



[www.cariboublock.com](http://www.cariboublock.com)

## PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS SHEET

Caribou products are the finest wooden surfaces available on the market. Our construction techniques and finishes are innovative and industry leading. We have constructed this document as a way of managing customer expectations prior to the purchase of your Caribou surface. Like the finest Carrera marble, Caribou is also a natural product with unique properties that any owner must be made aware of to ensure enjoyment and longevity. Below is a list of what sets Caribou apart from other wooden surfaces and what you can expect. If you have any additional questions, please contact us directly at: [info@cariboublock.com](mailto:info@cariboublock.com).

### THE CARIBOU ADVANTAGE

*What makes Caribou better than its competition?*

#### **Sustainability**

Caribou was built on a foundation of environmental ethics. Where possible we try and reduce our footprint in areas such as packaging, shipping, and the use of solvents in our fabrication process. Caribou takes pride in its allegiance with the "One Tree Planted" organization. Through "One Tree Planted", Caribou has a tree planted for every surface we sell. We recognise this does not impact the immediate need for mature trees but see it as an investment in the planet for future marketable timber and CO2 reduction. Caribou only uses mills with modern and sustainable harvest practices.

#### **Craftsmanship**

Caribou butcher block products are handcrafted by Canadian artisans to survive in the world's harshest climate. The wood blocks are layered and radio frequency glued together for a stronger bond, providing greater overall strength. The block is then aged and treated with Caribou Crated food safe premium hard wax oil or Caribou Crafted food safe End+Edge Technology.

#### **Product Aging + Testing**

Raw lumber is carefully aged in our facility. This allows the wood to acclimatize until the core reaches 5% moisture content or lower. Each lift is tested before a production run to reduce any future warping issues due to the surface "drying out" after install.

#### **No Exotics**

We only use tried and true North American hardwoods that have a proven track record for performance. While exotic woods like Zebrano and Purpleheart are beautiful, the results are unpredictable when they're exposed to our ever-changing climate.



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### **Jointless Full Length Sticks**

Each 1-3/4" block that makes up a Caribou Crafted surface runs the entire length of the slab. There aren't any small blocks to affect the aesthetic, and there are no joints in the surface's structure. Caribou Crated will see joints in the sticks that make up the surface. Pairing our jointing and RF gluing technology, this does not affect the strength of our crated products.

### **Opposite and Opposing Grain Positioning**

Each block is oriented and flipped so that the grains of the next block are running in the opposite direction. Combined with the use of full-length pieces, this allows any residual stresses in the wood to work against each other, maintaining a straight surface and preventing warping. Caribou crated sticks are arranged with parallel grains at time of gluing, this keeps the grain direction stays consistent with this practice.

### **RF Gluing Technology**

When blocks are being assembled, traditional gluing and clamping reintroduces moisture into the surface's core. Carpenter glue takes up to 36 days to fully cure, and this extended exposure to moisture can cause warping over time. RF gluing technology, on the other hand, fuses wood blocks together in eight minutes by drying the adhesive from the inside out. Less exposure to wet adhesive means a dryer core, a better bond, and far less failure due to warping.

### **Caribou Crafted Industry Leading Finish**

Our Caribou End+Edge Technology finish was developed out of a need that arose from our commercial clients. Restaurants needed a durable, chemical-resistant finish that required little maintenance. They also wanted a warm, natural-looking finish that was smooth to the touch, not a maintenance-intensive wax or a shiny, candy-coated poly finish that would flake off in a year. Our team worked closely with a local chemical engineering firm and developed our proprietary formula that was originally developed as a protective coating for the bottoms of oak railway cars. The result was End+Edge Technology, a specialized process resulting in high clarity, and a rock-solid matte finish. End+Edge is National Food Safety Certified, chemical resistant, food safe, waterproof, and UV and impact resistant. This finish is the finest on the market and is only available on Caribou products.

### **Caribou Crated Premium Hard Wax Oil**

Fiddes Hard Wax Oil is a blend of natural oils & waxes offering exceptional durability & resistance for kitchen worktops and areas subjected to a high degree of wear. Fiddes produces a quick drying, natural satin water repellent, tread-fast finish that will not peel or flake. To maintain, simply wash, buff or re-apply, following the guidelines found within our website.



