

## **French White Oak**

Northern European White Oak grows north of the Alps mostly in France, Germany and Austria. During the last ice age the number of varieties of oaks, and maples in Europe were significantly reduced as they were unable to migrate over the Alps into warmer climates. Only a few subspecies survived under the ice shield. Therefore, a significantly reduced tree species remained to cross pollinate in Northern Europe. Contrastly, North America more than 100 subspecies of Oak populated the mountain ranges from North to South cross pollinating. Thus, French White Oaks has less color variations and higher tannin content than any oak species globally.



French White Oaks are grown in forests that have been a model for sustainable hardwood management for over 300 years. French White Oak trees are only harvested when they are fully mature after 150+ years! The harvesting is done by select unobtrusive cuttings.

French White Oaks are highly sought by furniture makers, wine barrel makers, leather makers, and lumber companies. All of these users are competing for the limited lumber. The name “French Oak” is derived from the preferred use as a wine barrel material. The French White Oak is very hard, has a tight grain, low porosity, and a high tannin content. The high level of tannin allows the barreled wine to age by eating up the oxygen and gives the wine a sought-after taste and aroma. The tannin is used by the leather industry as a natural leather softener.

For flooring the logs are generally “Live Sawn” in a horizontal manner, and naturally air dried for 12 - 24 months. Prior to production the planks are slowly kiln dried for 30 days to enhance the stability and bring the moisture level to recommended indoor levels. We also use the high tannin content of the French White Oaks to accelerate the aging process to give different natural colors to the flooring planks without using any artificial coloring or staining.

Instead of cutting for the highest yield of grad lumber, the live sawn cutting method results in a variety of stunning distinctive grain patterns within each individual board. Tight straight quarter grain, medullar flecks along the edges and cathedral grains are all part of the same plank. Live Sawn planks will show all the idiosyncrasies of the log, including knots, and mineral deposits.

French White Oaks are the oldest most versatile flooring material. Each board is unique with its own character, and always remains timeless. French White Oaks have been used for centuries in castles, monasteries, chalets, villas as well as contemporary modern living. French White Oaks shows off the best characteristics of real wood floors. Over the years, French White Oak matures from rich amber to a natural deep golden brown tone, that tis timeless and transcends infinite decors.