

Antique Teak



ANTICO CADORE
The magic of time, the art of wooden flooring.



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then serenely placed his hands on the wood,
almost caressing it.*

And said goodbye.”

Thailand, land of teak.

Thailand is a magical place, and for some time now, a leading tourist destination. Visitors can admire all the lights, colours, and fragrances of its capital: the Bangkok of temples (*wat*) with its giant golden Buddhas, the Bangkok of canals with its picturesque floating markets. Between a bowl of *tom yam*, a delicious fish and vegetable soup, and a glass of *Singha*, the local beer, tourists make the rounds of its main sights. Ammira Ayutthaya, the capital of Thailand from 1350 to 1764 and one of the most flourishing cities in Indochina, lets them out the gorgeous heritage that Buddhism has left throughout the country.

What visitors to Thailand find most striking is the explosion of colours (decorations, flowers, clothes) and the extraordinary architecture, with its bulbous spires (*prangs*, symbols of the Buddhist paradise) and its multi-tiered roofs, a traditional stylistic trait that was introduced in the era when Ayuthhaya was the kingdom's capital.

The architecture - which strikes awe into anyone seeing it for the first time - dates back to the period when Rama Chulalongkorn was on the throne. Under his reign, the country gradually formed closer ties with Europe, slavery was abolished, a new legal code introduced, and many political, military, and trading relationships were forged with the leading Western states. In this era, architectural projects were directed by an Italian engineer, Carlo Allegri, soon joined by other Italian colleagues, who definitely left their mark on the country's artistic development.

But Thailand has many more hidden treasures than just what a tourist can visit. Only getting off the "traditional route" of standard tours does one head inland.

Here, in places less easily glimpsed, people still live in villages or stilt houses; vast forests of teak stretch for miles and miles, hiding the sun from view for travellers

who venture through them. These very tall teak trees, with their gigantic leaves, form the region's "skin" and are one of the country's primary sources of income. The teak trade is now subject to stringent monitoring and regulation, in order to avoid the kind of uncontrolled deforestation that damages the environment and natural habitats.

Teak is a highly prized material, and like mahogany from the Amazon, rosewood from Indonesia, and afromosia from sub-Saharan Africa, is in great demand on the market. That's why teak plantations have also



been created in many different tropical countries; the advantage is that specific local factors give the wood different kinds of grains that are always beautiful and unique. The inherent characteristics of this material make it appealing for interior decor, architectural claddings, and the nautical world; its beautiful grain and deep brown colour are perfectly suited to the modern or classic designs of the contemporary furniture market.

One ought to note that teak reaches our shores after a truly painstaking search and an unusual transport process. The logs must be sawn and drilled, so that chains can be inserted to drag them through the forest.

To Western eyes, the spectacle of this timber being transported is always an amazing one. Since Westerners are used to machines, they are often spellbound by the sight of elephants pulling the chains with their tusks to drag the logs to their proper destination.

These imposing animals are highly intelligent, and they are domesticated in semi-free conditions. The importance of elephants in Thailand's daily life can be grasped, for example, from the stone or colourful lacquered effigies that often adorn holy places.

This is the other side of Thailand, no less magical than its resort destinations: the vibrantly coloured land of teak, to which Antico Cadore is pleased to dedicate this special.



Teak in the ancient world (from India to Egypt).

Teak is an extremely durable wood that is very fashionable in our day, continuing to reflect the great popularity it enjoyed in ancient times.



This observation seems to be backed up by a significant discovery made by archeologists from UCLA and the University of Delaware, a few years ago.

Their expedition brought to light a large number of artefacts related to a sea trade route between India to Egypt during the Roman Empire. These excavations were performed in Berenike, a long-abandoned Egyptian port on the Red Sea, near the border with Sudan. Among the buried ruins of Roman-era buildings, the group discovered a vast amount of teak, a wood native to today's India and Myanmar, but which were not present in Egypt, the rest of Africa, or Europe.

