



In Fisher's tools, there are no welds that could be susceptible to cracking. Instead, strong rivets secure the square shanks to the blades.

Handmade Garden Tools

Tuli Fisher grew up in Indiana and as a young adult learned how to shoe horses. Seems that was his calling. His mentor told him if he wanted to make it a career, however, he'd better move west, and so provenance brought him to Bozeman, Montana, and to his wife Danielle.

Five or so years ago, when she decided to pursue a graduate degree in Oregon, Tuli tagged along. Next to the house they lived in was an organic farm, and when the folks there saw Tuli blacksmithing with his portable propane-fired forge and heard the ring of his hammer on the anvil, they began bringing him all sorts of old and broken tools for repair. Tuli happily obliged, but some tools were in such poor condition he offered to make them new ones. And so by sheer happenstance, he became the maker of garden tools. Lots of folks around Bozeman own 'em and prize 'em.



Tuli Fisher heats garden tools of his own design in a small propane-fired forge.

zone 4 than most. His has four or five standard tools: a three-tine rake, large trowel, S-curve hand hoe, and a square-blade hoe. Custom jobs are possible—inquire within.

The tools begin as a sheet of 1/8" steel, from which he cuts the blades. These are heated individually in the forge and then hammered into shape on a form. Stocks begin as square stock, which he tapers at the handle end. Blades are riveted to the stocks. No welds. The finish gives each tool its look: an hour-long bath in a 500°F oven, followed by a sealing coat of wax, oil or varnish. The wood handles, the species of which varies according to what's available and to his whimsy, might be hickory, maple, or other. To marry the stock and handle Tuli heats the stock and then drives it into the handle to lock the two. A rather spectacular flame-out erupts from the union, not unlike the honeymoon night for an eager couple. The last operation is to tie a length of rawhide through the handle.

Tuli Fisher, 409 S. Fifth, Bozeman, MT 59715, 406-522-9443. Email: tuliestlin@hotmail.com.



Two Idaho Wines

The Sawtooth Idaho Chardonnay 2005 is sourced entirely from Idaho's Snake River Valley. In the glass, this straw colored Chardonnay gives off aromas of tropical fruit and butterscotch. The flavors are crisp and clean from the stainless steel fermentation but the rounded finish gives away the time it spent in oak. The fruit flavors are supported by high alcohol content (14.5%) which undoubtedly reflects the ripeness of the grapes at harvest. Sawtooth has showcased the Idaho climate in this delightful offering which can be enjoyed with crab cakes, chicken parmesan or pork tenderloin.

Ste. Chapelle is one of Idaho's oldest and best known wineries. Its Idaho Chardonnay 2005 has a rich golden color and the nose is highlighted by notes of apple, honey and lemon. The flavor profile follows the aromas with a crisp expression of apple and citrus notes, subdued oak spices, and balanced acidity. Because it is lighter and crisper than the Sawtooth Chardonnay, I would recommend it with light fish, chicken salad or just as an aperitif on a warm evening. —Greg Badenoch, *The Wine Gallery, Bozeman*