

BUYERS GUIDE

Wooden Outdoor Furniture



Park Bench Teak & Garden

1-415-479-8325

www.ParkBenchDesigns.com

***Showroom:
3815 Redwood Hwy.
San Rafael, CA 94903***

Park Bench

OUR HIGH QUALITY CHARACTERISTICS

- ✓ Secure supply of teak & shorea (yellow balau) from environmentally managed Government forests
- ✓ We use only the best center portion of each log (heartwood) and void of any loose knots or checks
- ✓ Our wood is properly kiln dried to a moisture content of 10%-14%, ideal for North American climate
- ✓ Thick generous portion of tight grained, oil rich hardwood is used to ensure durability and strength
- ✓ Fasteners and metal fittings are made with solid cast brass and stainless steel, then polished
- ✓ Precision, machine cut ends and joints, including every foot
- ✓ Time honored mortise-and-tenon and tongue-and-groove joinery methods
- ✓ All structural joints are doweled and glued with weather resistant Tight Bond glue
- ✓ Ergonomically designed for comfort and elegant style
- ✓ Sanded twice for a smooth buttery finish
- ✓ We offer a full three year warranty on all our outdoor furniture

PARKE TEAK – Made from Burmese Teak

- ✓ We use the world's best slow growth Burmese Teak
- ✓ 500% more oils and resins than Indonesian Grade A plantation grown teak. Most manufacturers use Indonesian Grade A plantation grown teak that is harvested premature at about 20 years old. This teak is now being a cash crop. It has undergone genetic modification

and the hybrid version is a faster growing strain of teak. This hybrid Indonesian teak does not possess the same qualities of the original "slow growth" Burmese teak. This hybrid teak contains about one-fifth the natural oils and resins of Burmese teak and weighs about 20% less. The result is a shorter life expectancy, inferior grain character, and a rougher texture.

- ✓ Beautiful rich golden hue and grain character
- ✓ Life expectancy of over 80 years

PARK BENCH DESIGNS – Made from Shorea (Yellow Balau)

- ✓ Shorea (yellow balau) is a dense, tightly grained hardwood that is heavily laden with rich oils and resins which are impervious to rot
- ✓ Similar to teak in looks and feel, yellow balau's texture is very fine, even and smooth to the touch
- ✓ Twice as strong as teak
- ✓ Proven for centuries as one of the best woods suitable for outdoors
- ✓ Great Value, half the cost of teak
- ✓ Life expectancy of over 50 years

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

A knowledgeable consumer is "our preferred" customer. The more knowledgeable a consumer is about high quality outdoor garden wood furniture the easier it is to recognize good value, and furthermore, recognize our great value. Value is a combination of quality and price. When purchasing high quality outdoor garden furniture, be sure to compare design, construction and price. One must consider design details, comfort and quality of construction when comparing prices to be sure you are getting the value you expect. Our commitment to high quality and competitively discounted prices is our formula for great value. We have the best value and proudly live up to our slogan, "Nature's best...for less!"

Purchasing wooden outdoor furniture is an investment that you should make only once. With the right choice, your furniture will last you a lifetime. At Park Bench Teak and Garden, we want to help you make an informed decision that you will not regret.

1. Why Buy Wooden Outdoor Furniture?

No other material can match the natural character and warmth of solid wood. After all, wood has the natural ability to coordinate with an outdoor setting. When left outdoors year-round, certain types of woods are more durable than man-made materials. If you choose the correct type of wood for your outdoor furniture, it will last you a lifetime. Some manufacturers even guarantee it! Wood is also an environmentally friendly product, if it is harvested from managed plantations and finished with eco-friendly products.

2. What Woods are Available?

Some woods are considerably better than others. Common woods sold by United States retailers include: Oak, Cedar, Eucalyptus, Yellow Balau and Teak.

***NOTE:** All estimated lifetimes are based on untreated, uncovered woods left outdoors in all seasons.

Oak

- ✓ Dense but porous. Lets moisture in readily, making the wood more prone to rotting.
- ✓ Turns black as it weathers.
- ✓ Contains tannic acid that temporarily protects it from fungi decay and insect, but will eventually rot if left outdoors.
- ✓ Chemically treated to improve durability.
- ✓ Estimated lifetime: Less than 1 year.

Cedar

- ✓ Softwood with a unique aroma, said to repel insects.
- ✓ Not as durable as hardwoods, such as teak.
- ✓ Tends to have many knots, which can compromise the structure of the furniture. Knots can lead to splits, resulting in surface deformation, or the knot may fall out, leaving a hole in the furniture.
- ✓ The grain in cedar wood will sometimes rise after it has weathered, causing splintering.
- ✓ Estimated lifetime: 8-10 years

Eucalyptus

- ✓ Sometimes referred to as “Jarrah”, “Tasmanian Oak”, “Rose River Gum” or “Australian Heritage Oak”.
- ✓ Tropical wood with natural oils that prevent rotting and insect infestation.
- ✓ Naturally a pinkish-brown color, it is typically finished with oil to give it a “teak-like” appearance.
- ✓ Weathers to a reddish-brown color.
- ✓ Often used by lower-end manufacturers because it is abundant. Thus, construction of the furniture is usually substandard.
- ✓ Estimated lifetime: 8-10 years

Teak

- ✓ Historically used in ship building, it has an excellent reputation as a durable and long-lasting wood. Due to its popularity and our misuse, teak has become endangered. Now a day most teak wood used commercially comes from managed plantations. This has increased its costs.
- ✓ High natural oil content, which protects it from rotting and insects.
- ✓ Quality teak is yellowish brown in color. Stay away from teak that is very light in color as this is the sapwood, which is low in oil content.
- ✓ Best quality teak is cut from the inner core of the tree trunk (heart wood), which is the strongest part of the tree. It is also the richest in natural oils and the color and grain is more uniform, and it should be void of knots.

