

**PREPARE
FOR**



URBAN JUNGLE, YOUR CHAMPION HAS ARRIVED
AND IT IS CALLED KRANOS BY SPARTAN BLADES

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JOSHUA SWANAGON

GLOORY

“GIVE THEM NOTHING, BUT TAKE FROM THEM EVERYTHING.”
 – KING LEONIDAS, 300

Although this is just a movie quote, delivered for dramatic impact, it would be hard to believe that it does not fall in line with the mentality of the Spartans. Feared around the world for their ruthless efficiency in battle, the Spartans held strictly to the belief that it is better to come home on your shield than without it. It was a warrior culture to the highest degree.

Whenever I get the opportunity to handle a new offering from Spartan Blades I feel that same sense of ruthless efficiency and perfection that the Spartan culture adhered to so long ago. Its latest offering, the Kranos folder, has not altered my feelings on this in the slightest.

When it comes to picking the right knife for an urban setting, Spartan Blades has taken the field, prepared for glory.

First Impressions

Built as solid as the Spartan phalanx – an almost impenetrable shield formation – the Spartan Blades’ Kranos is stout and displays no noticeable weaknesses.

I was able to simply press right through this .5-inch climbing rope multiple times with little effort.



Top Left: The 3.375-inch, stonewash blade features a flat grind spear point with tapered top edge.



Top Right: The flipper works in unison with the finger choil to create a very protective finger guard.

“BUILT AS SOLID AS THE SPARTAN PHALANX – AN ALMOST IMPENETRABLE SHIELD FORMATION – THE SPARTAN BLADES KRANOS IS STOUT AND DISPLAYS NO NOTICEABLE WEAKNESSES.”

While carrying the Kranos, I handed it to my friends, as I often do with new knives to get their impression, and everyone commented about how substantial it felt in the hand. Closely followed by their comments about its sturdiness were exclamations about its subtle beauty.

You can get the Kranos in combinations of contoured titanium frame and G-10 scales, or anodized titanium frame and carbon fiber scales. No matter how you go, it is a sight to behold. For my T&E, I was sent the brass anodized titanium frame and carbon fiber scales, which really grab the eye.

Harkening back to the Spartans’ most notorious weapon – the spear – the Kranos features a 3.375-inch, CPM S35VN, spear-point blade with tapered top edge

and flat ground main bevel. With its dual bearings, the stonewash blade opens easily, with an audible snick, while the titanium frame lock gives it a rock-solid lock up. At first, the frame lock is very tight and takes a little work to actuate with one hand, but it does start to work itself out and get easier, but is still locked up.

The 8.375-inch overall length of the Kranos folds down to a very manageable 5 inches.

As with other Spartan Blades products, the Kranos references another iconic Spartan weapon in its chiseled arrow pocket clip. Crafted from 6AL4V titanium, the pocket clip holds the Kranos firmly in the pocket with no concern of it slipping out. With the slightly lower placement of the pocket clip, the Kranos rides a little high in the pocket.

Bottom: I was able to get some very clean cuts on this military gun belt, made from very thick nylon webbing, without dulling the edge.



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What's in a Name?

"Kranos" comes from the Greek and means "helmet," and the name was derived during the design process of the Kranos, due to the fact that if you hold it flat and look at the side of the handle you will see a subtle Spartan helmet. I would like to say that I noticed it right off, but it is so subtle that Curtis Lovito, co-founder/co-owner of Spartan Blades, had to point it out to me at the BLADE Show.

However, I will say this, once you have seen it, you always will. Perhaps one of the coolest design elements I have encountered on a knife in a long time.



Left: The spear point penetrated .75 inch through this thick leather and into a phone book.

Right: The titanium spacer at the butt features the USA etching to signify its American-made roots.

“THE 8.375-INCH OVERALL LENGTH OF THE KRANOS FOLDS DOWN TO A VERY MANAGEABLE 5 INCHES.”

Some like this, some don't, but I felt it makes it easier to get a solid purchase on the Kranos during the draw.

At the butt of the Kranos is a small, titanium spacer insert that provides a rectangular lanyard hole, in the event you would like to place a lanyard for easier retrieval. Etched on the spacer is "USA" – the home of Spartan Blades and where all its knives, including the Kranos, are made.

The oversize flipper doubles as a perfect finger guard and flushes perfectly with the finger choil in the handle. The subtle jimping on the spine aligns nicely with the choil, being just forward of it, for a secure grip every time.

