

SANTOS MAHOGANY
(MYROXYLON PERUIFERUM)

Other Common Names: Incienso Colorado, Balsamo, Palo de balsamo (Spanish America generally), Cedro chino, Nabal (Mexico), Chirraca, Sandalo (Costa Rica), Tache, Tolu (Colombia), Estoraque (Peru), Cabriuva vermelha (Brazil), Incienso, Quina (Argentina).



Distribution: Has a wide range from southern Mexico southward through Central American and continuing to Argentina.

The Tree: Up to 100 ft in height, usually 50 to 65 ft and 18 to 36 in. in diameter.

The Wood:

General Characteristics: Heartwood reddish brown becoming deep red or somewhat purplish upon exposure; fairly uniform to striped; sharply demarcated from the white sapwood. Luster medium to high; texture medium; grain is typically interlocked; without distinctive taste, but may have a pleasant spicy scent.

Weight: Basic specific gravity (oven dry weight/green volume) 0.74 to 0.81; air- dry density 54 to 62 pcf.

Mechanical Properties: (First set of data based on the 2-cm standard; the second and third on the 2-in. standard.)

Moisture content (%)	Bending strength (Psi)	Modulus of elasticity (1,000 psi)	Maximum crushing strength (Psi)
Green (30)	16,900	1,820	8,600
15%	19,200	NA	10,300
12% (20)	25,400	NA	13,400
Green (40)	17,270	2,130	8,200
12%	20,130	2,430	11,100

Janka side hardness 2,070 lb for green material and 2,200 lb at 12% moisture content. Amsler toughness 360 in.-lb at 15% moisture content (2-cm specimen).

Drying and Shrinkage: No information available on seasoning characteristics. Shrinkage from green to oven dry: radial 3.8%; tangential 6.2%; volumetric 10.0%. These values are very low for a wood of this high density.

Working Properties: It is reported to be moderately difficult to work but can be finished smoothly with a high natural polish. Though non-siliceous, there is more than the usual dulling of cutters.

Durability: The heartwood is reported to be highly resistant to attack by decay fungi.

Preservation: Both sapwood and heartwood are highly resistant to preservative treatments.

Uses: Flooring, furniture, interior trim, turnery, railroad crossties. The tree is well known for its yield of balsam used in perfumes, harvested mainly in El Salvador.

SOURCE: US Department of Agriculture – Forest Service