

KITCHENS BEDROOMS & BATHROOMS

BE PREPARED

£2.90 OCTOBER 1999

Last word

Report: Tracey Blake Photography: Mark Grimwade

The basic design of the knife hasn't changed for 5000 years. The materials have. Cutting-edge blades fashioned from ceramic are now at the sharp end of the market. Dismiss all preconceptions about fragile ceramic tableware, this is the stuff of the future.

Made from zirconium ceramic, a material originally developed for use in space, it is second in hardness only to diamond. As well as being razor-sharp, the knives are extremely durable, retaining their sharpness for many years. Ceramic blades are also contaminate-free, so they cannot influence the taste or colour of food.

These knives embody Japanese style – a perfect synergy between beauty of form and function. Jay Patel spotted their commercial potential when he brought a set back from Japan on one of his regular business trips.

"I'm a keen cook and I was intrigued by the importance the Japanese place on the art of 'cutting' in the preparation and presentation of their food," he explains. "They revere the knife – it's deeply rooted in their culture. Friends saw my ceramic knives and loved them, asking me to bring some back for them. It just got silly – I was bringing three or four back every time I went. So I decided to set up a mail order service." And so the Japanese Knife Company was born.

The collection of six ceramic blades includes Fruit and Vegetable, General Purpose and Fish and Meat knives. The latter is available in a choice of black or white ceramic. So go on, embrace the future and bring your kitchen kit into the 21st century. Prices start from £49 for the multi-purpose knife.

JKC knives are available from stockists nationwide or by mail order. Call 0870 240 2248 for enquiries.

KNIVES, FROM LEFT: 156MM, £203; 140MM, £81; 105MM, £49; BACKGROUND PAPER, £2.50 PER SHEET, FROM PAPERCAPER (020 7289 5279)

