on a budget can buy an 8-cm (3-in) paring knife for £220 (\$338).¹⁵

Why do people buy these poor quality celebrity-endorsed knives? First, most customers don't understand knives or how to use them. Second, price may be an issue. I contend that people buy knives pushed by celebrities because they want to be, if only vicariously, associated with the celebrity. The same people that watch Paula Deen create fat-filled fantasies on the Food Network want a bit of Paula in their kitchen. If it's a knife that they are interested in—there's a whole range of other types of housewares available from Paula Deen's online store—they can choose between a red or blueberry-coloured set of three for less than £16 (\$24).¹⁶ Each time a customer uses one of these knives they can pretend that Paula is there whispering in their ear. Or better yet, they can leave the knives sitting on the counter for their friends to see and hopefully draw the association between the knife owner and Paula Deen.

Another type of celebrity that peddles knives are the celebrity knife designers. Two designers to come over to the dark side of commercial endorsements are Bob Kramer and Ken Onion. Knives available under the name of either of these two gentlemen are relatively expensive and seem to be of interest more to the men than women. These designs are for fairly hefty knives. I've seen a number of professional cooks using Ken Onion's original chef's-knife design.¹⁷ To a man, they've each talked about how well the knife felt in their hand and how well it works, but also to a man, the fancy Ken Onion knife was not the knife they used on a regular basis. They liked having it around, but that can be a problem. The unique profile makes it difficult to store without the blade getting damaged. The Ken Onion chef's knife comes with a wooden stand that's ideal for displaying the knife as an *objet d'art* on the countertop (Figure 1). This would protect the blade when not in use, but is really only useful in a home environment.

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FIGURE 1: Ken Onion-designed 20-cm (8-in) chef's knife sold under the Shun brand.
(Photo © Kai USA, Ltd. Used with permission.)

Bob Kramer knives are real 'lookers'. The version made by Shun was the knife that the blonde gentleman bought in the beginning of this essay. Kramer, who also makes custom knives in his own shop,¹⁸ has since switched his allegiance to Zwilling J. A. Henckels (Figure 2). There are now multiple styles, all expensive, of his designs. There's a limited edition of 250 knives that sell for £1,170 (\$1,800) each.¹⁹ Very pretty, not particularly practical, and a steal considering the price and waiting time for Kramer's knives made by his own hand. It may be the ultimate knife bling—expensive and scarce.



FIGURE 2: Bob Kramer-designed 20-cm (8-in) chef's knife by Zwilling J. A. Henckels
(Photo © Zwilling J. A. Henckels. Used with permission.)

There's a third type of celebrity knife that appeared briefly and now seems to be on the wane. The knives were designed by F.A. Porsche,²⁰ manufactured in China, and sold by the Chroma USA as the Chroma Type 301 (Figure 3). They appear to be designed from ground. They look the least like the kitchen knives that everyone is used to seeing. They have a unique handle design that includes a post on each side to indicate to the user's hand, the intersection of the handle and the blade. They are marketed to professional cooks and showed some success in that market for a few years. Referring to professional cooks, one knife seller who no longer sells the Type 301 knife commented, "They buy shit, even if they don't need it."²¹

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FIGURE 3: F.A: Porsche-designed 26-cm (10-in) chef's knife by Chroma USA.
(Photo © Chroma USA. Used with permission.)

A sizable percentage of the knife purchases in the United States are sets selected by future couples and added to their bridal registries. Depending on the paperwork, people accessing the registry can buy a single knife or the whole set. I've lost count of the number of former brides who asked me in a knife-skills class what they should do with each of the knives. I have a difficult time answering this question tactfully since I believe you only need three knives at the most. As one knife developer sarcastically asked me in passing, 'You need a special knife to cut a sandwich?'²²

The selection of one knife set versus another is often made by the young couple without ever looking at any of the knives in the set. The decision is made by looking only at the handles.²³ The sets are generally displayed as knife blocks with all available slots filled with knives. The couple can imagine each set as it will look on their countertop. Even if the set will be displayed as separate knives on a magnetic bar on the wall, the decision is often made based solely on looks.²⁴ To better take advantage of this selection process, one German manufacturer will be introducing a knife block with 36 slots in it.²⁵ Other than the two slots occupied with the steel and scissors, the remaining slots will be for knives. I wonder if a couple considers how much counter space they need to give up to support a knife block of this size?

