

# A Seat in the Trees

**G**reg Klassen's slender side chair is whisper-light—you can lift it with one finger—but it's packed with personal history. Klassen, who grew up amid fruit trees on a farm in central California, now lives in Washington state, where he loves walking the mighty forests of the Pacific Northwest, and it was tree limbs that inspired the branching forms of his chair. The wood he used is telling, too. He designed the chair while studying furniture making on an island in Sweden, and he made it from planks of Swedish ash that had been air-drying for decades in a barn near the school. Klassen says the Gothic arch formed by the chair's steam-bent back legs came about by accident. But you have to wonder. After all, he was a theology major in college when he made his first rudimentary furniture years ago and found his way into a career in the craft.

—Jonathan Binzen



Photo: David Welter

**How They Did It** Turn to p. 90 to see how Klassen split and steam-bent the back legs of his chair.

**Pro Portfolio** To see a range of Klassen's furniture and hear him discuss it, go to [FineWoodworking.com/extras](http://FineWoodworking.com/extras).