

Want to Break Away From Common Exterior Products? Check Out These Winners

I'm always on the lookout for new products that might interest my readers, and *Pro Builder* magazine is great at finding and promoting them, including with their annual Most Valuable Product (MVP) Awards. Their February-March 2024 issue featured the top 3 winners (gold, silver and bronze, of course) in 16 categories from "Connected Home" to "Weatherization."

In this week's column, I'd like to feature their winners in the "Exterior" category. I think you'll agree that each provides a fresh look and a welcome break from what we are seeing, especially in the tract homes from the major builders.

The "Gold" winner was **Tantimber's** decking product they call **Thermowood**. Here is a picture and description of their wood decking:



"Thermowood is a sustainable alternative to endangered South

New Homes Can Have Inspection Issues, Too

This will be a good year, I believe, for the developers/builders of new homes. There's a decent supply, you can choose between spec homes that are already built or design a home to your specifications if you are not in a rush.

You won't have to deal with bidding wars, but you also won't be able to negotiate a price reduction. It's "list price only" with builders.

Also, you can hire a buyer agent, like my broker associates or me, who will be paid by the builder, so you don't have to pay for professional representation. Too many buyers of new homes end up regretting that they bought from a builder's salesperson and didn't have a professional on their side.

Another mistake buyers make is to think that because a home is new, it doesn't need to be inspected. You absolutely must invest in

American hardwoods and various environmentally damaging petroleum-based wood imitations and hybrid products. It is dimensionally stable, extremely durable, and will not warp in extreme temperatures and environments, the company says, while still being workable. The practical and environmental benefits of the product, as well as its pleasing aesthetics, elevated it to the top of a competitive category."

Tantimber is a Turkish company, and their website describes their commitment to sustainable production of natural wood products. Today's composite decking materials are petroleum-based, but Tantimber's products are made from thermally processed natural wood. The company's website is www.Tantimber.com.

The "Silver" winner was **Nakamoto Forestry's** siding product **Gendai**. Above right is the picture, and here's a description of this product:

"Gendai is sustainably sourced and ethically produced shou sugi ban siding — an exterior cladding made exclusively from Japanese cypress that is charred as a preservative heat treatment. The product is black in color with a water-

the cost of a professional home inspector. We have an inspector on our team, Jim Camp, who has decades of experience inspecting new homes for buyers. We recommend him exclusively. New construction is permitted and must pass county or city inspection, but, based on the kinds of defects that Jim has found in new homes, we worry that these inspections can be too cursory.

Jim likes to do a 2-phase inspection. The first inspection would be at the rough-in or pre-drywall stage and the second or final inspection would be prior to the buyer's final walk-through with the builder.

As when buying an existing home, money spent on inspections is money well spent, because you might uncover hidden defects, from sewer to attic, that could cost you much more later on.

Call me with your questions.



based finish. Traditionally called 'arai' meaning 'washed,' Gendai is brushed once to remove the textured charred surface, leaving behind a smooth appearance and dark hue. The burnt fiber crevasse shadows are subtle and create a silky color with charred grain details throughout."

Nakamoto is a family-owned business in western Japan, which owns its own forests and mills near Hiroshima. They are the biggest manufacturer of yakisugi (the more common name for shou sugi ban wood) in the world, and have been doing it for 50 years. Visit www.NakamotoForestry.com for more information.

The "Bronze" winner for exterior products is **Fiberon's Wildwood Cladding**. At right is the picture, and here is the paragraph describing the product:

"Free of toxic chemicals and made with 94% pre- and post-

consumer recycled content, Wildwood composite cladding is a highly sustainable alternative to traditional wood cladding. It has several performance characteristics that make it an ideal solution for rainscreen applications, such as being hydrophobic and resistant to rotting, cracking, insects, and decay. The product features an open-joint profile and is available in a variety of board lengths and widths, combining the beauty and warmth of wood with the durability of high-performance, low-maintenance materials."

Fiberon operates out of both Idaho and North Carolina. The company claims that its products are free of toxic chemicals and are manufactured using sustainable practices.

Fiberon has been recognized as an "Eco-leader" by *Green Builder* magazine. The web address is too long for here. You will find a link for it in my online post at <http://RealEstateToday.substack.com>.



Circling the Globe Was Fun, But We're Happy to Come Home!

As you read this on May 2nd, Rita and I are just four days from our flight home to Denver, having circled the globe, mostly by ship. (There's no port in Denver...) Above is a picture of our docked ship, the Viking Sky, which I took in Tahiti back on Jan. 22nd. Our 122-day world cruise ends next Monday. Over 300 readers and friends have been following my daily "travel-blog" at <http://WhereAreJimandRita.substack.com>. It will allow us to relive our adventures.



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"Concentrate on giving, and the getting will take care of itself." —Anonymous

