

OPINELmag

N°02 - 2021

A yurt in the workshops

Sheaths in the spotlight

Nomad cooking takes
centre stage

Our Australian friends
speak out

...

JUNE EDITORIAL



Dear partners,

In this second edition of OpinelMag, we would like to tell you about something that makes Opinel special. Our method of governance.

As you know, Opinel has remained a family business since 1890. But thesedays, the running of the company is a joint effort.

First of all, there is the Opinel family, with François Opinel (President) accompanied by his brother Denis and sister Brigitte (Directors). The Opinel family identifies and approves the company's key development areas, from working the numbers to the company's core principles, like keeping manufacturing in Savoie, being environmentally responsible, and staying true to our profession and expertise, knives.

Adding to that, since 2008, the company's operations have been led by a management team focused on keeping the company strong while remaining faithful to its principles. This team consists of two managers. Gérard Vignello is in charge of the site (manufacturing, management, HR, and IT), and Luc Simon is responsible for sales and marketing. This double-headed management is unusual, but it has proven successful thanks to ongoing, respectful, and constructive dialogue and complementary skills and personalities keeping the company moving forward on an even keel.

This joint leadership allows us to optimize our handling of manufacturing and business challenges. It also helps our teams to better understand the constraints facing each department and focuses attention on the collective interest of the company and our partners.

Through highly frequent interaction and a shared vision between the family and operational management, the company balances its long-term vision with the flexibility and adaptability needed in these times.

This governance, and obviously the contribution of all our partners (customers, suppliers, and employees) have allowed the company to grow substantially over the past fifteen years.

Unfortunately, that doesn't prevent us from facing product shortages today. Even though our production level has been good since the start of the year, we are aware that is still too low in light of exceptional demand for nearly a year.

Rest assured that, day in and day out, our employees and company directors are focused on improving product availability and our service level.

Luc Simon / Gérard Vignello



A YURT IN THE ARTISAN WOOD WORKSHOP

Who would expect to find a yurt at Opinel?

The new addition to the artisan wood workshop looks like one, but there's no yak or Mongolian nomadic family in sight!

The installation is actually home to a carousel used to dry glued wood assemblies that will eventually become our magnificent handcrafted knives, like the Chaperon, the Atelier, and the Ellipse. Gluing operations take place at workstations on both sides of it, with everything kept under negative pressure. The generated air flow protects workers from the glue fumes and speeds up the drying process. Opinel uses only a few liters of glue over the course of the year, but the literature on workplace safety recommends minimizing staff exposure to volatile organic compounds (VOCs) released by this type of product. Constantly concerned about the well-being and safety of our staff, Opinel made this investment at the beginning of 2021.



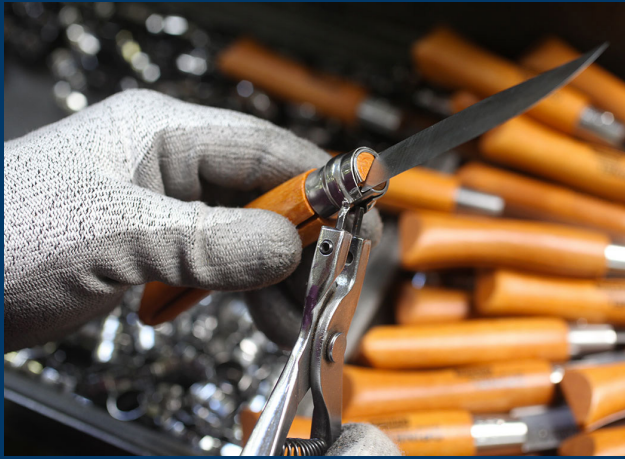
By the way, how do we call our two employees who celebrate the marriage of different types of wood everyday? Here's what the dictionary says:

“ A person who is skilled in a particular craft, an artisan. ”

Opinel likes to be the exception!

And congratulations to our craftswomen!

Patrice Perinetti, Industrial Director



DID YOU KNOW?

97% of the wood used in Opinel knife handles comes from the Jura, the Savoie, and the Isère regions.

As for the steel used in the knife blades, **44%** comes from France, **41%** comes from Sweden, and **15%** comes from Germany.

SALES ADVICE FROM...

Frédéric Pautet, Sales Director France



Sheaths

The most effective way to sell sheaths is to offer them!

Not all knife sales include the additional sale of a sheath (which sometimes cost more than the knife itself), so there are more opportunities than you think.

It is important to have a ready-to-use pitch, without the long-windedness of a pushy salesperson. For example, "Have you seen that we also have beautiful sheaths that would make a very lovely wrapping or gift wrap/that would protect your knife well for years?"

The second option is to show that such a product exists. This is an impulse buy, so by definition, customers don't think about it by themselves.

A helpful method would be to:

- Increase their presence at the point of sale (show the product as much as possible).
- Display them near the cash register and suggest them just before checkout.
- Showcase the item (such as in a window display).
- Display them alongside a knife inside the store or on salespeople.

THE NOMAD COOKING...

In 2018, Opinel launched an article spanning two of its product types: outdoors and cooking. With the Nomad Cooking Kit, we offer a solution for everyone who wants to cook well when they're away from home. We fall back on our expertise for this one, manufacturing compact, lightweight knives that are handy and portable, for top-notch prepwork.