This teak, which has been dated to the first century,

seems to come from the port of Berenike. According to the researchers, the precious wood was used for the hulls of trading vessels, and when the ships became damaged beyond all repair, it would be recycled as a building material. The exceptional nature of this discovery is underlined by Willeke Wendrich, assistant professor of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at UCLA and co-director of the project. With regard to it, she stated that *“these findings go a long way toward improving our understanding of the way in which a whole range of exotic cargo moved into Europe during antiquity”*. It is a well-known fact that traders brought spices and other exotic cargo into Europe, and that they travelled by both sea and land. *“When cost and political conflict prevented overland transport,”* added her fellow co-director Steven Sidebotham, a history professor at the University of Delaware, *“ancient mariners took to the Red Sea. The route between India and Egypt seems to have been even more productive than we ever thought. The Silk Road gets a lot of attention as a trade route, but we’ve found a wealth of evidence indicating that sea trade between India and Egypt was also important for transporting exotic cargo, and it may have even served as a link with the Far East”*.

And the discovery of teak points to this very hypothesis: *“You’d expect to find woods native to Egypt,”* Sidebotham explained, *“but the largest amount of wood we found at Berenike was teak.”*





Teak (profile of a prized wood).



Botanical name: *Tectona grandis*.

Family: Verbenaceae.

Trade name: teck (France); teak/teack (Italy, Germany, UK) and teca (Spain).
Other names: mai sak, pahi (Burma); jati sak (Thailand); djati, gia thi, sak, maisak (Indonesia); kedire, kembal, semarang (Java); sagwan, tekku, kyun, sagon, sagun, tegina, tadi (India).

Distribution: native to the monsoon forests of India, Myanmar (Burma) and Southeast Asia (Thailand), teak is now cultivated in many tropical countries. It has also been introduced to West and East Africa, as well as the Lesser Antilles. The natural forests of India, Indonesia, Java, Cambodia, and Laos, after depletion in colonial times, are now undergoing steady reforestation. High-quality teak comes almost exclusively from the forests of Burma.

Plantation teak, however, may come from many different countries (Indonesia, Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, Ghana, even Central America), but since

the trees are younger it is not preferred for quality work.

General description: the wood has various colours: when fresh, the sapwood is light yellow and the heartwood is a deep brown, at times quite dark.

Burmese teak, on the other hand, is a golden brown, without markings, but most other kinds of teak are deep brown with darker markings. Indian teak is streaked with a straight grain and with a quite fine texture. It feels oily to the touch and sometimes has white glistening deposits. Teak from mountainous regions also has clearly visible growth rings; these rings may be irregular at times, or indented by longitudinal channels, usually not very wide, but close together.

When fresh, the wood has the fragrance of fresh leather.

It weighs between 610- 690 kg/m³, on average 650 kg/m³, with a relative density of 65.



Mechanical characteristics: teak is a medium-density hardwood, with a high crush strength, medium bending strength, low stiffness and resistance to shock.

It is fissile and brittle, with excellent dimensional stability. It is acid and flame resistant. It has moderate steam bending characteristics.

Seasoning: drying depends on the method used to make the tree die. There is the option of girdling, a procedure that causes the tree's death while it is standing and makes the logs easier to float. Wood from trees subjected to this process dries slowly, though without real complications.

Wood from trees that have not been initially girdled has a rather high relative humidity, and must be protected against a rapid drying process that could easily lead to cracks and warping, though overall shrinkage movement is low.

In both cases, however, after reaching ambient humidity, the timber is very stable.

Workability: blades can rapidly become blunt when sawing this timber. Even wood that might seem softer has a high silica content, making it necessary to use special steel tools, hard metal plates, or tungsten carbide cutters. Pre-drilling is required for nailing.

Due to the resins that give it its oily appearance, it is best to glued on freshly planed or sanded surfaces. It stains well, and can be given a good finish, especially with oil-based products.

It is particularly important to take protective measures against the fine machine dust produced when working with teak.

Durability: excellent; not susceptible to insect attack. It is extremely resistant to preservative treatment.

Uses: due to the special characteristics described above, teak is used for all kinds of applications:

fine furniture, cabinet-making, garden furniture, ships and boats, flooring, walkways, toys, sculptures, vehicle bottoms and walls, structures exposed to the elements, pool decking, weight-bearing structures, etc.

