

# A SLICE OF BEAUTY : FORM MEETS FUNCTION

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PHOTOS **SHANNON CORSI, JILL GOODSON + LUKE DOLAN**



SHANNON CORSI

**ABOVE**  
The Rock Block from New West Knifeworks is functional art for your kitchen.

**RIGHT**  
A set of New West knives fit snugly into a Rock Block. Craftsmanship and entrepreneurial spirit are the marks of this Teton-based company.



LUKE DOLAN

## NEW WEST KNIFEWORKS ARTISAN KNIFE MAKER

[NEWWESTKNIFEWORKS.COM](http://NEWWESTKNIFEWORKS.COM)

2022 marks 25 years in business for **New West KnifeWorks**. The space from which this innovative outfit operates is a far cry from owner Corey Milligan's humble start in a spare bedroom in his home. At the current factory in Victor, Idaho, a team of craftspeople hone the components that make up the specialty blades and artisan pieces that surround the brand.

Among those team members is Sarah Gage. A native of Michigan, Gage joined the New West KnifeWorks family to work on one specific item: the Rock Block. Made of stone native to the Tetons, wood and epoxy, this kitchen accessory serves as a showcase for the highly praised knife line that the New York Times has said is, "as beautiful as it is useful."

Gage found her roots as a maker early on as she embraced woodworking in high school. Her college curriculum included welding. When hired to work full-time using her artisan skills as a sculptor and woodworker in order to shape the Rock Block, she understood this would be her opportunity to create beautiful, functional sculptures. "My passion for making art is molded into one really cool product," she says. No two Rock Blocks are alike, making each of them unique to the kitchen in which they are featured.

**“GETTING A VIEW OF THE NATURAL WORLD IN YOUR KITCHEN IS SO SPECIAL.”**

—SARAH GAGE, NEW WEST KNIFEWORKS

The custom nature of the Rock Block lies in its unique composition, and shaping the piece. “My favorite part of the process is finding and cutting the rock,” Gage says. When a rock is chosen, it leads her to envision how the other components will come into play. Selecting the color or grain of the wood is inspired by the stone itself, as is the epoxy. The rocks that are used often include granite, which is found locally in abundance. But sourcing basalt or soapstone is not out of the question. “No matter the choice in rock, we try to maintain its ruggedness. We want to feature that natural edge. Getting a view of the natural world in your kitchen is so special.”

Gage extols the virtues of living an aesthetic life. A lover of architecture and a student of design, she believes, “When you are in your home, you always want it to be happy, healthy and inspiring. It’s the place where well-being starts.” The Rock Block is part of that equation, allowing a kitchen to feature a focal point of beauty, while at the same time, serving a practical purpose. A New West KnifeWorks Rock Block is fine art crafted for everyday use. 📌



**ABOVE**

Crafting the Rock Block means marrying together stone, wood and resin. All of this is accomplished in the New West KnifeWorks facility in Victor, Idaho.

**RIGHT**

A Rock Block elevates the presentation of the hand finished blades by New West KnifeWorks—tools described as having “perfect balance” by Bon Appetit.



**ABOVE**

Sarah Gage is a Rock Block maker at New West KnifeWorks. Finding the perfect rock sparks the start of each sculptural journey.



JILL GOODSON