



Fine Antique Wood Flooring Since 1976

ANTIQUE HEART PINE 101

How to Buy Antique Heart Pine: Not all Heart Pine is "All Heart"

America's interest in historic preservation has resulted in a tremendous increase in popularity of reclaimed woods. Independence Hall, Jefferson's Monticello, the Brooklyn Bridge and homes from the 18th and 19th centuries are just a few examples where antique heart pine has stood the test of time.

Buying the antique floor of your dreams can be time consuming and often, downright confusing. Because there are vast differences in terminology, grades, pricing and quality, this guide will prove helpful in making sure your dream floor comes true.

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN SHOPPING

1) Is the wood from the longleaf pine?

Longleaf pine is the best source of antique heart pine. Some companies sell Southern yellow pine, loblolly, shortleaf pine, slash or a combination and call it heart pine. Although they *are* pine and they have some heartwood, antique longleaf pine, especially the River Recovered® wood, is stronger, more durable, and more stable and has a richer patina and color.

2) Is it truly antique? Or how old was the tree when harvested?

"Old-growth" does NOT mean antique. The only way to get heartwood is over time. According to the USDA Forest Service book Longleaf Pine; it takes 200 years for a longleaf pine to become mostly heartwood and to be considered antique. Scientists say any wood from a tree less than 200 years old is "new heart pine." A 75-year-old tree will average only 30% heart, and even a 130-year-old tree yields wood that is not as hard or rich in color as antique heart pine.

Goodwin's heart pine is from trees 200 to 500 years old.

3) Is it 100% heartwood?

A tree has both heartwood and sapwood. Heartwood is prized because its tight grain means it is stronger and more stable. In other words, more is better. Less heart, which means more sapwood, results in softer wood that can be scratched and dented. Grades with 50 percent sapwood may still be called heart pine. Heart wood hardness and strength comes from its resin, and longleaf has more resin than the other 200+ species of pine.

Goodwin's River-Recovered® Heart Pine is always 100% heart





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4) What makes Longleaf heartwood the prettiest wood?

The grain of Goodwin's antique heart pine yields a rich, red color thanks to the resin and is unlike the usual oak pattern found in 75% of homes. One hundred percent heartwood means the color will be more consistent. Even 98 percent heart will have yellow sapwood streaks that produce a strong/obvious color variation.

5) What grain patterns of antique wood are available?

Three distinct grain patterns are sawn by The Goodwin Company:

Select grain is the most popular grain pattern seen in wood floors. Select grain is achieved by sawing flat through the log and results in a blend of both arching or flame grain pattern and vertical grain in planks up to 10 inches wide.

Note: When comparison-shopping, you may want to review the percentage of vertical grain included in the plainsawn product. Goodwin provides a high percentage of vertical grain—or about 50 to 85 percent in most plainsawn projects.

Vertical grain is a pinstriped pattern achieved along the full length of the board by using what is called the quartersawing process. To obtain this formal grain pattern, a more intricate sawing method is used which does incur some waste. Vertical grain is a bit more costly than plainsawn wood.

Note: Goodwin provides 100 percent vertical grain, with growth rings no more than 45 degrees perpendicular from the face.

Curly grain is an extremely rare, natural burl grain. This unique and luminous grain pattern is found in about one out of every 300-400 logs. It is perfect for a stunning conversation piece, inlays on flooring and cabinetry, or other areas of interest in your project.

6) What is the hardness of antique longleaf heart pine?

Our antique longleaf heart pine has a hardness on the Janka scale of 1225, which is comparable to red oak (1290). Reclaimed Wood, because of its age, generally has a higher Janka rating than virgin wood of the same species. The Janka hardness test measures the resistance of a type of wood to withstand denting and wear.

7) Are there at least 6 growth rings per inch?

The more growth rings, the stronger the wood. Each pair of light and dark rings is from one growing season. When pairs of rings are very close to each other it means the tree grew slowly and the wood had time to become dense and strong. Longleaf pine trees usually grew only an inch in diameter every 30 years and lived 400 to 500 years. It's no wonder they are so hard and durable. True antique heart pine has at least 6 growth rings per inch. Four or fewer indicate new growth trees.

Goodwin exceeds industry standards by offering premium grades that have eight or more rings per inch.



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8) *What size and type are the knots?*

Professional standards were last published for heart pine in 1924. After the forests were cleared, they were no longer needed. However, the 1924 specifications allow for knots to be no bigger than 1½ inch in diameter and specify that knots must be sound (not loose or open). Knots are infrequent in better grades of antique heart pine.

