

Inside

text: Megan Norgate

REJUVENATE

One of the most appealing aspects of timber is that it's able to be rejuvenated by re-oiling, staining or sealing. Oils penetrate the surface providing a breathable finish that repels moisture and enhances the grain and colour. While surfaces such as benchtops will need annual re-coating, oils have the advantage of being easy to spot-repair. Stains alter the shade or colour of timber, and are used in conjunction with oils or sealants. Water-based Low-VOC varnishes form a water-repellent barrier on the surface of the timber and provide a harder, glossier finish that requires less maintenance, but a full removal and re-coating if damaged.

BIRCH

Finnish Company, Secto, creates well-established slatted timber lampshades in a variety of shapes. Manufactured and assembled in Finland from high quality, locally-sourced PEFC certified birch veneers, they have an enduring design appeal. Like many high quality design pieces, Secto designs have been widely copied with low-cost imitations, lacking the craftsmanship found in the originals.

OH CEDAR

Western red cedar battens are cut at random lengths, mounted on Cedartech plywood cladding and stained black to form a double-height interior feature wall, intended as a reference to the cracked and riveted bark of the Pohutakawa tree. Western red cedar is a durable, highly attractive softwood grown in sustainably managed New Zealand plantations and Forest Stewardship Council certified international areas. The FSC is an internationally based third-party certification scheme that was founded in Canada in 1993 and now operates in 80 countries.

OUT OF THE WOODS

The Under Pohutakawa project, in the west coast bush enclave of Piha, is considered New Zealand architectural royalty. Conceived and sensitively resolved by Herbst architects for a heavily treed site full of the glorious, massive, gnarled forms of the native Pohutakawa tree, the interiors are both meticulously crafted and deeply imbued with biophilic form – and withstand the whims of fashion. The designers layered the interior surfaces in light to dark timber – imagining by doing so that they could be carved out of a tree itself. In their own words the project "needed to contain the memory of trees", and exists in deference to the surrounding landscape.

SPOT THE GUM

Durable Australian hardwood spotted gum timber unifies the flooring, kitchen benchtops and a custom-designed couch, adding to the impression that interior is of one form. When using hardwoods, the designers' preference for a particular source can ensure that the timbers specified minimise the destruction of old-growth forests. Using reclaimed or recycled timbers or those local to the region and grown in small, sustainably managed plantations can be a positive approach.

ALWAYS GOOD

Vatne Mobler furniture in Norway produced this triplicate set of original Sigurd Ressel falcon chairs in the 1970s. Sitting very comfortably in this lofty living space, the branched legs of the chairs playfully allude to the geometric structural branches holding up the glass roof. Made of plywood and leather, these chairs will likely last another 50 years.

Megan Norgate is an interior designer at Brave New Eco.
braveneweco.com.au