Due to its high acid resistance, it is also used for chemical vats, fume ducts, and laboratory surfaces. It is also sliced for plywood and decorative veneers. In the specific field of shipbuilding, its high stability in varying humidity, ease of crafting, and excellent seasonability (even in difficult conditions) have led it to be used for claddings, railings, hatches, etc.

Since this wood has been widely employed for quite some time, in a vast range of applications, it has been possible to outline specific characteristics

related to a given area of origin, so that the most suitable type can be chosen for each project. Therefore, the best teak for structural work and carpentry is known to come from Burma (Moulmein teak, Rangoon teak), followed by Thailand (may sak, sak) and India (Malabar teak); this last variety featuring lovely variegations of colour. Then comes teak from Java (Java teak, giati, jati) which is oilier-looking, heavier, and grainier: it is more difficult to work with (due in part to the higher silica content).

Java teak also has less visible growth rings.

Due to the well-merited popularity of teak, now as in the past, many broad-leaved exotic species that bear some vague resemblance to it are marketed under this name, even though they lack the technical characteristics that make teak so sought-after and valued.





Old teak and antique teak (notes for a study).



“The monk came to take leave of an old friend...the wood that until a few days before, had been part of his temple. He came up to the planks that we had so carefully and respectfully removed, looked at the pillars that still bore a patina of old green lacquer, then serenely placed his hands on the wood, almost caressing it.

And said goodbye. Only then could we load the lumber onto the rusty trucks and drive it to the warehouse.

It was a moving experience. Every day, I find myself looking at those planks, those beams and columns so neatly stacked in the Antico Cadore warehouse, and think of how they are imbued with stories, ceremonies, and centuries. And I can never make up my mind to use them.

Perhaps I never will.”

Roberto Faneo





*Even today, elephants do all the work:
moving the logs, clearing roads and paths in the tropical forest...
The holes at the sides of the log, near where it was cut, serve to anchor
the chains that are pulled by these huge beasts.*



