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Scandinavian blades.

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Description :

A comparative test of some Scandinavian puukkos from different makers and different price ranges.

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Scandinavian blades.

I thought it would be interesting to compare these Nordic and Scandinavian knives from different makers, countries and price ranges.

From left to right: Roselli, Iisakki, Helle, Marttiini, Frosts



So I took the following pieces:

1. [Roselli](#) (Finnish) Carpenter UHC
— 8.5 cm [1] blade, 3mm thick, 19 cm total, UHC steel at HRC 65, wood handle, leather sheath with a plastic insert, already tested [here](#), 100 Euros [2].
2. [Iisakki Jarvenspaa](#) (Finnish) model 5226
— 10 cm blade, 3mm thick, 21.5 cm total, carbon steel at HRC 57-59, wood handle, leather sheath with a plastic insert, 32 Euros.
3. [Marttiini](#) (Finnish) Hunter.
— 11 cm blade, 3mm thick, 23 cm total, stainless steel at HRC 57, hard rubber handle, leather sheath with plastic insert, 36 Euros.
4. [Helle](#) (Norwegian) Fjelbit.
— 12 cm blade, 3.5 mm thick, 24 cm total, stainless laminated steel, core at HRC 59, wood handle with a full rat queue tang, leather sheath, 67 Euros.
5. [Frosts](#) (Swedish) model 660
— 10.5 cm blade, 2mm thick, 22cm total, 12C27 steel at HRC 59, plastic handle, plastic sheath, 9 Euros.

From left to right: Roselli, Helle, Iisakki, Marttiini, Frosts

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Roselli



Puukkos, and Nordic knives in general have the peculiarity that there is only one bevel on the blade, which forms the working edge, they are therefore very easily sharpened, as all is needed is to grind this bevel to get the sharpness back. the fact that the bevel is big allows to find it intuitively on the stone.

Helle

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So my first task was to check sharpness, the Roselli, and lisakki presented a very small second bevel near the edge. The Marttiini, Helle, and Frosts presented a true Nordic edge [3].

The thicker blade is the Helle, followed by the lisakki, Roselli, Marttiini, at the same thickness, and the Frosts, the thinnest.

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The Helle from top



The Martiini from top



The Frosts from top



Sharpening

I used the blades for general kitchen use, meat and vegetables cutting, all were fine and showed some order in edge resistance, but before talking about edge resistance, I'll present the sharpening.

I did put a true Nordic edge on all the blades, it was a lot of work on the Roselli, were the diamond stones are what really did it. The steel of the lisakki is softer, but was still some work, the Frost's steel is comparable to the lisakki, which is amazing for a stainless, the Marttiini is a bit softer, the Helle, as it is a laminate shows a very hard core, and quite soft edges.

lisakki

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Ah the end, the knives are scaring sharp, and can shave very easily.

So this is what we get in terms of edge cutting ability (How sharp it can be):

1. Roselli

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2. lisakki, Frosts, Helle, Marttiini

In terms of edge resistance (how long it stays sharp):

1. Roselli
2. Helle
3. Frosts
4. lisakki
5. Marttiini

This said, the differences are very small, except to the Roselli, which is exceptional.

From left to right: Frosts, Helle, Roselli, Marttiini, and lisakki



Handling

All these knives are nice to handle, the Frosts has a finger guard, the Helle and Marttiini have a cut for the forefinger, which is pleasant to use, the Roselli and lisakki are in the pure puukko style.

Conclusions

The Helle is a very sturdy knife, built with a rat tail tang, my only regret is a very small belt loop and no plastic liner inside the sheath.

The Roselli is a superb knife, with a blade of incredible characteristics. It feels right in the hand. The blade design is

excellent.

The lisakki, is for its low price a seriously good blade, easy to sharpen, nice pointy blade.

The Marttiini is a blade I like, It will resist to anything, is easy to sharpen, the blade presents some useful belly, the handle is very well designed, non slippery, and very ergonomic. Not very traditional, but a winner for the price.

The Frosts is an impressive value for 10 euros, excellent steel, good and pleasant handle, good sheath, not traditional at all, but what a knife for the price.

I like puukkos, they are the biggest blades I'll ever carry out of the house. They are every day real life knives [\[4\]](#). They are light [\[5\]](#), easy to maintain and sharpen, they have secure sheaths, they are great kitchen knives [\[6\]](#), but also very good wood whittlers, because it is their primary design.

