

SOFTGOOD: EATING

A daily carrying case for a professional chef with a personal attachment to his tools that is fashionable and expresses the chef's pride and identity.

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THE PROBLEM

For a professional chef who loves his work and is very proud of his tools, there needs to be a method to transport his goods. From user surveys, we found that “for almost all.. jobs... the cooks are required to supply their own tools... everyday”. Even a chef who is retired takes his knives “in the car to anywhere [he] might need them (including dinner at Dad’s)”. The attachment to his knives is such that he would go through the hassle of bringing them than “try to cook with somebody’s steak knife”.

Currently, the market has only a few solutions for this: a knife roll, case, or carrier. Culinary schools, knife makers, and other culinary companies sell knife rolls and cases (such as The Ultimate Edge’s Chef’s Luggages). However, “none of [the knife rolls] are big

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enough to carry all the tools you need”, and many cooks adapt a tacklebox or toolbox to their needs and put everything within the boxes. Current knife rolls are also not durable enough, resulting in cuts that need to be sewn once in a while.

Cooks carry many things, including, but not limited to: knives (chef, french, pairing, carving, cleavers other specialty knives), knife steels, peelers, whisks, spatulas, tweezers, squeeze bottles, pastry bags, cookie cutters(for pastry chefs), mallets, forks, thermometers. They also carry first aid kits (cuts, burns, aches, wipes, talcum powder), and spare socks and underwear.

From the research, it turns out chefs like to be very prepared: they bring all their specialty knives just in

case, but most times all the cooking is done with just one or two. About three quarters of the knife will stay in the bag. A user stated that “the bag should reflect this and have a special, accessible place for the few things which get used most often”.

THE ATTEMPT

We are going to attempt to solve this problem by making a carrying case for a professional chef. Our target will be young adult chefs who are extremely proud of their profession, with an undeniable love for their tools. The bag will not only be functional, but become a sort of fashion item that expresses the chefs’ lifestyle. Our focusing strategies include a concentration on the chef’s personal attachment and identity, as well as a use of materials which communicate durability and quality, which relate to cooking and eating (i.e. not artificial rubbers which may discourage an appetite).

The essential functions of the bag include modular and customizable knife and tool holders, dividers and small compartments for smaller items, with an easy-access compartment for frequently used items. The bag should be small enough to be carry-on luggage, yet big enough to, perhaps, store a cutting board. ■