As an added touch, when you look closely inside the handle, you can see the same arrow fletching pattern on the pocket clip chiseled into the titanium. Now that is attention to detail.

Through the Paces

Although I am convinced that the Kranos could make its place in any environment – from battlefield to the office – I decided to focus a little more on typical EDC/urban carry tasks that would be more common in an everyday setting. It may not seem like much of a test, but my wife wanted an apple. When I told her I was testing this knife, she decided she wanted apple slices. I found that with the extremely sharp edge – out of the box – and the flat grind, I was able to get some really thin slices. There was no slipping while cutting on the rounded side of the apple and each slice was extremely clean.



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Because I personally do a lot with leather, and own a lot of leather items, I wanted to see how cleanly I could cut some thick leather scraps. I don't remember the weight of this particular sheet of leather, but it is thick, and the Kranos was able to cut it very cleanly. Although it isn't a leather-working tool, and I would opt

SPECS

Blade Material: CPM S35VN Steel
Blade Length: 3.375 inches
Overall Length: 8.375 inches
Closed Length: 5 inches
Blade Thickness: .157 inch
Blade Style: Spear Point – Flat ground main bevel with tapered top edge
Frame: Contoured or anodized titanium with G-10 or carbon fiber scales
Locking Mechanism: Frame Lock, Flipper
Weight: 4.3 oz.
MSRP: \$515 - \$545



From a side view of the handle, you can see the subtle Kranos, or helmet, designed into the handle scales/frame.

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for one when actually working with leather, the Kranos would be great for leather repairs in the field.

As spear points are designed for penetration, I was curious to see just how deep the Kranos would penetrate the same thick leather piece, along with a phone book. It was able to

penetrate the leather and into the phone book a solid .75 inch. Although, the edges of the scales at the butt bit into my thumb quite a bit during the stab. For this reason, if I had to use the Kranos to penetrate a hard object, I would use something to drive it in. For soft subject matter, I don't think it would be an issue in the slightest.

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Next, for durability and sharpness, I took to cutting up some heavy-duty, military nylon webbing. I took an old GI issue pistol belt and started slicing away. It took some work and some sawing motion to get through it, but I expected that because it was very sturdy nylon webbing. I have yet to see a knife that would just slice right through it without some effort. With that said, I was very pleased with the results. It cut the webbing cleanly, and the edge held up amazingly. No sign of dulling at all.

Next, to continue the durability and sharpness testing, I cut up an entire cardboard box. Anybody who has ever had to cut cardboard boxes every day knows that this is a hard test for a knife. Every cut was clean, and the edge was still razor sharp.

One final test for durability brought me to a piece of bamboo, which is very hard and can be torturous on an edge. I went ahead and spent some time shaving a tinder pile, which the Kranos handled admirably. Due to how hard bamboo is, it took some pressure to get this pile shaved, and I noticed some hot spots developing in my palm from the squared off handle back. But, the reality is you will probably never use this knife for this kind of hard carving, so it will most likely never really come up.

Finally, after hours of testing and giving the Kranos a run for the money, I had to test its edge and see how it held up. For this I turned to my rope press cut test, where I see if I can press the knife directly down onto a 1/2-inch climbing rope and cut it without needing to slice. Not only was I able to press through the rope three times—and could have kept going—I was able to get some very clean slices on paper when I was finished.

Good steel, good heat treating, great knife.

With Its Shield

The Spartan Kranos holds up to the Spartan name in every way. This is a knife that was built to withstand the tortures of war but designed to be with you day in and day out in an urban setting.

I have no doubt that if the Kranos were an actual Spartan warrior in days of old, it would come back with its shield and never bat an eye. I don't say this often, but this is a knife that is now a part of my very small rotation, and it will be seeing a lot of time in my employ. It's always good to have a Spartan on your side. **KI**

Left: The jimping on the spine adds additional control along with the finger choil.



I was able to get some very thin, clean slices on my wife's apple, which she was very pleased with.

2017 International BLADE Show "American Made Knife of the Year"

It came as no surprise to me when I heard it, but the Kranos won American Made Knife of the Year at the 2017 BLADE Show. This is no small feat, considering the number of entries and the fact that it is an open voting system, all exhibitors are encouraged to vote – that is 200 peers voting. Congratulations Spartan Blades on another job well done.



Even though it is a very hard material, this bamboo did no damage or dulling to the edge.