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This attraction to knives as bling is relatively new, and pretty much confined to the United States. In most countries, if guests are invited to dinner, they are not welcomed into the kitchen. The reason for this can be cultural or just that the kitchen is small. In the United States, middle-class houses in the nineteenth century, especially farmhouses, often were built around the kitchen, which may have been the only room with heat in the winter. Even today, where some form a living room²⁶ exists, it is not uncommon for Americans to say they entertain in their kitchens. The kitchens usually are not large enough to eat in, but the guests will gather there until dinner is ready. Whether consciously or not, many purchase decisions in the United States, when it comes to items for the kitchen, revolve around appearance and perceived intrinsic value rather than function.²⁷ This attraction has led to the development of modern kitchen knives, some of which are so fancy they almost become ceremonial.

The sixteenth-century cook's knife illustrated in Scappi's *Opera*²⁸ looks essentially the same as the early nineteenth-century cook's knife illustrated in Jules Gouffé's *Le Livre*

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de cuisine.²⁹ Two decades later, the three-piece knife construction shown in Hatfield's 1886 patent,³⁰ a minor change to the then current design, became the standard for many European manufacturers for the next century.

Texts of the era that specify which tools a cook needs in the kitchen generally call for a large cook's knife, a paring knife, a bread knife, and a cleaver.^{31, 32, 33, 34} Some also call for a chopping knife³⁵ and wooden bowl. The detailed names of the knives occasionally change, but the total quantity is about the same. They also specify a carving knife and fork, but normally for table-side use rather than in the kitchen.

Checking out some of the housewares catalogues of the day, we find only a limited number of knives available to the cook in the home, whether an employee or a member of the family. The 1895 Montgomery Ward & Co. catalogue shows many butcher and bread knives, but only a single 'French Cook Knife' in three lengths.³⁶ There's also half a page of carving knives, singularly and in sets, three chopping knives, and three paring knives.³⁷ The 1897 Sears Roebuck & Co. catalogue has a smaller selection of the same types of knives except for no cook's knives.³⁸ The 1898 catalogue for Au Bon Marché displays a cook's knife in seven lengths and a matching paring knife in two.³⁹ There's also a cleaver and a chopping knife.

Knife sets start to appear in American magazine advertisements just after the Second World War. The typical set contains four knives for use in the kitchen: a French cook's knife, a utility knife, a paring knife, and a bread knife.⁴⁰ There are also a number of knives intended for use at the table such as a roast slicer, a steak slicer, a ham slicer, and a beef slicer.⁴¹ The utility knife is a somewhat new addition and is essentially a lengthened paring knife. The slicers are all slight variations of the same knife, something many modern producers are doing today. Bringing a bread knife into the set may have been new, but knives have been used for bread for centuries. Bread knives with thickness gauges go back at least as far as 1874,⁴² and the serrated knife that we commonly picture as a bread knife dates back to at least 1893.⁴³ Only the Sears catalogue shows a knife with a wavy edge, which is not the same as serrated.⁴⁴ The three wavy-edge knives are specified individually as being for bread, cake, or carving.

Throughout much of the first half of the twentieth century, people displayed their status not with kitchen knives but with carving knives. In middle-class homes, roasts were carved at the table in front of the guests. One just couldn't use a kitchen knife for the job. Although these carving knives served a utilitarian purpose, they also were often highly decorated. Handles were fashioned out of deer antlers or made of silver-plated metal. There are numerous design patents for carving knives during this period, and often the handles are what makes a design special.

The expansion of the knives available to cooks really starts in the 1960s with the principle German manufacturers expanding their lines with both increases in patterns and

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increases in styles.⁴⁵ Today, Wüsthof produces fifteen different sizes and weights of cook's knife in their 'classic' style. In all, the company produces almost 70 different knives in the same style.⁴⁶ More than any individual could ever need or use.

In the late 1980s, Wüsthof introduced their version of the Japanese santoku. It was sold exclusively by Crate & Barrel.⁴⁷ Being lighter and slightly smaller than most cook's knives of the period, the Wüsthof santoku was a big hit.⁴⁸ Today, almost every knife manufacturer has their version of the santoku.

One version of the santoku sported oval-shaped depressions, called kullens,⁴⁹ on each side of the blade. The little depressions have become so popular that, even though there is a debate as to whether they work to reduce knife drag,⁵⁰ Wüsthof is adding them to more knives. Apparently, some people find the little darlings a bit sexy.⁵¹



FIGURE 4: Global 27-cm (10.6-in) cook's knife illustrating Yoshida Metal Industry's unique handle design. (Photo © Scanpan USA Inc. Used with permission.)

122 Slightly prior to the introduction of the Western-style santoku, in 1983, the Yoshida Metal Industry Company introduced Global knives to the west (Figure 4).⁵² These knives featured a lightweight design with an all stainless steel construction. They've won numerous design awards, and led the way for the other Japanese knife companies to enter the U.S. market. Numerous people have told me that they originally purchased their Global knives because of their looks, and that they have many Global knives that people admire but that they never use. Global knives may have been the start of knives as bling.