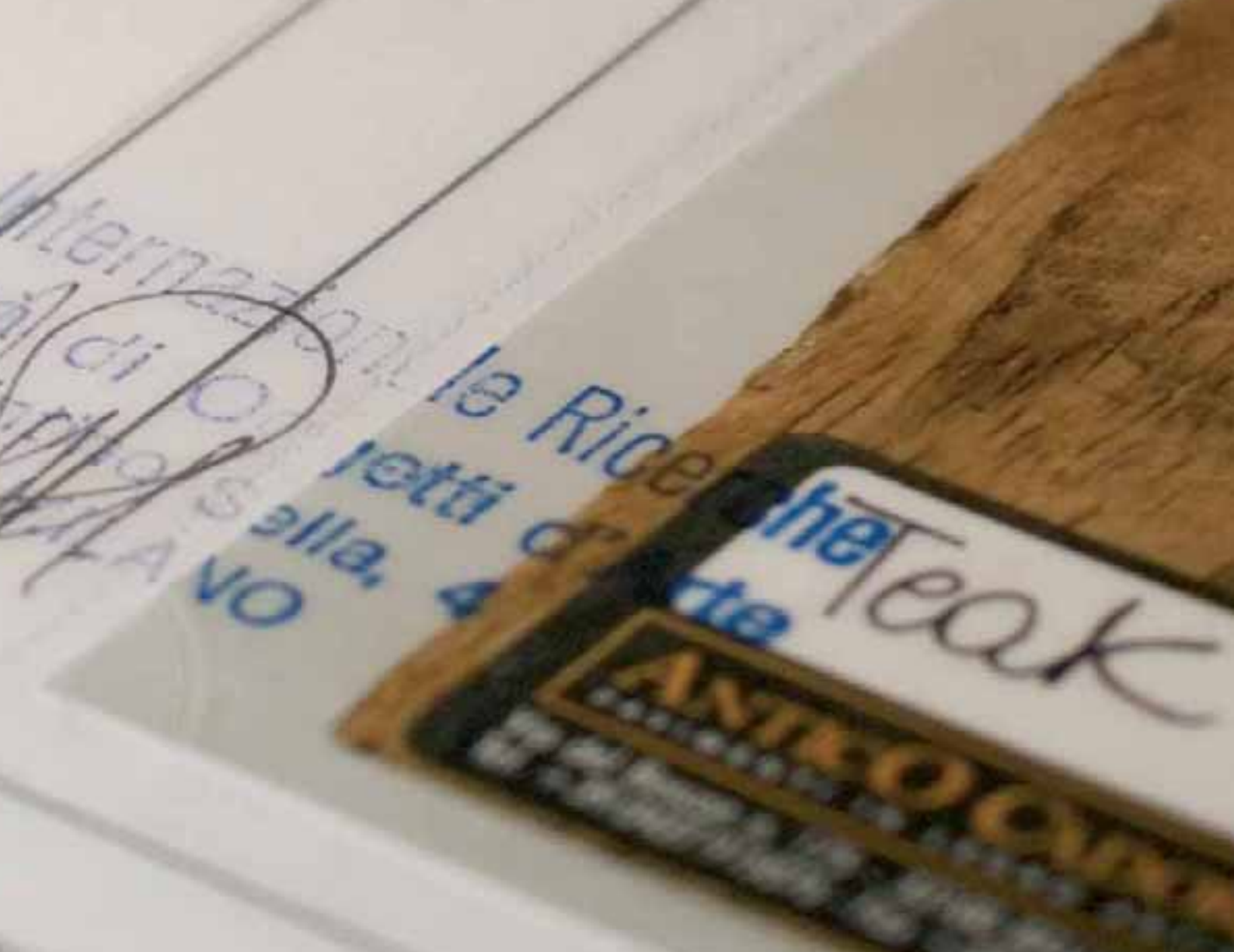




The restoration of teak

Antique teak almost always requires careful restoration to be turned into flooring. In many cases, one can see the traces of earlier work: even from many decades ago. These signs of history should be thought of as strong points, guaranteeing the age of the wood employed.





**ISTITUTO INTERNAZIONALE RICERCHE
AUTENTICITÀ DI OGGETTI D'ARTE**



una sezione del "Museo d'Arte e Scienza"
Via S. Saba, 4 (Piazza Cavotti) - 20121 Milano

Certificato Nr. 100-0000
Data: 14.03.2008
Luogo: Milano

Certifichiamo che per l'oggetto d'arte rappresentato nella foto a lato
non sono state registrate nell'anno € 20

Metodo di datazione: Metodo C-14 (Radiocarbonio) spettrometro IR



L'autenticità dell'opera è stata verificata con il metodo C-14 (Radiocarbonio) spettrometro IR

- Autenticità dell'opera d'arte
- Autenticità dell'opera d'arte
- Autenticità dell'opera d'arte

Per informazioni:

Nome:
Luogo:
Telefono:

Certified antique

(when science vouches for authenticity).

Antico Cadore has always believed in genuine quality, the kind found in certified products. That's why, for some time now, it has had its fine wood scientifically dated by Milan's Museum of Art and Science.

This institution adopts the spectroscopic technique patented by Dr Gottfried Matthaes, the best-known and most reliable scientific method currently available. Spectroscopy is based on analyzing the chemical decay of specific molecules. This way, a computer can determine the type of wood and its age based on the different frequencies.

The last two datings we asked the Museum to perform were for TEAK and OAK; the spectrographic readings shown in figures A and B showed that the teak dates back approximately 250 years, and the oak, no less than 600 - 800 years.