- ✓ Requires no application of preservative or treatment oil.
- ✓ Weathers to a handsome silver-grey color and does not splinter.
- ✓ Estimated lifetime: More than 80 years.

Yellow Balau

- ✓ About 20% denser and heavier than teak wood, making it ideal for our windy climate.
- ✓ Considered stronger and more durable than teak, due to its high density. The greater the density of the wood, the greater the exterior resistance, strength and durability.
- ✓ Rich in natural oils that protect it from rotting and insects.
- ✓ Looks similar to teak, but slightly darker brown in color with a coarser and rougher grain.
- ✓ Requires no application of preservative or treatment oil.
- ✓ Estimated lifetime: More than 50 years.

3. Which Type of Wood is Best?

How do various woods rank in outdoor durability?

Wood	Best	Good	Average	Economy
Teak	☀			
Yellow Balau	☀			
Eucalyptus		☀		
White Cedar			☀	
Red Cedar			☀	
Cypress			☀	
Rubber wood				☀
Oak				☀

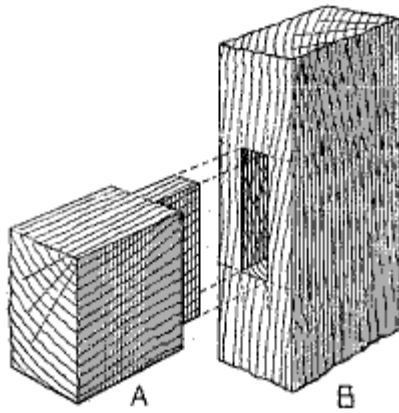
- ✓ For outdoor furniture, these different woods range in quality from economy to best durability: Oak (economy), Cedar (average), Eucalyptus (Good), Teak and Yellow Balau (Best).
- ✓ Tropical hardwoods such as Teak and Yellow Balau are recognized as the best material for outdoor furniture as they are able to withstand our harsh Outdoor climate.
- ✓ Both Teak and Yellow Balau are very dense and high in natural oils that give the wood superior strength and durability against rotting and insects.
- ✓ No other woods compare to Teak and Yellow Balau durability, elegance, stability, and low maintenance.
- ✓ Teak has been over commercialized and the demand for this prized hardwood exceeds the supply. This has driven the price of teak up considerably. A less expensive alternative to Teak is Yellow Balau.

4. How do you Identify Superior Construction of Outdoor Furniture?

It is important to remember that the life of outdoor furniture is not only dependent on the type of wood used but also the quality of its construction.

- ✓ When it comes to outdoor wood furniture, machine made is preferred.
- ✓ Handmade means hand tools. Compared to machine-made, handmade is not as accurate, resulting in ill-fitted and weak joints.
- ✓ The precision of machine-made outdoor furniture ensures the accuracy of mortise-and-tenon joints (see diagram). These joints are often reinforced with high-quality hardware (brass or Stainless Steel Fittings) or wooden dowels and weather-resistant glue. This is the foundation of sturdy, long-lasting furniture that is able to withstand

the stresses of continuously changing climates.



- ✓ It is also important that the wood has been properly kiln dried to prevent cracking and warping. It is unlikely that a cheaper product would have endured this vital step.
- ✓ If the sales representative is unsure about the mortise-and-tenon joinery or whether the wood has been kiln dried, or cut by machinery, this is probably a good indication that neither of these steps have been taken in the manufacturing and construction.
- ✓ Ensure that the hardware being used is stainless steel or brass as this prevents rusting and tarnishing.
- ✓ Examine the thickness of the wood, the number of slats on the chairs, the joinery, the hardware as well as any folding mechanisms, to make sure they are strong enough to function properly. All of these aspects of the construction directly impact the longevity of the furniture.

5. How do you Care for and Maintain Outdoor Wood Furniture?

- ✓ One of the benefits of choosing wooden, outdoor furniture is that it is relatively easy to care for and maintain.
- ✓ You can clean teak and yellow balau by scrubbing with soft nylon-bristle brush with soap and water.
- ✓ There are also Wood cleaner and sealer in the market designed to clean outdoor wood furniture and preserved its natural color. We recommend Semco Wood Sealer and Feron's Wood Preservative.
- ✓ Most manufacturers recommend using oil based sealers to preserve the natural color of the wood by applying a coat of sealer to the surface every year. But make sure the wood is completely dry before applying the sealer, otherwise moisture trapped within the wood may cause black spots (mildew) to appear after oiling.
- ✓ However, this sealing process is not necessary with teak and yellow balau as their natural oils help protect it from rotting and insects. Therefore, with teak and yellow balau, you can let it weather to a silver-gray and it still maintains its integrity.
- ✓ You should never use a pressure washer on outdoor wood furniture to clean it, as it can cause the grain to open and become coarse, jeopardizing the integrity of the wood.
- ✓ With quality teak and yellow balau furniture, storage through the winter is not necessary as these woods are durable enough to be left out year round.