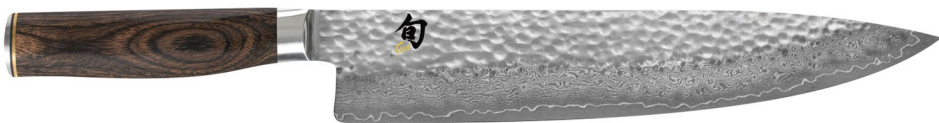


FIGURE 5: Shun-brand, Premier-style 25-cm (10-in) chef's knife by Kai USA illustrating an elaborate, Japanese design. (Photo © Kai USA, Ltd. Used with permission.)

Global-brand knives are the direct antecedent the today's ultra-fancy Japanese knives directed towards the high-end market (Figure 5). The newer Japanese knives are principally produced by Shun⁵³ and Miyabi.⁵⁴ In contrast to these knives with rounded edges and sweeping lines are the traditional German-style knives with their square edges and clean-

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looking surfaces (Figure 6). The principle producers of these knives are probably Wüsthof⁵⁵ and Henckels.⁵⁶



FIGURE 6: Classic-style 26-cm (10-in) cook's knife by Wüsthof illustrating a classical, clean, German design. (Photo by author.)

Although I have tried to make the point that many of these knives are bought as bling, I will concede that it is not always the case. There are people who purchase fancy knives and only bring them out of the drawer when they use them to cut food. I will also concede that storing the knives in a knife block or on a magnetic bar may be the best approach in some kitchens, and the knives' owners seriously use every knife at their disposal. But I would still contend that a significant portion of the knives purchased see more time as bling than as useful tools.

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Notes

1. US dollars have been converted the UK pounds at the rate of 0.65 £/\$, the rate at noon on 5 April 2013. No attempt has been made to reflect the actual cost of purchasing the products at the prices quoted in pounds from a United Kingdom location. Where the exact amount of currency was not important, liberal rounding has occurred.
2. 'A slang term popularized in hip hop culture, referring to flashy, ostentatious or elaborate jewellery and ornamented accessories that are carried, worn or installed, such as cell phones or tooth caps'. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bling-bling>; cited 27 March 2013)
3. Rick Rodgers (cookbook author and teacher), in discussion with the author, 18 March 2013.
4. Tommie Lucas (product developer, Kai (Shun) USA), in discussion with the author, 18 March 2013.
5. (Todd Myers, vice-president of sales, Wüsthof-Trident of America), in discussion with the author, 18 March 2013.
6. This conversation took place one morning in the spring of 2009 in the basement prep kitchen of Cowbell Restaurant in Toronto, Canada. I don't remember the name of the chef.
7. A Japanese version of western-style chef's knife. (<http://zknives.com/knives/kitchen/misc/type/Gyuto.shtml>; cited 20 March 2013)
8. JobTrain is a vocational school that provides training in entry-level jobs, primarily for disadvantaged students. (<http://www.jobtrainworks.org>; cited 20 March 2013)
9. Both 'chef's knife' and 'cook's knife' refer to the same knife pattern and are used interchangeably in this paper.
10. Frédéric Médigue (chef-owner, Château d'Amondans), in discussion with the author, May 2002.
11. This is not a complete list of knives with celebrity names.
12. Celebrity Knives Review from Consumer Reports, 16 June 2009. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnbstb4kPss>; cited 21 March 2013)

