

Mendo Bench

Greg Klassen

Greg Klassen got the idea for this bench on a visit to the Pacific Ocean, where he stopped to admire the waves and contemplate the beach environment. “I wanted to bring this feeling of life into my design for this bench,” he says. “There are no square or flat surfaces on the bench, just as there are no such things in nature.”

Klassen, a second-year student at College of the Redwoods in northern California, coopered the madrone seat from three pieces, roughing out the shape on a tablesaw by repeatedly adjusting the fence and blade height. He smoothed the contours with two planes he made and says the seamless flow of wood makes even other woodworkers wonder how it was done.

Klassen has been making furniture for only a few years. He was headed for a life as a pastoral minister after graduating with a biblical studies degree. Poor and newly married, he needed furniture. “I was working at a door factory at the time and decided to make my own furniture from door parts,” he says. “I loved it. Soon I realized making furniture was what I was supposed to be doing with my life.”

Size: 20 in. deep, 36 in. wide, 18 in. deep

Materials: Madrone, claro walnut

Finish: Oil-varnish mix, wax

Contact: www.gregklassen.com

