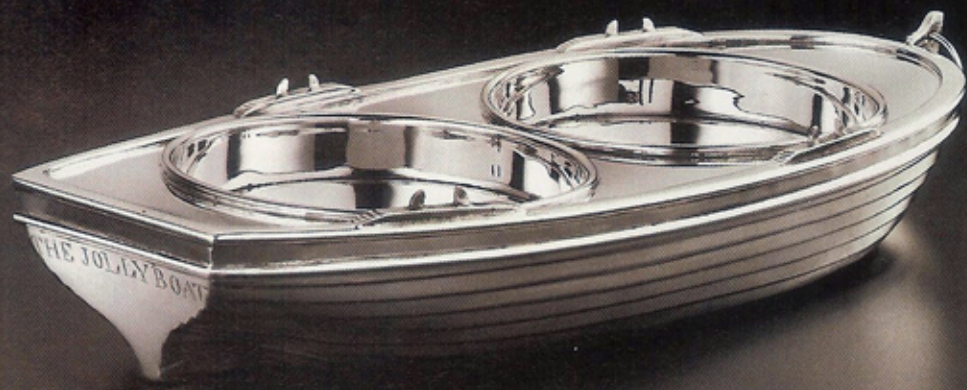


Objects of desire



Decadent dining

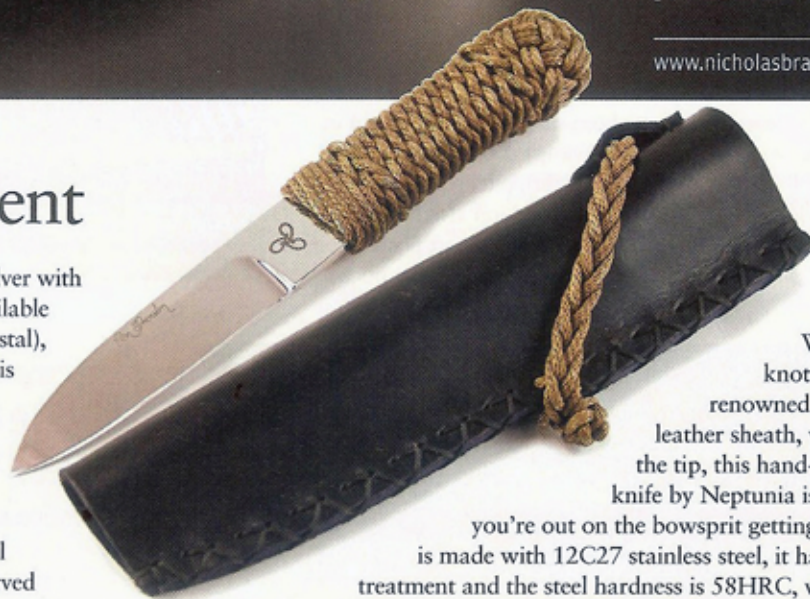
During the early 19th centuries, ships used clinker-style jolly boats to ferry passengers and cargo to and from the shore. At the time, silversmiths took this design and modelled it into exquisite wine-coasters. This rare silver-plated example is available through the Nicholas Brawer Gallery in New York and features two wells for a pair of bottles and stoppers. £3,936

www.nicholasbrawer.com, Tel: +1 212 772 2664

Style statement

Beautifully crafted from sterling silver with a 24-carat gold detail (it's also available with black ruthenium metal or crystal), this stylish Hoggit decanter cradle is part of the Silver by Aston Martin range, launched this year to celebrate the car maker's centenary. Manufactured by London-based silversmiths Grant Macdonald, it comes with a crystal glass decanter, complete with a curved base to prevent guests from 'hogging' the bottle. £4,950 inc VAT

www.grantmacdonald.com
Tel: +44 (0)207 633 0278



A cut above

With a French sennit handle, knotted by internationally renowned rigger Patrick Moreau and a leather sheath, which drains water out from the tip, this hand-forged Pen Skoulm Custom knife by Neptunia is the one you want when you're out on the bowsprit getting a fresh soaking. The blade is made with 12C27 stainless steel, it has an anti-oxidation treatment and the steel hardness is 58HRC, which produces a good, durable sharp edge. Although lovely to look at it's only once you handle this knife and you really get to feel its balance, weight and sheer quality, that you realise why Neptunia is famed in France for its innovative designs and quality of workmanship. £500 plus P&P