Update 06-09-2003

To the addition of these fine nordic blades, I now own the following:

KJ Eriksson Mora 2000, 12c27 blade, 20 euro



KJ Eriksson, carbon blade, clippable sheath

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another KJ Eriksson, carbon blade

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Helle Eggen, layered stainless blade, 50 Euros

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Mauri Poylio, carbon blade, 35 Euros

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EKA, 12C27 blade, 80 Euros, the eka has its own review [there](#)

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Home made, etched Karesuando 12C27 blade, mapple burl handle

Scandinavian blades.



Home made, etched Karesuando 12C27 blade, olive handle, macassar ebony pommel

Scandinavian blades.



Home made, Lauri carbon progression tempered blade (62HRC edge, and 52 HRC body, birch handle with ebony spacers, nickel silver bolsters and butt-plate)

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Home made, Lauri carbon progression tempered blade, birch handle with moose horn spacer, bolster and pommel

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These are very good blades too, and at low prices.

To keep these knives in good state, I generally do a few things:

- Use Tung oil, or better, Biofa hard oil (a mixt of liseed oil and colophan) on the handles. It hardens them and

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makes them resistant to water.

- Use a wax, or better Camelia oil on the sheaths, inside and outside, as a protection to rain and water.
- Use multiuse oil, or Ballistol-Klever on the carbon blades. Ballistol-Klever is a good oil for knives, it is slightly alkaline, sticks to the steel, is edible, can be used to protect wood and leather, and in addition is a mild antiseptic [Z]! Another good option is to cut vegetables, oignons, aubergines, or stick it in a potato for a night, it ages (darkens) the carbon steel blade, and makes it a bit more rust resitant.

Update 03-04-2004

This articles has generated some comments about what is a true scandinavian grind.

Here is my position about it:

As far as "scandinavian grinds" are involved, some people say the single bevel is better, or more traditional, some say it is the micro bevel, some say it is the case of the micro or full convex bevel... I do not think it is worth to discuss who is right about what is a traditional scandinavian grind, because they all come from there. How traditional they are (I am talking about the differences), or wether they are traditional because they are or were made by renowned names of the industry, is irrelevant to the way they cut. I do think everybody is right about it.

But in terms of efficiency, you are right to sharpen a scandi the way you want, and to adapt it to use, steel, and personal preferences. etc... The good thing with a scandinavian grind is that is is quite easy to tune the profile to one own preferences. So, one big bevel, one bevel with a micro edge bevel, or one big convexed bevel, or one convexed edge, or one big hollow bevel, really it is as you prefer.

I always remove the mico bevel, but sometimes I do it by grinding a flat bevel, and sometimes by grinding a (reasonably flat) convex bevel, and sometimes a flat bevel with a slightly convexed edge. All these solutions are good and show different advantages, and they all enter for me in the category "scandinavian grind" (which also includes the micro bevel and hollow bevel).

Some Scandinavian makers even grind their bevel with a wheel, and it makes a hollow-ground (concave) grind! (which will turn flat at the first sharpening)

A hand made scandinavian blade is even different from a factory made, as the factory blades are stamped out of a constant thickness blank, when a forged blade tapers to the tip. Very often, the edge angle at the tip is more pronounced that near the handle, thus making a more resistant blade tip.

So sorry, if I just destroyed all definitions of "scandinavian grind". What is left, is that a scandinavian grind is somehow a "saber grind", a large bevel that goes often down to a very, very thin edge.

Update 07-07-2004

Puukko is the Fin term, but the Norwegians and the Swedish also wear the "brukskiv", which is similar in look and function.



Frock knife This is a reproduction of what a middle age swedish "kniv" were like. Very little steel, because steel was rare, sallow root handle pine resin covered, blade fixed by pewter, sheath in folded beech bark holding with root lace.

In Norway, Blades were traditionally made from layered steel, the cutting edge being made from a more carbonated steel than the sides of the blade. They were also ground traditionally on a large wheel stone, thus making a hollow bevel, rather than flat [8].

These hollow blades have a great cutting power, definitively, to the expense of edge holding somehow. They are extremely easy to sharpen, as there is less steel to remove on a stone, but this indeed changes the original sharpness.

[1] 1cm = 2/5"

[2] approximate same value as the US dollar

[3] though the Frost was second hand and the edge had been reworked, the original edge could be seen near the handle.

[4] I do not live in a jungle area, so, I am quite conscious that the machetes, goloks and parangs are only for fun in the garden.

[5] I do not see the point of saving kilos on most equipment we carry, and still carrying a 1 kg blade, for only a potential use.

[6] Kitchen and food preparation is how I use knives the most

[7] It was actually designed for the German army after WWI

[8] source Trond Pedersen