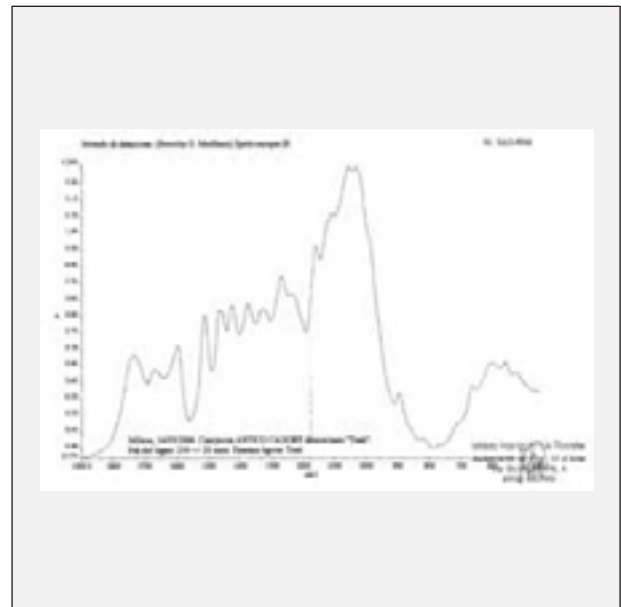
Antico Cadore vouches for the genuine value of its antique flooring by attaching a **Certificate of Scientific Authenticity**.

This is a special guarantee of truly special flooring: after centuries and centuries, this wood still retains all of its magic, and Antico Cadore brings it to the modern living space.

Oak



Teak



Made from ancient teak...(the Antico Cadore range)



Years of research in the areas where teak has its origins (Southeast Asia) and archaeological diggings have brought to light sunken pilework and boats over 10,000 years old, evidence that teak has been used since the remote past, when it was already appreciated for its enormous potential in terms of beauty and durability.



Antico Cadore has organized on-site work teams to locate and reclaim wood from demolitions, renovations, even natural disasters: after the earthquake that struck the island of Java in 2003, for instance, we recovered an entire temple, complete with ceilings, finely inlaid beams, octagonal columns adorned with splendid capitals, and naturally, the original antique flooring.

We use old teak to create beautiful, sturdy flooring that can add cachet and personality even to very large rooms.







Initial restoration and cleaning are performed at the source, under the supervision of master carpenters. The teak is then shipped: beams and especially valuable pieces are wrapped in hand-sewn jute bags for protection, then everything is loaded into freight containers and shipped. After about a month they reach Venice and then Antico Cadore.



Vibrant and gratifying, antique flooring made from teak is extremely comfortable and creates a warm ambience in any setting.







After careful inspection according to its type, the material is selected for use as Antique Teak Prima Patina, Antique Teak, outdoor Antique Teak, and now, double-layer flooring. The final restoration and finishing are carried out by master carpenters at our Belluno facility who use only materials (glue, varnish, wax, putty) that meet stringent organic standards.

Due to its exceptional strength, teak is perfect even for outdoor flooring exposed to the elements, or difficult areas such as bathrooms, kitchens, or stairs.





Antico Cadore
is also:

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ECHI DEL  PASSATO

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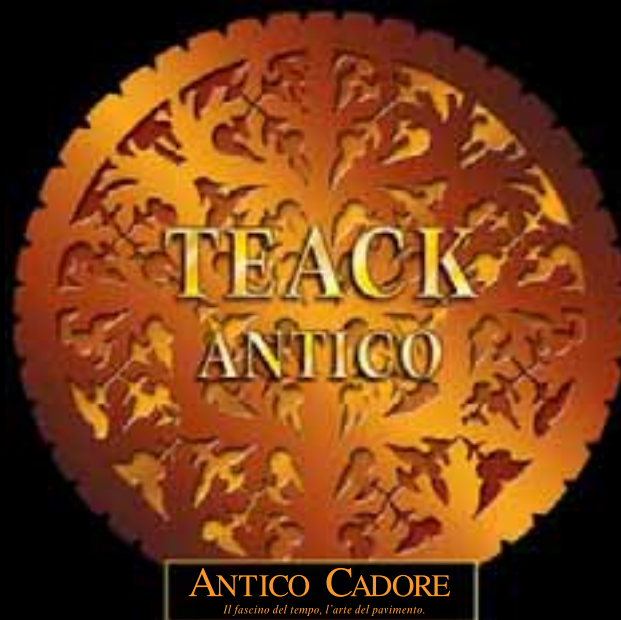
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