



Vitex

(*Vitex cofassus* - *Verbenaceae*) also known locally as *Vasa* or *New Guinea Teak*

Very durable; it is used for sills, stair-treads, piling, decking, bridging or fences. Typically a little greasy or oily to touch it is dark yellowish-brown to dark olive-brown with slight lustre or sheen due to the oils present. Vitex finishes better than Kwila and is a little easier to work with. It is a stable and strong timber that has been used throughout the Pacific region for generations. It is often compared with Teak, and thus the potential for Vitex in marine applications are obvious.

A comparison to true Teak (*Tectona grandis*) is not unwarranted: Teak screws and nails extremely well, turns well, and has earned an excellent reputation in cabinets, furniture, joinery and boat-building. In recent times Teak has become expensive. The lower comparative price of Vitex will see it used much more readily in the future for purposes normally reserved for Teak.

PROPERTIES

<u>Density</u>	700 – 800kg/m ³ @12% m.c
<u>Colour</u>	Pale yellowish-brown to greyish, olive-brown.
<u>Texture</u>	Fine and even; slightly lustrous.
<u>Grain</u>	Sometimes straight but usually interlocked.
<u>Figure</u>	Distinct striped or ribbon figure on quarter sawn faces.
<u>Durability</u>	Durable.
<u>Permeability</u>	Heartwood, impermeable to pressure impregnation.
<u>Lyctid-borer</u>	Resistant.

WORKABILITY

<u>General</u>	Good working and finishing properties, where there are no grain irregularities.
<u>Sawing</u>	Readily sawn.
<u>Planing</u>	Good planing characteristics with the grain.
<u>Blunting</u>	Low.
<u>Boring</u>	Excellent characteristics.
<u>Turning</u>	Very good characteristics finishing with sharp arrises.
<u>Nailing</u>	Nails well, pre-drilling advisable to prevent splitting on board ends.
<u>Gluing</u>	Care required due to natural greasiness of wood.
<u>Finishing</u>	Works and sands to a smooth finish; takes an excellent polish.

MECHANICAL PROPERTIES

<u>Strength</u>	SD3 (seasoned).
<u>Structural</u>	Grade F27 (select grade).
<u>Toughness</u>	(Izod) 7.3J (seasoned), 15J (unseasoned).
<u>Hardness</u>	(Janka) 5.6kN (seasoned), 5.1kN (unseasoned).
<u>Max. Crush</u>	64 MPa (seasoned), 42 MPa (unseasoned).
<u>Elasticity</u>	14 GPa (seasoned), 12 GPa (unseasoned).
<u>Rupture</u>	133 MPa (seasoned), 80 MPa (unseasoned).

SEASONING

<u>General</u>	Seasons slowly, but well, with little degrade. Preferable to preliminary air dry prior to kiln drying. A high humidity equalizing treatment should be applied at end of drying cycle.
<u>Movement</u>	Medium.
<u>Shrinkage</u>	Medium.