



The silicone FoldTuk Kitchenware (above left) bakes as well as Corningware but stows with lid as easily as plastic plates (above right).

Cookin' with Collapsible Bakeware

Space is always at a premium on a boat, and the galley tends to get very small, very quickly—even with a minimum of pots, pans, and cooking utensils onboard. *Practical Sailor* reviewed one galley space-saver, nesting cookware, in the April 2009 issue, and more recently tried out FoldTuk Kitchenware. Where nesting cookware is designed for stovetop use, the FoldTuk line can be used to bake, serve, and cold-store a meal, all in the same rattle-proof container, which saves on storage space, water for dishwashing, and power.

FoldTuk is durable, sturdy, and serves the same functions of a Pyrex or Corningware dish. Made of silicone and “Ceramber,” a silicone-and-ceramic compound, the collapsible bakeware can be used in conventional, microwave, convection, and infrared ovens in temperatures up to 500 degrees. After use, the pan collapses into a 1-inch-tall container that is stackable.

The shatterproof FoldTuk dishes with plastic lids are airtight, dishwasher safe, and naturally nonstick. Their Ceramber material feels like rubber, but it is petroleum-free, so, when heated, it will not leach BPAs or present any of the health risks often associated with petroleum-based plastics. The FoldTuk also uses no non-stick coating such as PTFE or PFOA, but the

Ceramber provides a natural non-stick surface.

Company studies show the Ceramber compound heats up and cools down faster than all-silicone bakeware products. The FoldTuk can be transferred from deep freeze directly into a hot oven without risk of thermal impact. (The plastic lid that accompanies the baking dishes cannot be used in an oven.)

Testers used the FoldTuk bakeware to cook several products in a conventional oven, including some tasty brownies that came out just right. The only challenge we came across during cook tests was removing food from the dishes. The stepped sides, which allow the dishes to collapse, make it a little more difficult to get food out using a spatula, and testers were concerned that using a sharp knife might damage the Ceramber.

Made in China, FoldTuk comes in multiple shapes, colors, and sizes—4 cups/32 ounces (\$16) and 6-cup/48 ounces (\$22). The company also sells a meat roaster (\$80), and offers a limited 60-day warranty on all. ▲

CONTACT

FOLDTUK KITCHENWARE, 877/365-3885, www.foldtuk.com

If You Can't 'Duct It', 'Tough Duct' It

In plenty of time for your spring maintenance routine, 3M has recently released several new Scotch Tough Duct Tapes, similar to those we've come to rely on for projects and repairs, but marketed as tougher, more durable, and more versatile.

The new line, Scotch Tough Duct Tapes, includes: a new No Residue tape, said to handle temps up to 200 degrees, that can be left on for up to six months without leaving a sticky mess behind; an Extreme Hold tape, which uses a double-layer adhesive for a better grip that won't fail under pressure; a Heavy-duty All-Weather tape designed for long-term (even permanent)

exterior repairs that 3M claims will stand up to UV and moisture without cracking or peeling; and Outdoor Painter's Clean Removal tape, which is marketed as a paint pro's choice for high adhesion, waterproof backing, and clean removal for up to two weeks. The line also touts the first-ever transparent duct tape for “invisible” repairs.

Practical Sailor plans to test these tapes in real-world conditions and has already employed the new no residue tape for a project on our beloved test boat, *Jelly*. Stay tuned to see whether they stand up to maker's claims.

The new tapes are available in hardware and home improvement stores and range in price from \$6 to \$10. ▲

CONTACT: 3M, 888/364-3577, www.scotchtoughtape.com

Good Lookin' Leica

Photos by Ralph Naranjo

Sight is the mariner's most important sense, and tools that enhance visual acuity can be worth their weight in gold. Leica's newest addition to its line of premium-priced, high-quality optics delivers brilliant viewing—and at \$2,200 costs nearly its weight in gold—but for the sailor preferring an uncompromising pair of binoculars, the German-made Ultravid 7x42 HD is a navigator's dream. Although they lack a compass, they do afford camera-lens quality resolution and their low-light gathering ability is truly astounding. The ergonomic two finger-focus adjuster, water-tight armored coating, and extendable eye cups round out their superior design.

Their most significant downside is obviously their cost. The hefty price tag puts them out of reach for many, including PS's editors, but their high quality and superior performance have earned them a spot on our dream-gear list.

Costly fluorite lens elements and high-quality roof prisms are ground to tight tolerances. The fringe benefit of their design is best measured in dawn and dusk low-light situations, when they allow a user to pick out individual lobster pots, read navigation mark numbers, and even see the froth on a fringing reef—features that may go unseen with lesser-quality optics. The exit pupil diameter is large enough

to allow full-frame viewing while wearing eyeglasses, and the dial-a-diopter adjustment can be accomplished with a simple pull and twist of the user-friendly focus knob. Attached caps on both ends of the Ultravid protect the lenses when the binoculars are not in use.

Much of the improvement in the Ultravid line comes from new optical coatings that increase light transfer through the fluorite lenses and roof prisms, lessening chromatic aberration and flare. The external coating on the front lens element sheds fog and water droplets better than any optic we have seen. The optical components are sealed in a nitrogen-charged atmosphere, guaranteed to handle submersion to 5 meters.

The magnesium-alloy body is rugged, yet light. At 1.70 pounds, the Ultravids have nearly half the heft of the Fujinon FMTRC-SX, our Best Choice among high-priced 7x50 binos (November 2006 and April 2009), but the \$700 Fujis have a compass. We found the Ultravid 7x42 binoculars to be the right compromise when weighing the effects of magnification, boat motion, and field of view. Leica's optical quality was outstanding, and it delivered sharper images than most 7x50 binoculars. The decrease in the field of view was minor and certainly didn't inhibit their ability, even in low-light and overcast situations.

Today, good quality binoculars can be found at the lower end of the three-digit scale. (Our August 2006 test tapped the \$300 Nikon Ocean Pro as Best



Leica's outstanding optical quality allowed its smaller 42-millimeter front lenses deliver an even brighter image than most 7x50 binos.



Choice in the low-priced group.) But to really tap into the best of engineering and optical design, the price quickly rises into the low four-figure column. What's gained by the added expenditure is both optical quality and engineering detail. The latter relates to how well the lens elements are held in place and how well they tolerate heating and cooling, humidity and pressure changes, not to mention the inadvertent bumps and minor impacts of rugged use.

Bottom line: If you're the type of sailor who would consider adding a Rolex to his kit, then we recommend investing the money instead in these high-quality binoculars, a much more practical navigational tool. However, if you have a budget like our editors, file this review in your "when I win the lottery" gear locker. ▲

CONTACT
LEICA CAMERA LTD.
 800/222-0118, www.leica.com

AS LEICA ULTRAVID 7x42 HD	
OBJECTIVE LENS DIAMETER	42 mm
ANGLE OF VIEW	8 degrees
FIELD OF VIEW (@ 1,000 YARDS)	420 ft. (140 m @ 1,000 m)
MIN. FOCUS DISTANCE	10.8 ft. (3.3 m)
EXIT PUPIL DIAMETER	6 mm
EYE RELIEF	17 mm
FOCUS TYPE	Center
WEATHERPROOFING	Weatherproof, fogproof
DIMENSIONS (WxHxD)	4.7 x 2.6 x 5.6 in.

The Leica bino is smaller than average marine 7x50s, making it easy to grasp.

