

# DeepStream Designs

www.DeepStreamDesigns.com

## Mariner Planter Care Instructions

Your planters are built with marine-anodized aluminum legs and solid Jatoba, Lyptus, Cumaru, or Ipe wood planks.

The wood has been finished with Thompson's WaterSeal Waterproofer Plus Clear Wood Protector, which darkens the wood while adding protective oils to minimize water and sun damage. Just as with teak, these woods will go "grey" in time if not sealed, and the planks will take on a more uniform appearance.

To renew the finish, let wood dry after washing with plain soap and water before reapplying the same Thompson's finish with a clean rag. After sealing the wood, wipe the leg down with MEK. The whole process takes about 10 minutes. **Afterwards, be sure to dispose of oily rags per the package instructions to prevent spontaneous combustion.**

**NEVER USE VARNISH OR POLYURETHANE to refinish the wood.** (See page 4 to find out why.)

If you wish to renew the natural color of the wood after it has faded, use a low-power pressure washer to quickly bring back the original look (see photos on page 5).

To clean the aluminum, **do NOT use acids**, including vinegar, **caustic agents** such as ammonia, **or abrasives** such as Soft Scrub or Comet. **Also avoid contact with de-icing chemicals.** Just mild dish soap and water, or products such as Simple Green, Formula 409, etc. will clean the aluminum as well as the wood. If you get sealer, paint, markers, or the like on the legs, MEK on a clean rag is the best solvent for heavy duty clean up. Wear gloves when applying MEK. Mineral spirits are also safe to use.

**NOTE: Water may wash out red color from the wood for the first few weeks, leaving stains on the deck below. Phosphoric acid will remove these stains easily from pavers, cement, and porcelain tile, but will quickly eat into the anodizing on the aluminum legs. We recommend that you move the planters first, if possible, and use care. Use MEK early and often in the initial months to prevent stains on the aluminum.**

(More details and photos follow.)

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## ABOUT THE WOOD USED IN OUR MARINER PLANTERS

It is the character of wood - warm and sophisticated, yet rugged - that makes it our favorite material for our planters. Getting to work with it in the shop is a very rewarding and almost spiritual experience. Wood's warmth of color and feel, the figuring of its grain, and its varied organic nature give each piece its own unique identity in an increasingly uniform world. However, if you seek perfect uniformity over the character of wood then we have a myriad of other options for you.

While all of the characteristics of the woods we use make it beautiful for indoor applications and rugged enough for the outdoors, it is not for everyone or every project. The planks we use are solid  $\frac{3}{4}$ " flooring grade hardwoods that are appropriate for ship and deck construction. This planking has more wonderful character than you will find in thin, uniform cabinetry-grade veneers of similar wood. This includes shallow chips, small knots, burrs, interlocking and wooly grain.

We revere wood, the trees and the natural environment that it comes from, and we never waste it. If it is structurally sound and aesthetically pleasing, we use it. Non-structural flaws are part of the natural character of the wood that we cherish in our planters. Because we have sized our planters around standard plank lengths, cut-off pieces are minimal and all trimmings and sawdust are taken to a wood recycler. If you have enough appropriate  $\frac{3}{4}$ " unfinished solid wood left over from a flooring project we can probably use it!

While these woods are chosen for their stability in both wet and sunny environments, wood is still a "living" entity that changes on a daily basis. We use tongue and groove construction to minimize warping. Each plank comes from a different part of the tree or from different trees, so each will have its own "life." Ipe, one of the longest lasting woods, is especially hard, fibrous, and difficult to work.

I have designed our proprietary legs specifically to handle the dimensional changes that wood undergoes as it swells in humid environments and shrinks in dry or sunny locations. It is the design of the leg that channels the power wood exerts when it expands absorbing water, which is the same force that causes the rapid deterioration of wood planters that use screwed, bolted, or nailed construction. Stone has been quarried for centuries by wetting wood dowels and using the woods expansive strength cracking off huge blocks. You can also think of buckled wood floor. To fit the leg, the wood has to be machined using high-speed carbide cutters and scoring; however, wood can still chip where it has been machined at 90° angles leaving minor cosmetic chips, especially in Ipe.

Even though we handcraft these planters in humid Miami, you may find that the top plank swells upwards over the top of the leg when exposed to rain. This is normal, but you may modify it easily if you like. We urge you to wait until the wood has seasoned and stabilized over time before doing so, as you may find it shrinks back during the dry season. The easiest way we have found to plane the wood down is to use an inexpensive Microplane® or Sureform® rasp available at any hardware store. Carefully plane the top edge down to almost flush before finishing with 120- grit sandpaper. If you want to make the wood absolutely flush, you must remove the plank from the leg to avoid damaging the leg by removing two fasteners, but with every change in the weather it will continue to shrink or grow.

