

A NATURAL PROGRESSION

ARTS KNIFE AND LEATHER WORKS – A CAREER BORN FROM A NEED



STORY BY JOSHUA SWANAGON, PHOTOS BY ARTURO MALDONADO

For most, when you have a hobby that requires any kind of tool, the typical response is to find that tool and purchase it.

Meet Arturo Maldonado of Arts Knife and Leather Works—not your typical hobbyist. Why do I say that? Because when Arturo was looking for the perfect skinning knife to go along with his love of hunting, he decided he was just better off starting a knife company, in his Palm Harbor, Florida home, and making one.

01 Humble Beginnings

Finding himself ready to retire from his job as a commercial and airbrush artist, Arturo looked to his love of hunting and taxidermy to find his new direction. One that would take him into the world of knifemaking and leathercraft.

02 The Challenges

Being a new knifemaker, with no one to look to for guidance, Arturo was forced to learn by trial and error. His drive led him to tackle the challenges before him quickly.

Left: This Bowie design is 12.25 inches overall with a 7.5-inch D2 tool steel blade with brass bolster. The Bowie is dressed in elk horn handle scales.

Right: The Pops EDC has an overall length of 7.5 inches with a 3-inch D2 tool steel blade and stainless bolster. The Pops is finished nicely with fossil handle scales.

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03 Eclectic Tastes

When asked what his favorite design is, Arturo mentioned that he really doesn't have a favorite because he likes all kinds of knives. But, if he had to choose, he would go with a drop point.

04 Forging His Own Way

Being new to the knife world and not being familiar with any of the knifemakers in the industry, Arturo really didn't really have any inspiration to speak of. Instead, he developed his own style from his own needs.

05 Material Preference

Leaning towards stainless steels, Arturo prefers the toughness and rust-resistance of D2 but likes to work with AEB-L from time to time, as well. For his handles, he likes to work with natural materials, such as wood, bone

and antler, for the beautiful finish they provide.

06 Creative Process

Although he does enjoy sitting with pencil and paper and coming up with new designs, Arturo encourages customer requests because he enjoys bringing their visions to life.

07 The Process

Due to space issues, Arturo uses stock removal for all of his blades and does have some production models to accompany his custom work.

08 Ordering

If you would like one of Arturo's knives, you may be surprised to find that the wait time is a very speedy 3-5 weeks. In very special cases, he has even been known to turn an order around in a couple of days. **KI**

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