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Horn Golok Large

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- Gear reviews and tests - Edged tools - Long blades -



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Description :

The Large Horn Golok - Revisiting Smaller Goloks..

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The [Golok](#) is a traditional knife of [Indonesia](#).

I've been a while getting around to ordering some new Valiant blades. The main problem is that I'm still discovering things about the Valiant blades that I have. The more I've worked with the small horn golok, the more I've come to like it! It came time to get some new blades to learn with, so of course I got a large horn golok, to see whether to get some more small or whether the large offered any great advantages. Luckily, this time I got the handle with the carved tiger, so that I am able to make a few comments about handles. Soon I'll be putting up a set of pictures, because what matters to me with these blades is just what they'll cut.

It's rather hard to believe that this is one of 'Wandi's low end blades. The handle carving is spectacular, and the finish on the blade is excellent. About the only clue that it's one of the less expensive blades is that there are some natural scars in the horn on the sheath. I rather like this since it makes it immediately evident that the sheath really is horn - and well - I like buffalo with experience! I think that no matter what preferences a person might have in blades, it's worth ordering one of these - just for the "out of box" experience. I'm sometimes asked if the more expensive Valiant blades are better finished, because apparently a number of people are - like I was and am - astonished by the amount of work that goes into the less expensive blades. The simple answer, though, is that the more expensive blades will shock you even more. I just have three right now, but each is incredibly well finished. About the only shortcoming of the more expensive blades is that people will find them "too good" to actually use. That's a great pity, because without using them, you're only getting part of the total experience.

I guess that's a long winded way of saying, try one of these for pretty, because at the price you will use it and can always get another one for show. I doubt that you'll find a need to replace for looks though, steel can be polished and horn is very durable.

The Specifications and Comparison to the Small Horn Golok:

Large Horn golok on left, small on right:



As is apparent, the small, is slightly wider and only a little over an inch shorter. In actual use, I didn't find a huge difference between them - but the chopping advantage goes to the large of course. The difference in weight of weight with the blades themselves is under a couple of ounces, and the difference with sheaths is only a little over two ounces. The small goes 12oz for blade, 16oz with sheath, the large is 13 1/2oz and 18oz with sheath. I really like the bird head handle on the small as shown on its own page here - but I'd have to give top marks to the tiger carving handle as shown on the above pictures. The carving on mine is spectacular, with even the canines on the tiger carved out! Just as important, though, is that it's one very comfortable handle for chopping. I believe that it will fit a number of hand sizes well, and it sure works for me. I have different carving designs on the sheaths, but I'm not sure which I like best...

The Large Horn Golok in Use:

I did a substantial amount of chopping with this blade each evening, comparing it to the small horn golok that I'd reprofiled. This one came with a very good blade profile, and so chopped well right out of the box. I didn't notice any real difference between the large model and the small one I'd reprofiled, so I felt sure that I could improve things.

Arguably the most efficient chopping tool for 11oz is the Gransfors mini hatchet. When I first got mine, I compared it to the small horn golok which weighs 12oz and found about a 20% difference in efficiency - in favor of the golok. Now that I've put substantial work into the mini hatchet, that difference is gone: but it does point out that with some work, the golok is a very efficient tool. This time around I wanted to compare the highly reprofiled Cold Steel LTC with the large horn golok. The total weight of the LTC with sheath is 4oz more, and the blade weighs 2oz more than the Large Horn Golok - so the LTC has about a 15% weight advantage. It's also more tip heavy. The simple bottom line is that it takes an extensively reprofiled LTC to approach the chopping efficiency of the golok. I was surprised too! Chopping was done on 5" alder, and on seasoned wood and devil's club. I was sure that the blade shape of the LTC would offer a substantial advantage on the devil's club, but it just isn't so. I'll be repeating the tests with some more reprofiling of both blades - but the fact is that the \$41.00 Horn Golok is difficult to beat by anything. A New LTC, or most blades for that matter, would probably be outchopped by a factor of many to one, not slightly outclassed. Obviously, though, anyone who is prepared to reprofile a golok would do the same to their other blades. In terms of edge holding, both blades came back sharp.

It's always interesting to try new blades and ideas. In the bush, though, it's best to have the safest blade possible, and the horn golok wins in that respect, being far less likely to glance. The handle on the horn golok is also much more comfortable than rubber in extended use. The one issue for the user to resolve with the horn golok is gluing small thin pieces of leather inside the mouth of the sheath. It's worth some trials with pieces of cardboard to see the thickness needed. The blade is a loose enough fit in the sheath to slide out enough to give a cut.

Conclusions:

As with the Small Horn Golok, this blade is difficult to categorize. With a little (very little with this one) work, one has a superb tool, that will chop both light vegetation and seasoned wood. It'll certainly do well enough on the latter to prepare a fire - though of course one wouldn't want to use it to chop a winter firewood supply. It certainly looks more like a display knife than a tool - but that would be a total waste of its capabilities.

Like a lot of people, I started out with the survival goloks, and after seeing their efficiency, my considerations were mainly to see what increased weight, and different blade shapes would achieve. Partly this is due to the fact that I now do some trail clearing - but like everyone else I'm anxious to try the biggest and baddest! Maybe a smarter

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direction for most would be to try one of these smaller blades with 3/16" thickness instead of 1/4". You get a good idea of what a really efficient blade can do, with one of these - and they are still capable of cutting green wood of a size bigger than one wants to carry far, and chopping firewood. Learning the draw cut might be safer with one of these lighter and smaller blades, but it will pay to consider safety, because they are amazingly efficient.

As I said before....

"You'd sure want to get one of these and learn the draw cut before wagering your same weight "Ninja Commando Rambo Attak XX" against it in a chopping contest. As with a horse called "Buttercup" at some real rodeo, some things aren't what they first seem, no matter how innocent or cute they look.: swish -crack - WAOW!"

What I'm anxious to know now is what will beat one of these blades...

Post-scriptum :Original article at [OldJimbo's site](#).