Occasionally a plank may split over time and, while this is not a material defect, nor will it reduce

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the planter strength, if it diminishes the aesthetic appeal for you, call us with the exact measurement between the legs, accurate to 1/64", and we can supply a replacement plank that can be inserted in our modular design.

Similarly, if a leg should be badly damaged, we can supply a new leg for a reasonable cost provided you return the damaged leg to us for recycling. **It is imperative that neither acid nor abrasives be used to clean the aluminum leg.** MEK available at any hardware store paint department is the best cleaner to use for stubborn stains and waterproofing buildup.

We drill and tap the holes in the leg before anodizing for the greatest corrosion protection. When the leg is anodized, electricity passes through the solution to chemically bond and protect the leg. The legs are hung in the anodizing solution by the screw holes to give an even cosmetic appearance to the outside of the leg that will be visible when the planter is in use. It is not uncommon to see a "halo" effect around the screw hole. This is not considered a defect and it will not be seen in an assembled planter.



Even without any protective finish, tropical hardwoods may last decades. Our planter design eliminates contact between the wood and wet dirt or standing water. These woods are photo-reactive and change color with exposure to the elements.

**Even with treated wood, water will wash out red color from wood and leave stains for the first few weeks. Phosphoric acid will remove these stains easily from pavers, cement, and porcelain tile, but will quickly eat into the anodizing on the aluminum legs. So move the planters first and use care. Use MEK early and often in the initial months to prevent stains on the aluminum.**



Just as with teak, other woods will go "grey" in time if not sealed, and the planks will take on a more uniform appearance. Sealer will darken the wood while adding protective oils to minimize water and sun damage. Your planter has been finished with Thompson's WaterSeal Waterproof Plus Clear Wood Protector. For more information, see our Mariner Planter Care Instructions.

Above: 18-month-old Lyptus planters sealed with one coat of Thompson's WaterSeal, then allowed to weather fade to a silver-grey.

Left: One-year-old Lyptus planter maintained every three to six months with a coat of Thompson's WaterSeal.

# Wood Finish Options

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With decades of yacht operation and wood refinishing in our background, DeepStream has selected two waterproof finish options with UV filters for hardwood panels. We have more under long-term testing. The finishes we use can easily be reapplied in under 10 minutes by unskilled labor as soon as needed, so that you can keep your planter looking fresh, should you decide not to let your wood go naturally grey, as teak does.



***Varnish or Polyurethane is not a viable finish option*** for a number of important reasons, easily seen in this photograph.

Good varnish application requires skill, experience, and time. It is evident that the person who varnished this planter had none, as is can be seen in the splotches of varnish yellowing on the aluminum legs.

Even with experience, the sharp contact lines between the leg and the wood, as well as the Zephyr banding on this model, make it impossible to do an acceptable job unless the planter is disassembled.

Varnish, even blends with UV filters, needs constant maintenance. Used outdoors, it must be sanded and

recoated with three coats every 6 to 8 weeks in Southern and Southwestern states after building up an initial coat eight layers thick.

It is impossible to get an even layer of varnish near the metal contact lines. These areas will “lift” with water intrusion and soon blister, leading to rapid deterioration.

Even if you start with a factory-applied varnish finish, and could properly varnish with out disassembly, the time to tape off the legs for protection, sand, and properly varnish just one coat on a planter would take hours, and it would need to be stripped and completely redone within a couple of years.

Additionally, planters should be varnished inside and out, as a barrier coat on just one side makes the planks more prone to warping due to differential wetting and drying.

Eventually, left to nature, all the varnish on this planter will evaporate or peel off, once again leaving the noble look of aged hardwood. At that point, a light power washing at 1800 PSI, and even a light scrubbing with a green kitchen scrub pad will provide a fresh and uniform surface for properly recoating with an oil-based water-proofing finish.



## PRESSURE WASHING

To restore faded wood planks to their original color, use a low-power pressure washer to quickly remove the faded outer coating. Once the renewed wood is dry, you may apply a fresh coat of Thompson's to maintain the fresh look. Alternatively, you may allow it to fade to gray naturally.

### PHOTOS:

(Top left) A 24-month-old Lyptus planter that was originally finished with Thompson's Water Seal, but which had no maintenance for over nine months.

(Middle left) Pressure washing the planks to bring back the natural wood finish.

(Bottom left) The newly cleaned wood looks like new.

(Bottom right) A 30-month-old Lyptus planter that was never finished with any sealer quickly faded to a classic silver gray. Pressure washing the planks quickly brings back the original reddish-brown color.

