

Diablo spearguns -- an obsession

By Gene Mack
s/v Aurora

Isla Xalaja My wife Valeria has been telling me for some time that I have become obsessed with Spearguns and Spearfishing. Maybe she is right. What can I say when I'm laying in bed watching tv and she walks in to come to bed and there in her spot is this sexy and curvy speargun. You ever seen a Latin woman get mad? Well that speargun might as well have been another woman. I think I slept on the couch that night. Some years back I started building spearguns mostly for a few friends and myself. Over the years the design has progressed and my "obsession" has turned into a small business called Diablo Spearguns. Diablo Spearguns are handcrafted from teak and exotic hardwoods in my workshop in Guatemala City specializing in quality high-end spearguns. These guns are handmade with pride to exacting standards on a limited basis. I make the body of the speargun from locally grown teak. The aged teak lumber is milled into boards of matching dimensions. The strips of wood are hung for a period of time, about 30 days to relieve any stresses. I

Depending on the model of the speargun, four to six teak strips with opposing grains are laminated together using epoxy. This process forms a stock that is extremely strong and durable. I use a combination of power and hand tools to create each gun. Power tools such as a thickness planer, jointer and router are used to machine a perfectly square and straight stock which is of utmost importance with regards to accuracy of a speargun. The router equipped with a ball bit is used to mill a track where the spear shaft will rest. After the track is made a trigger pocket is cut into the stock using a router bit with the corners being squared off with a paring chisel. Lastly a slot for the power bands is carefully milled into the muzzle of the gun. Honestly, I really dislike this process of machining but it's a necessary "evil" in producing a gun. The dust gets on everything and at times I manage to get more epoxy on myself than on the laminates. I'm sure all the boaters can relate as I'm like using black Sikaflex or 5200. The last time I sealed the mast on Aurora with black Sika flex it ended up all over my cloths, hands, hair, the boat and even inside both Casa Pitaya and Tamarindo and I was not even in the houses that day. After I finish machining everything the hand tools come out and the process of forming the shape of the gun starts. Now here is where the fun and enjoyment actually starts for me. The use of hand tools is an extremely satisfying process for me personally. The Diablo Speargun design has many rounded corners and curves along the stocks length. The different models of spearguns I build have one thing in common; both Euro and American style guns have been my inspiration. I use a mix of both Japanese and western style tools in my workshop. I use several different types of curved Japanese rosewood hand planes to cut the compound curves into the gun near the track. A few favorite Lie-Nielsen and high angle Japanese planes and spoke shaves also help shape the stock in this area. Various hand cut rasps are used in the shaping process as well. My many rasps and Iwasaki floats are some of my favorite tools alongside the hand planes. If you look closely at the shape of the speargun there is a transition area from an American Style gun (towards the rear) to a wide and curvy low profile Euro inspired body forward. Here is where the rasps, floats and rifflers come into play in making that transition. For me this process of working with my hands in a trade or craft is a noble profession but unfortunately I'm being lost in a world of plastic and cheap Chinese mass production. Everything up to this point has been done with machines and is a mechanical process but here working with hand tools is where creativity and skill come into play. For me, I'm sculpting the wood into a shape I desire. There are no loud saws screaming in the background forming a cloud of dust. Here there is only the pleasant sound of the rasp or plane shaving the wood into a form that not only looks and functions properly but feels properly as well. The amount of time I spend shaving off half a millimeter of wood gets insane at times but as mentioned the process is enjoyable and in the end makes the speargun what it is and I take a great deal of pride in something I create and put my name on. There is a simple and pleasing shape to each Speargun but it did not start off this way. My first guns were "complicated" and I was trying to do too much to something that should be simple. I started building some small 1-meter reef guns and after taking them out a few times I decided to crank things up a notch or two and build something bigger and better to put food on the table. There is something special, satisfying and primal about building a weapon and killing your prey. Please no flames from the vegans out there as I only kill what I eat. A few weeks back, Serlan (many of you will remember him) came back to Guatemala on vacation from the great white north and we went on a sailing trip with my wife Valeria out to the cays. What a great trip we had. I shot a dead and bloated fish which I thought was a goliath grouper and yes there was that massive wahoo I popped with my spear and stoned him cold dead but unfortunately that that hoo was actually part of an old surf board. Seriously we ate well that trip with some very good fresh seafood. And yes, we had a great time and laughed more in that week than we all have in the last year. Back to guns and girls. So at Diablo Spearguns I am currently building 3 different sizes of guns. These are the Diablo 121cm, 131cm and 151cm guns. I'm currently designing and testing a smaller 110cm reef gun and a big blue water gun for large pelagic's such as tuna, kings, dorado and wahoo. This is a 161cm mid handle monster firing a 67" shaft from 4 power bands. I need to spend a bit more time in the gym as it takes a gorilla to load this one. What do they say, "œchics dig a guy with a big gun". From start to finish each gun has about 20 - 30 hours of time invested in it depending on the model. Diablo Spearguns are for the discriminating fisherman who enjoys to hunt and can appreciate a weapon that is handmade to a high level of quality and attention to detail. My wife made a comparison between women's dresses and deadly weapons. Yes it's true! Went something like this. Valeria: "œHow do you know how girls go ballistic when they walk into a restaurant and another girl is wearing the same dress?" Gene: "œYes dear, I notice that all the time". Valeria: "œDon't mock me!!! Come on, I bet it's the same with guys and local beach bar. Don't you want to know that what you're holding in your hands while drinking beer and telling lies is a

unique hand built weapon that represents you? A big thanks to my editor extraordinaire Valeria for helping me with this story, I could never have done it without you sweetie!. You can see more of Gene's spearguns [HERE](#) .Contact Information

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facebook.com/spearguns You will only find premium components in Diablo Spearguns. The custom trigger

mechanisms are from Nile-Tec or Neptonics depending on the model of speargun. The spears are from Addiction.

They are polished to a mirror finish and come with different tip configurations. These include the "Sniper Point" and

"Hammer Point". The speargun handles are carved out of exotic Central American hardwoods Stainless Steel is used

in all the hardware that goes into making one of the finest spearguns on the market Features for all Models

-- Stainless steel handle frame with hand carved wooden grips

-- Nile-Tec or Neptonics trigger mechanisms

-- Premium rubber "power bands" with Dyneema wishbones

-- Custom stainless steel spear from Addiction

-- Fully rigged with 300-400lb red shooting line and ready to hunt

-- *Optional items such as Mother of Pearl inlays or different reel sizes are available upon request. Please inquiry for pricing.

Diablo 121

Rear Handle

121cm overall length, open track

9/32" x 50" Addiction spear

Hawaiian flopper shaft

2 x 5/8" power bands

Effective Range 5 meters

50m reel with line included

\$620.00 USD

Diablo 131

Rear Handle

131 cm overall length

Deep open track with UHMW muzzle insert

9/32" x 55" Addiction spear

3 x 5/8" power bands

Effective Range 6 meters

50m reel with line included

\$790.00 USD

Diablo 151

Mid Handle

151cm overall length

Enclosed Track with UHMW muzzle insert

5/16" x 65" Addiction spear

3 x 5/8" power bands

Effective Range 7 meters

80m reel with line included

\$980.00 USD