

Cumaru

DIPTERYX ODORATA

Cumaru, or Brazilian teak as it is widely called, is known for its exceptional hardness and durability. This dense wood has a range of colors varying from a tan brown to a reddish brown with some pieces offering a black striping. This exotic hardwood is a great choice in both residential and commercial installations, especially to users who prefer a more brownish look to their application. Cumaru's appearance makes it a great sustainable alternative for Burmese teak, with the added benefit of being more than three times as hard.

FAMILY

Fabaceae.

OTHER COMMON NAMES

Brazilian Teak, Almendrillo, Champanha, Tonka, Southern Chestnut.

ORIGIN

Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Costa Rica.

APPEARANCE

Cumaru varies in color from a medium tan brown to a reddish brown or purplish brown with light yellowish-brown or purplish streaks; gradually becomes uniform light brown or yellowish brown upon exposure to light. Unlike most exotics, cumaru undergoes very little color change due to sun light and color range will slightly mute over time into a more uniform color. The grain has a pronounced interlocked appearance.

DENSITY AND BUOYANCY

Janka hardness is 3540, making it somewhat hard and durable, 174% harder than Red Oak (1210 Janka).

Average weight is 71 lbs./cu. ft. Specific gravity is .86, making this wood dense and extremely hard.

DRYING AND SHRINKAGE

Very unstable when used in dry climates and it is prone to shrinkage. It is naturally seasoned and kiln dried to prevent shrinkage.

WORKABILITY

Being one of the hardest woods on the planet, the wood is difficult to saw and bore and will have a fairly high blunting effect on tools. Where severely interlocked grain is not present, the wood planes to a smooth surface. Because of its high density and oily nature, the wood glues poorly. It nails and screws well; pre-boring is necessary.

DURABILITY

The timbers have a reputation for being very durable, with resistance to both brown-rot and white-rot fungi. The wood has excellent weathering possibilities, rated 25 years against decay and insect damage with applications having longevity of over 50 years.

PRESERVATION

Cumaru naturally weathers to a beautiful, silver-gray patina. To maintain this rich tone, apply a UV inhibitor like Penofin. Application of sealers is optional.

USES

Flooring, millwork and mouldings.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

This dense, attractive Brazilian hardwood has the characteristics of ipe, but without the olive-green tone. The color of cumaru varies from yellowish-brown to light brown with a tight, even grain. It is sometimes referred to as Brazilian teak or southern chestnut.

Some of its qualities include:

- an irregular, slightly interlocked grain which is coarse and wavy in texture
- resistant to insect attacks and decay
- very dense wood, which makes it ideal for a variety of uses