

MERBAU

(Insia Bijuga)

Merbau is a popular hardwood derived largely from areas in South East Asia, Papua New Guinea, the Pacific islands, and northern Queensland. With its high degree of natural durability and strength it is used externally in engineering, construction and marine applications. Merbau is a versatile wood product. It is utilised for larger-scale projects and general construction, along with common use for outdoor settings and barbeque trolleys, and for joinery, flooring and fitting purposes. As it turns well and responds to hand tools it can be applied to more specialised work, such as cabinet making, musical instruments, boat building, carving and tool handles.



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

COLOUR

The attractive yellow-orange brown hue of freshly cut heartwood deepens or reddens with ageing. This contrasts markedly with the merbau sapwood, which is white, pale yellow or buff coloured. If left untreated, the sapwood is susceptible to lyctid borer attack. Beyond that, merbau is quite resistant to termites and seasons well with kiln or air-drying, exhibiting only a low degrade and very little shrinkage or movement. The grain of merbau can vary but it is usually interlocked or wavy, with a coarse but even texture, often prized for its attractiveness on backsawn material.

DENSITY

1150KG/m³ Seasoned: 860KG/m³

GRAIN

Grain is straight to interlocked. Texture is coarse, with a moderate natural luster.

STRENGTH

S1 unseasoned; SD1 seasoned.

STRUCTURAL RATINGS

F11, F14, F17, F22, (unseasoned), F14, F17, F22, F27, (seasoned)

HARDNESS (JANKA)

8.5kN (Seasoned) & 7.6kN (Unseasoned)

TERMITE RESISTANCE

Resistant

SHRINKAGE TO 12% MC

2.6% (tangential); 1.2% (radial).

DURABILITY ABOVE GROUND

Very High – More than 40 Years

DURABILITY IN GROUND

Moderate – 5-15 Years

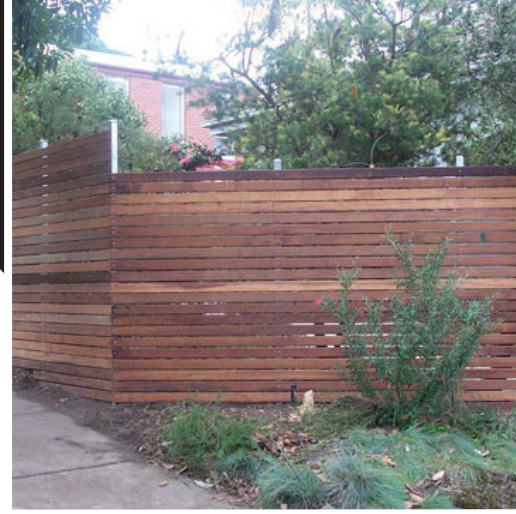
WORKING PROPERTIES

Merbau takes well to paint, stain and polish, however the finish can sometimes be affected by gum bleed-through or oily patches. Its vessels also contain a yellow substance that stains textiles and concrete. It turns well and is relatively easy to work with hand tools, though it can be variable when it comes to machining. It will generally cut cleanly but there may be some blunting or gumming effect on the cutting edges. Merbau tends to split unless pre-bored, but holds fastenings well.

USES

Merbau spans a variety of uses in the fields of engineering, construction, marine and furnishings, both for the indoors and outside. It has been utilised for infrastructure projects including cross arms, bridge building, piles, sleepers, posts, wharves and mining timbers. In the construction context merbau is used in framing, decking, treads and other general needs. Many boats, particularly the decks, are made of merbau, as are a variety of vats, musical instruments and tool handles. As a furniture material merbau is prominent in outdoor settings and barbeque trolleys, as well as being valued for turning, paneling, joinery, shop fitting, cabinet making, parquet flooring, carving, veneer, counter and bench tops.

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