The nomad kit is extremely innovative for the target market and available items. The kit spearheaded our line of outdoor cooking products, a trend that is still going strong in many countries, with the appearance or return of lifestyles like van life, tiny houses, camping, hiking, and boating, and even daily picnics. We've seen this nomad trend emerge in recent years in many brands of lunchboxes and water bottles.



In 2020 and 2021, to amplify our position as the leading cutlery expert in this market segment, we created a separate “Nomad Cooking” collection, which has its own identity and brings together an assortment of existing products, like the corkscrew and oyster knives, and new products, like the No.07 Chestnut knife.



...AN INNOVATIVE COLLECTION



Today, there are seven products that make up the Nomad Cooking collection, each stamped with its natural green “Nomad Cooking” logo. To promote them in stores, we’ve designed a mini-corner display that accommodates all the products through a window and self-service labels.



This is a new segment, a new way of talking about our products to our longtime customers and a new way of reaching new customers looking for curated products to fit their activities and lifestyle.

Françoise Detroyat, Marketing and Communication Director

THEY ARE OPINEL

Sandra Sobrido, assembly workshop

What is your position at Opinel?

I work in the assembly workshop. The handle, the ferrule and the blade are mainly assembled using a semi-automated machine. There's one person at the machine, another setting the ferrules and the last person sharpens the blades. Then the knives are packaged. It's a team effort, we all help each other out while being independent in our own role.

What values do you see in the company?

Group spirit, teamwork – it's a real family business and super friendly too.



What do you like most about this profession?

I love everything, it's fascinating, and you see the knives being made right from start to finish. The assembly workshop relies on the wood, grinding and ferrule workshops, and the packaging and shipping departments slightly depend on us. It's real teamwork.

What does sharpening involve?

Sharpening ensures the knife has a good cutting edge. It's a skill you learn, you need to be able to feel whether to sharpen harder or not. You can also test the knife to see if the blade cuts well.

 [Find out the full interview here](#)

“ It's a real family business and super friendly too. ”

OUR TEAM IS GROWING

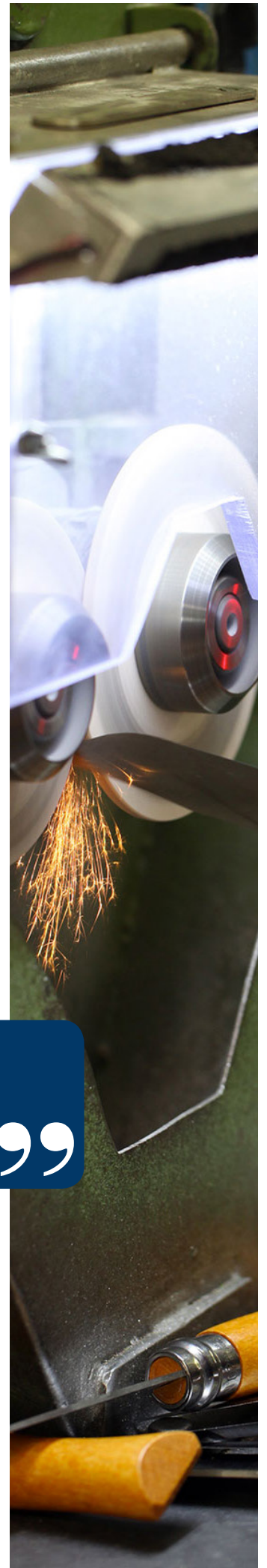
Jules CURTIL – Area Export Manager for Central, Eastern and Northern Europe

Thomas BELLEMIN – Service Engineer

Olivia BERNICOT – Team Leader at the assembly workshop

Salim BENCHINA – Order Picker at the shipping department

Laetitia DORGIA – Operator at the steel workshop



THE VOICE OF AMERICA!



Civil Alchemy, Webster Groves, Missouri



Modern Love, Frenchtown, New Jersey



Seed People's Market, Costa Mesa, California

Strong Brick-and-Mortar sales

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With about 50% of adult Americans fully vaccinated and government restrictions easing up, our US brick-and-mortar partners are seeing more customers coming back to stores for in-person shopping. After a long year of restrictions, forcing our partners to pivot to online sales and curbside pickups, Opinel USA sales are stronger than ever before, even pre-pandemic! Our American brick-and-mortar dealers have adopted omni-channel strategies that allows them to reach more customers and convert more sales.

”

Alex Delecroix, Director of US Sales & Operations

NEWS FROM OUR AUSTRALIAN DISTRIBUTOR

Interview with **David Yates**, Managing Director at **ZEN IMPORTS**

Can you introduce Zen Imports in a few words?

Zen, is a high end lifestyle brand management and distribution company. We represent world leading brands in Australia, New Zealand and some parts of Asia. Managing the brand integration, marketing strategies and all sales channels including eCommerce.

How long have you been working with Opinel?

We have only been working with Opinel for less than 6 months. However we have communicated for many years about Australian distribution.

We wanted to work with Opinel as the brand is a European Icon and heritage brand. We only work with the top brands in our industry categories and Opinel has always been a clear leader and we are thrilled to be privileged to represent Opinel.

Can you describe Opinel in three words?

Heritage, Iconic and Pioneering.

