

WRITTEN BY ~ GREG DULEY

BENCHMADE KNIVES



Custom knives have quite a large following in New Zealand, and it never fails to amaze me how much some guys are prepared to spend on what are in some cases are true works of art

Ampro have recently become the agents for Benchmade Custom knives from Oregon USA.

Benchmade make a huge range of knives using the latest laser cutting and CNC technology, but here we're reviewing one from the Hunt series for obvious reasons. There are 6 fixed blade and 4 folders in this line, with the folders in particular being well suited to our hunting uses. The North Fork was the model I received

for testfire. This has a 3 in/75mm blade and a 4in/100mm handle and a really unique lock blade system called the AXIS. This consists of a sliding cross pin that that springs forward into locking recesses in the rotating cam on the butt end of the blade inside the handle. This could well be the best lock blade system we've seen.

The blade steel is CPM S30V, one of the rave steels amongst knife makers these days, and is truly fully stainless.

The handles have a stainless steel liner for increased strength. Spacers are used between the liners and the blade around the hinge pin, to avoid that 'stuck closed with blood' syndrome common with other knives. What looks like a wood handle is in fact a natural fibre layered composite called Dymondwood that is far more resistant to climate and moisture. To finish it off there is an ambidextrous belt clip that can be fitted to either side, or removed altogether. On the hunting trips I've used the North Fork on so far, let's just say I have not needed to sharpen it – in fact it's still too sharp if there's such a thing!

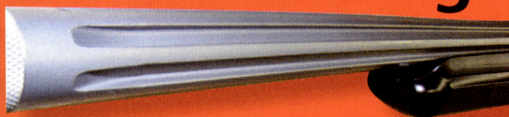
Weight 3.2oz/ 91gms

RRP from \$230 depending on model

<http://hunt.benchmade.com/product.aspx>

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