



A CUT ABOVE

New West Knife Works Owner Corey Milligan Opens Mountain Man Toy Shop

WORDS KRISTEN POPE | IMAGES JONATHAN SELKOWITZ

Whether he's tossing tomahawks in the alley behind his shop, hunting elk or foraging for morels and huckleberries in the woods, Corey Milligan knows a good knife—and how to use one. Milligan is the owner of New West Knife Works and the Mountain Man Toy Shop. “I love making a useful tool that is a pleasure for me to use,” he explained.

Milligan started crafting knives in 1997, first learning about the art from books. “I was working as a cook in high school and college and I started messing around to see if I could make a knife. When I started, I got some books and read them and, through trial and error, made some knives”

When he first moved to Jackson, Milligan guided rafting trips but he soon decided he wanted to branch out. “I lived here long enough I was trying to figure out a career,” he explained. “I didn't necessarily want to work in the tourist business and I didn't want to be involved in just the local economy.” He began crafting knives and sold them at art shows for 10 years. In 1999, he started his website to sell knives directly to customers and has since opened New West Knife Works on the Town Square.

All the kitchen knives are manufactured at the oldest cutlery factory in the U.S., located in western Massachusetts. They are made from a Crucible U.S. Steel Company powder metal steel. Accord-

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— Corey Milligan

ing to Milligan, it is the highest performance steel ever used for kitchen knives—it is typically used for airplane parts, race cars and industrial machinery cutting bits. “It's the highest performance knife you can buy anywhere in the world,” Milligan said. The high-performance knives are a hit in the culinary world. “My wife was watching the Food Channel and, in 10 minutes, there were three people I know who use our knives,” Milligan said.

In 2012, Milligan also opened the Mountain Man Toy Shop on the Town Square. With the tagline “dangerous toys for big boys,” the shop features knives, men's gifts and serves as an all-around “man cave.” Milligan explained that when couples tour the Town Square, oftentimes women

will explore the jewelry stores while men will head over to the Toy Shop. “Knives are like little pieces of jewelry for men,” Milligan said. “Each is a one-of-a-kind piece, all with different handles and bolsters.”

The tomahawks, hand-forged in Idaho, are especially popular. There is a cross-cut log in the alley behind the shop where customers can practice tossing them. “People love it!” Milligan exclaimed. “Tomahawks are just beautiful little pieces of metallurgy. I look at them and am like ‘Wow!’ It could be something to hang on the wall, but it's designed to be thrown.”

Milligan has a deep love for the rivers and mountains. “I always wanted to be a mountain man,” he explained. Active on the Snake River Fund board for years, he worked to get the Snake River designated as a Wild and Scenic River and also to develop Rendezvous Park. He volunteers with Teton County Search and Rescue and is husband to Jessica and father to Ruby, 10, Buck, 8, and Lucas, 6. ■



MTN MAN
TOY SHOP
JACKSON HOLE, WYOMING