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13. Macy's website, item 731816. (<http://www1.macys.com/shop/product/martha-stewart-collection-stainless-steel-cutlery-16-piece-set?ID=731816&CategoryID=30194>; cited 20 March 2013)
14. Williams-Sonoma website, item 41-7246218. (<http://www.williams-sonoma.com/products/michel-bras-10-piece-knife-set>; cited 21 March 2013)
15. Williams-Sonoma website, item 41-8137895. (<http://www.williams-sonoma.com/products/michel-bras-3-inch-paring-knife>; cited 21 March 2013)
16. Paula Deen Store website, item 415252. (<http://www.pauladeenstore.com/Product/detail/Paula-Deen-Signature-Cutlery-3-pc-Chef-s-Set-Red/415252>; cited 20 March 2013)
17. Amazon website, item DMO507. (<http://www.amazon.com/Onion-Shun-DM0500-8-Inch-Chefs/dp/B0007IR2MO>; cited 21 March 2013)
18. Kramer Knives website. (<http://kramerknives.com>; cited 28 March 2013).
19. Sur la Table website, item 893461. (<http://www.surlatable.com/product/PRO-893461/Bob-Kramer-Carbon-Damascus-Chefs-Knife>; cited 22 March 2013)
20. 'Ferdinand Alexander Porsche, nicknamed 'Butzi', son of Ferry Porsche, grandson of Ferdinand Porsche, was a German designer whose best known product was the first Porsche 911'. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferdinand_Alexander_Porsche; cited 28 March 2013)
21. Mike Solaegui (owner, Perfect Edge Cutlery), in discussion with the author, 28 March 2013.
22. Lucas, discussion.
23. Tula Gieseke (sales associate, Williams-Sonoma), in discussion with the author, 25 March 2013.
24. Sima Thomas (former bride), in discussion with the author, 16 March 2013.
25. Myers, discussion.
26. In other English-speaking countries, the living room is often called the lounge or, in former times, the parlour or drawing room.
27. Gieseke, discussion.
28. Bartolomeo Scappi, *Opera di M. Bartolomeo Scappi, cvovo secreto di Papa Pio V. 1570?* Plate XIII.
29. Jules Gouffé. *Le Livre de cuisine*. Paris: Librairie de L. Hachette et Cie, 1867, p. 17, pl. 12. Jules Gouffé, Alphonse Gouffé (trans). *The Royal Cookery Book (Le Livre de cuisine)*. London: Sampson Low, Son, and Marsten, 1869, p. 13.
30. US Patent 336,314. 16 February 1886. W.B. Hatfield, *Knife*.
31. Gouffé. *Le Livre de cuisine*, *op. cit.*, p. 17, 20. Gouffé. *The Royal Cookery Book*, *op. cit.*, p. 12, 14.
32. Janet McKenzie Hill. *Cooking for Two: A Handbook for Young Housekeepers*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1919, p. 22.
33. Juliet Corson. *Cooking School Text Book; and Housekeeper's Guide to Cookery and Kitchen Management*. New York: Orange Judd Company, 1883, p. 265.
34. Mary Johnson Bailey Lincoln. *Mrs. Lincoln's Boston Cook Book*. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1884, p. 509.
35. These knives are similar in appearance to the *mezzaluna* sold today.
36. —, *Montgomery Ward & Co. Catalogue and Buyers' Guide, No. 57, Spring and Summer, 1895*. New York: Dover Publications, 1969 [facsimile], p. 436, 446-8.
37. The paring knives were available either individually or by the dozen. The simplest one cost a nickel (5¢) for one or four bits (50¢) for a dozen.
38. —, *1897 Sears Roebuck & Company Catalogue*. New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2007, p. 122.
39. —. *Catalogue des Articles de ménage*. Paris: Au Bon Marché, 1898, p. 8.
40. *Life Magazine*, 3 May 1948, p. 88.
41. *Life Magazine*, 24 November 1947, p. 8.
42. US Patent 157,516. 8 December 1874. Eva Heineman, *Improvement in bread knives*.
43. US Patent 495,110. 11 April 1893. Francis Hayes & Fred J. Lewis, *Knife*.
44. *1897 Sears Roebuck & Company Catalogue*, *op. cit.*, p. 122.
45. 'Patterns' refers to the knife profile. Cook's knives, paring knives, utility knives all have different profiles, but may be designed with the same handle and overall visual style. 'Styles' refers to the different, overall visual appearance that one set of knives will have as opposed to another, usually a function of the handle design.
46. Myers, discussion.
47. Myers, discussion.

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48. At the same time, many professional chefs were experimenting with Chinese slicing cleavers as an alternative to the cook's or chef's knife. Other than among serious cooks of Chinese cuisine, the cleaver never achieved much popularity.
49. 'A similar design, *kullenschliff* (*kulle* is Swedish for hill (or—more likely—a misspelling of the German word “Kuhle” meaning ‘hollow’ or ‘deepening’); *schliff* meaning “cut” or grind in German), has oval scallops (*kuhlen*) hollowed-out of one or both sides of the blade above the edge'. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kitchen_knife; cited 24 March 2013)
50. The purpose of the kullens is to create air pockets on the side of the blade so there is less drag. Their effect is a subject of much debate in some circles.
51. Myers, discussion.
52. Yoshida Metal Industry Company website. (<http://www.yoshikin.co.jp/w/company/index.html>; cited 24 March 2013)
53. Kai USA Ltd, a division of the Kai Group, Tokyo, Japan (<http://www.kai-group.com>; cited 24 March 2013)
54. A brand name owned by Zwilling J.A. Henckels AG, part of the Zwilling Group, Solingen, Germany. The knives are manufactured in Japan. (<http://www.zwilling.com>; cited 24 March 2013)
55. Ed. Wüsthof Dreizackwerk KG website. (<http://www.wuesthof.de>; cited 24 March 2013)
56. Zwilling J.A. Henckels AG website. (<http://www.zwilling.com>; cited 24 March 2013)