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Subject: Finishing Padauk is a pleasure  
Posted by [Bill Epstein](#) on Tue, 21 Nov 2006 16:17:35 GMT  
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I had a third party affirmation of how gorgeous this wood is when I picked up another piece yesterday. The runner who brought it out from the millwork shop at the lumberyard asked, "what is this incredible wood?" It's also cheap. Atleast in my neighborhood. I paid \$24 for a piece 3/4x7x75, S4S. I used Zinsser amber shellac diluted to a 1 Lb. cut and applied with a cotton sock balled up inside a piece of cheesecloth. The amber just slightly deepens the natural tone and makes it a bit browner and redder. I padded on 5 coats and leveled each one with 4-0 steel wool. Then 5 more just left to dry. Finally, I wetted another pad with straight alcohol and very lightly passed it over to level the last coat. There's a natural glow you just don't get with any other finish. I wish you all could see this base in person. My 1 meg pocket camera doesn't begin to show how the patterns and colors seem to be alive. Especially where the router bit revealed the quartered grain. The black top plate will be recessed into the frame supported by the maple blocks. Those little black footers are Gabon Ebony without a hint of grain or other color. That's expensive! But if it's good enough for Yamamoto ....

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Subject: Re: Finishing Padauk is a pleasure  
Posted by [SteveBrown](#) on Wed, 22 Nov 2006 12:54:17 GMT  
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Looks outstanding, Bill!

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Subject: You're the reason dodgeball is being banned....  
Posted by [colinhester](#) on Wed, 22 Nov 2006 14:47:26 GMT  
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you make the rest of us feel inferior and are not helping our self-esteem. If such work continues, we will be forced to contact our local/state/national government officials to stop this obvious attempt at making us feel bad once and for all.

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Subject: Re: Waddayou mean, no Dodgeball? I LUV Dodgeball!  
Posted by [Bill Epstein](#) on Wed, 22 Nov 2006 23:33:29 GMT  
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Besides, anybody can do this kind of thing. If they choose to. All I do is release the beauty that's

already in the wood. All it takes is a router, a chop saw, a few clamps and the finishing materials available in any paint store. In my case in a bedroom. Of course, while making mistakes and ruining wood for over 40 years I've learned a few things, too. You want to see the Wizard? Try Martinelli or Brown. "That ain't workin', money fer nothin' and yer chicks fer free"

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Subject: Here's my try at it.

Posted by [Shane](#) on Thu, 07 Dec 2006 18:33:12 GMT

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Here's a little headphone stand I made one Sat. about a year ago. Padauk and purpleheart. Not as pretty as yours, but looks much better in person than this pic shows. I used about 10 coats of tung-oil on it.

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Subject: Re: Here's my try at it.

Posted by [Bill Epstein](#) on Fri, 08 Dec 2006 01:35:46 GMT

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Very nice. Graceful curves. And balanced-looking. It's such a gas when the finish first hits the wood and the grain and color pops out. You'll know better than most that I've been an oil finish guy for a long time. I've never had the equipment or space to spray lacquer and felt it looked kinda artificial. But, oh, that smoothness. I've also held the belief that shellac was for grade school projects and a pain to brush on. Was I ever wrong. Not only does shellac do a better job of revealing the color and grain but the tactile part of it, that glass smoothness is fabulous. And padding makes it easy. I'll still oil open pore wood like mahogany but for the rest, it's shellac.

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Subject: Re: Here's my try at it.

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Fri, 08 Dec 2006 02:09:55 GMT

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It really does look nice. I saw it at last year's GPAF. Sweeeet.

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Subject: Re: Here's my try at it.

Posted by [Shane](#) on Fri, 08 Dec 2006 02:56:31 GMT

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Wanna see something cool! I make, or used to when I had a place to shoot, homemade Cherokee style osage bows. NOT the ones you see at the antique flea markets for lookin' at, but ones I actually hunt with. Take osage and clean it all up, then pat it down with liquid draino. The bright yellow hardwood turns a GORGEOUS orange-brown color! Hit it with a light wipe of a wet rag, let it dry, smooth with 1000 grit (0000 wool leaves behind metal particles that can rust or dull your scraper blades if the thing needs re-touched) and give it a finish of high gloss followed by low gloss poly or a handful of shellac coats. Here's a pic of one I made my son that I just left with high gloss (more protection, and it's shiney!!) that I used several coats of draino on.

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Subject: And another bow

Posted by [Shane](#) on Fri, 08 Dec 2006 02:57:07 GMT

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Subject: Re: Here's my try at it.

Posted by [LAL](#) on Sat, 09 Dec 2006 17:46:16 GMT

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Bill, I have used padded shellac on teak with very nice results. I first put a light coat of teak oil on it to pop the grain, wiping off any excess, let it set a day and then begin with the shellac. Even though teak is an open pore wood like mahogany it can still work well. Got the procedure from a book by Jeff Jewit. Larry

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Subject: Re: Finishing Padauk is a pleasure

Posted by [Bob](#) on Tue, 16 Dec 2008 03:26:21 GMT

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Very nice work Bill! Your pictures inspired me to build a fireplace surround out of solid 8/4 padauk using the same finishing techniques you posted. It's been a few years since you posted these pics so I was wondering how the wood as oxidized over the years? My goal is to use a finish that will slow this process down as long as possible. I was even debating about putting a coat of Spar Varnish as the last coat which helps block UV. Any input would great.

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Subject: Re: Finishing Padauk is a pleasure  
Posted by [Bill Epstein](#) on Mon, 16 Nov 2009 10:49:45 GMT  
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I'm a year late!

Haven't been getting here a lot lately. The Padauk hasn't darkened much at all as I'm sure you've found out by now

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