

Check out this all-business chef's knife at only \$80.



Middle photo: Believe it or not, this tidy D-2 steel hunter with cocobolo handles is only \$80! How can you say no?

Tom's sheaths are workmanlike and serve the purpose well.



Need a serrated slicer with a jugged wood grip? How about \$45 — no, really!



AFFORDABLE AFFINITY

ROY HUNTINGTON
PHOTOS: STEPHANIE JARRELL

Sometimes something ends up being such a good value you have to tell your friends about it. So — I'm telling my friends.

I met Tom Goodpasture at the Blade Show in Atlanta a couple of years ago and was struck by the elegant simplicity of his work. His knives are just that — knives — with little else to get in the way. Like the old wood carver, Tom simply takes away everything that doesn't look like a working knife and what you end up with is ... well, a working knife.

As I handled his knives and noticed the prices, I thought there had been a terrible mistake and he has mis-marked them horribly. "Tom," I asked, "Is this knife really only \$45?" It was a slim, fit-your-hand kitchen pairing knife I could already see on a cutting board at home. "Why yes sir, that's the price. I believe in making my knives as affordable as possible so they can be enjoyed by most anyone," Tom explained.

I bought it, and two or three others. Tom is a soft-spoken gentleman, and there was something familiar about him. "Are you a cop or something?" I asked. Tom admitted to being an active-duty state trooper, and after introducing myself as a retired cop, we both laughed about how it's always easy to spot fellow cops. I think Tom brings his natural ability to talk to people from his experience on the street to his work with knives. His knives talk to you, very simply and with no high-and-mighty attitudes. "Hey, we're just working folks like you," they seem to say. I felt comfortable around Tom and his knives.

The Details

Most of Tom's work is in 420M stainless steel (cryo treated) but he does

GOODPASTURE KNIVES



Left to right: Paring knife at \$45, Bowie with jugged bone handle is \$125 and the file cutter comes in at \$80. All, except the kitchen models, come with leather sheaths for that price!

adventure out sometimes, like with the old Nickelson file knife pictured, in W-2. Handles can be linen micarta, camel bone, cocobolo or anything else that seems to fit the design. Tom's sheaths are, like his knives, simple and effective and handle the job at hand well.

Tom's friend and fellow (retired) law officer P.J. Tomes, is a Master Smith in the American Bladesmith Society and, after Tom had expressed an interest in learning how to make knives, showed Tom the ropes. They continue to travel to shows and work together, and usually drag Robert Fisher, another maker, along with them. With only about six years of experience under his belt, Tom con-

tinues to develop his skills and hone his designs.

If you're smart, you'll buy now before Tom gets so famous he stops taking orders. And with prices in the \$35 to \$200 range and this kind of highly-functional quality, I'll wager he gets real busy — real fast! Remember these prices are approximate as these are custom knives and the costs may change with market values on raw goods and design specifics. Tell Tom we sent you when you call.



For more info: Goodpasture Knives, (804) 752-8363, www.goodpastureknives.com.