Goodwin exceeds 1924 standards with knots no larger than 1-1/4".

9) *Is the wood kiln dried?*

Kiln drying is a process that removes moisture with heat and dehumidification. This provides greater stability in your flooring and reduces problems that can occur after installation. Many companies don't kiln dry because it is too expensive.

Even though wood reclaimed from old buildings has been 'on the job' for hundreds of years, it still must be kiln dried when milled again. Salvaged wood can take on moisture content as buildings are dismantled and insect larvae may be present. Air-drying or "age drying" is not an acceptable remedy.

Antique heart pine recovered from river bottoms has less moisture content than a newly cut tree, and is more stable because it has been underwater for at least 150 years.

Goodwin properly kiln dries all our wood to ensure your project achieves the highest level of stability.

10) *What about pitch pockets, checking and nail holes?*

Pitch pockets are crystallized resin pockets and should be solid or easily filled. Only pitch pockets of 1/8" or less are allowed in most antique heart pine. Checking (or tiny surface cracks) is natural in antique heart pine due to the high resin content. Checks are easily sanded out after installation and will not be noticeable. Demolition salvage wood usually includes nail holes. Better grades allow nail holes that are no more than ¼ inches and only infrequent on the boards. Demolition heart pine may also include nail staining around the nail holes or on some areas of the boards.

11) *How much extra wood should I order?*

Your installer or flooring manufacturer may ask you to order additional wood (waste) for trimming, special installation or other needs. Sometimes they may order extra in the event some of the delivered wood is not usable. Unfortunately, some companies don't remove defects as thoroughly as others because it increases their yield and costs. Waste can add significant cost to your projects. Use caution when asked by anyone besides your installer to order more than 8 percent waste.

Goodwin guarantees 100 percent usable wood. You save money in the long run.



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12) What milling standards do you use?

When buying flooring, paneling or other products made from fine woods, you want to ensure the company practices careful milling techniques. For example, flooring should be milled tongue and groove in a manner that allows each piece to fit neatly and tightly into the next. Widths should not vary unless you specifically request this type of floor design.

Goodwin precision mills to aid in a quality installation. Our flooring has a nail groove above the tongue and many technical details entailed in a well-made floor.

13) Do you guarantee you will deliver what is specified?

We recommend you use specific terminology when specifying the grade you want for your project (e.g. 100% heartwood). Get your grade in writing to guarantee you get what you specified. Larger, more established manufacturers will spend a great deal of time with you from planning to installation to ensure you get the floor of your dreams.

Goodwin provides detailed Specifications for each wood species offered.

14) Do you handle installation? Can you recommend an installer?

We suggest you review all projects with your professional installer; or we can refer you to the appropriate professional organization. We are more than happy to provide thorough information about installation of Goodwin Company products. Goodwin Company does not install; however, we have technical installation experts on staff and are glad to be of assistance.

15) Can you provide mouldings and stairparts to accent my flooring?

Goodwin provides a complete line of stair parts and architectural millwork, as well as wood for doors, cabinetry, fireplace surrounds and custom furniture.

16) Do you offer custom wood solutions and special requests?

Known for providing the finest grading in the industry, Goodwin is proud to honor custom requests. These can include projects that require specific lengths, colors or grain density as well as those that may need unique historical imperfections. For instance some logs have “cat faces” or scrapes where turpentine was collected on two sides, yet continued to grow. Other clients like marks such as lightning strikes that have healed over. One woodworker designed a massive River Recovered® headboard, in which he was happy to leave the original ax marks and gunshot holes. Yet another designer used the natural river worn edges of a curly grain log to create a George Nakashima-style desk.



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About The Goodwin Company

George Goodwin, a master carpenter and homebuilder, founded the Goodwin Company in 1976. Intending to build his own home, George acquired some longleaf logs a fisherman friend raised from the Suwannee River and the rest is history. The rich red patina and amazing grains of this “underwater” heart pine, as well as the rareness and historical significance, became his passion.

Today Goodwin Company is one of the most well respected, award-winning manufacturers of antique heart pine, cypress and cherry. They are the only company consistently delivering rare River Recovered® antique heart pine and cypress of the highest quality.

Based in Micanopy, Florida, the company provides a full line of superior flooring, millwork and stair parts, along with comprehensive industry knowledge and customer service. They have played instrumental roles in ensuring that antique woods are appreciated and preserved for many generations to come.