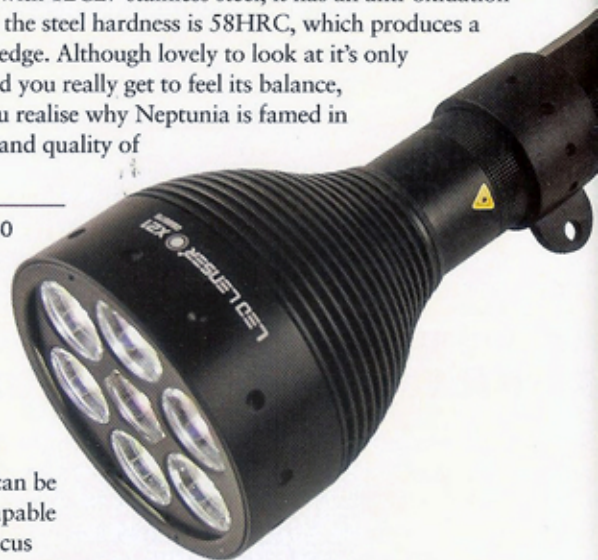
www.neptunia.fr, Tel: +33 25 40 68 10

Bright idea

The LED LENSER X21 is possibly the best torch on the market. It has a light output of up to 1,000 lumens, which can be adjusted from a wide circular beam capable of lighting up a cliff face, to a sharp focus searchlight beam, which almost hums with

concentrated light. Coming into harbour on a dark night, the X21 can supersede a mounted 12v searchlight and with the strap across your chest it points where you do. All this comes from seven ultra-bright, high-performance chips and seven terminator lenses, which use four D batteries giving it an impressive 240 hours of life. Finally, it's all wrapped up in a tough, aircraft-grade aluminium casing. £239.75 inc VAT

www.thetorchsite.co.uk, Tel: +44 (0)1686 670407



COLD STEEL SISU 60SS

This knife is inspired by the Finnish puukko belt-knife and it has the same tactile weightiness. The blade is made from exclusive VG-1 San Mai III stainless steel and it's been given an exquisite mirror-polish finish. The hilt is made from black linen Micarta and set off by a matching, highly polished nickel-silver bolster and pommel, all crafted in an unusual diamond shape that fits very well in the hand.

£320, www.coldsteel-uk.com

NEPTUNIA PEN SKOULM CUSTOM

With a French sennit handle, knotted by internationally renowned rigger Patrick Moreau, this lovely hand-forged knife is frankly a little over the top for our selection. But it's here because it's a true work of art. The full tang blade is made with tough 12C27 stainless steel, it has an antioxidation treatment, and the steel hardness is rated at 58HRC, so it has a durable sharp edge. Neptunia is famed in France for its innovative designs and high quality of workmanship - and this knife is the perfect example. It's not cheap though, so maybe one for the owner rather than general use by the crew.

£507 plus P&P, www.neptunia.fr

GREEN RIVER

This was the legendary knife espoused by trappers and mountain men of the American West, and made for nearly 200 years now by Dexter-Russell in Massachusetts. It's also the sailor's safety knife of choice, as made here in the UK by Arthur Wright & Son in Sheffield, complete with a steel and deep leather sheath.

£46.35, www.sheffield-cutlery.com

TEHO MOOSE TOMMI

The excellent Finnish knifemaker Veijo Käpylä takes pains selecting and shaping the raita root burl handle, forging the tempered steel blade, casting the solid brass bolster and forming the leather sheath of this weighty, wonderfully balanced, tough and tactile puukko knife. Although

a thing of beauty it's at ease with the roughest use as it spans the gap of design and function. If you've ever held one, you'll know. *From £199,* www.kainuunpuukko.com

OBJECT
OF
DESIRE

CAPTAIN CURREY GREEN RIVER TYPE

This is a workhorse knife that will cut, scrape, whittle and prise without any pretensions of fanciness. It's not expensive, so if you lose it overboard you can buy another one without feeling pangs of guilt. Nevertheless, it's a tough little knife with a fine rosewood handle, good-quality blade, brass rivets and a nice flat shape in the sheath.

A steal at just £16.95, www.captain-currey.co.uk

BEST
VALUE

Far more important than a set of foulies or a pair of plastic sunglasses, the sheath knife has always been the most important piece of personal kit a sailor can have. Aside from general cutting and chopping, it can also save limbs and lives. Two of our team have witnessed the gory reality of fingers caught in a block or winch: in one circumstance, two fingers were lost while people struggled to open their multi-tools, in the other the person was saved by the single movement of a sharp and accessible sheath knife.

Practicalities aside, and being one of our oldest tools, when it's well made, the sheath knife can also be the most satisfyingly tactile object that one can handle and use.

As always, there's a bewildering array of choice on offer so for the moment we're concentrating on general purpose, fixed-blade sheath knives that we feel may have an advantage over some of the others, taking into account everything from price and function to aesthetics. We'll leave out the Japanese folded steel and Damascus blades, for instance, as they are just too ornate and expensive to feel practical on a boat. We have also left serrated blades for another time, partly because the sharpening process is rather different. Here are a few that we either own or wish we did. *Turn over the page for advice on how to maintain and sharpen your sheath knife*