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### Limited Lifetime Warranty

Our product is protected by a limited lifetime warranty against defect in workmanship and material, including excessive warping, delaminating, and cracks in the material. Caribou offers the longest and most comprehensive warranty for wooden surfaces available.

***What can I expect from my Caribou surface? As an owner, what do I need to know?***

### Natural Product

Caribou products are made from sustainably harvested hardwoods. Wood is a natural product and will vary in tone and grain. These variances come from different ages of trees, growing conditions and regions harvested. Expect unique characteristics in each custom made top and sample, every Caribou surface is a true original.

### Crafted Finish

The Caribou Crafted End+Edge Technology is UV resistant therefore remains transparent and does not yellow over time. Due to the robust nature of the 7mil thick matte finish, at certain times of the day depending on the angle of the sun, the countertop may appear opaque as the light refracts through it.

The underside of the top will have a semi-gloss appearance, along with wood filler to fill the small voids with a 4" back polish (smooth) around the perimeter.

If all six sides (top, sides, and underside) need to be finished then our End+Edge Technology finish is applied to match the top of the surface. An additional charge is incurred.

**\*\*END+EDGE technology has a break-in period\*\*** Within that period, "WIGGLES" and/or Lines marks will appear when fingernails or something durable is ran along the top. This is typical. An analogy would be, it needs to shed its skin, like a snake. The more a top is cleaned, the sooner the top layer is removed. Once removed any imperfections on the surface, such as dust particles, the finish will become smooth leaving a durable long lasting satin finish.

### Crated Finish

Our Premium Hard wax/oil is extremely durable but does require maintenance. Please refer to our Caribou Surface Cleaning Instructions and our Caribou Standard Operating Procedures. From factory all 6 sides are finished with this process. The underside of the top will have a 4" perimeter sanded smooth. Visible wood filler will be used to fill small voids on the underside. Underside finishing to match the top of the surface can be arranged at additional charge if visible wood fillers does not match the design criteria.



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### Aging

Within the first 6 months after installation, the countertop will acclimate to its new environment. Slight seasonal ridges in the finish can be expected as the top slightly expands or contracts depending on the temperature and humidity of the area it is installed in. This phenomenon will go away within the first 6 months of the product being installed. If the problem persists, it is considered a warranty claim and the surface will be factory refinished. We refinish instead of replacement in this instance because the surface has already acclimated to the environment and a new surface would need to go through the same process again. We have found this typically happens only on sites with extreme temperature and humidity differentials.

Just like our skin, natural wood is susceptible to tanning (color variation) over time, even through the sunscreen (UV protection) of our finishes. We recommend that any objects on the countertop be displaced regularly for even tanning.

If ordering Cherry, please note its inherent darkening properties. Cherry will move to a darker shade and a richer brown tone as it ages.

### Cleaning

To clean surface, always wipe in the direction of the grain. Follow guidelines laid out in our Caribou Surface Cleaning Instructions and our Caribou Standard Operating Procedures.

### Seams

The seam is visible however resembles a micro-bevel and can be felt to the touch. All dry fitted at the factory, the edges are slightly broken to connect at a 45-degree miter. Tolerance of 0.5mm, equivalent to the thickness of two business cards is to be expected. Aligned with biscuits and fastened with countertop bolts from the underside. Variation in grain pattern and coloration of block can be expected at the seam if two pieces are being joined together.

### Cutting on Caribou

All knife cuts to the surface will become apparent and could penetrate through the finish. If you choose to cut on your Caribou countertop it will look like a cutting board.

### Polishing Crafted

Recommended polish: Countertop Magic, Pledge Extra Moisturizing Furniture Polish or Pledge Lemon Furniture Polish. Always polish with the direction of the grain. Please refer to our Caribou Surface Cleaning Instructions and our Caribou Standard Operating Procedures.



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### Scratches/Knicks

Small scratches and knicks, like any surface, can be expected. Caribou is robust but abnormal heavy abuse will cause damage. Inspect the underside of heavy objects before sliding them on your surface. Boxes are notorious for sand or gravel imbedded in the bottom. Installers – Please mind your toolboxes!

Please refer to our Caribou Surface Cleaning Instructions and our Caribou Standard Operating Procedures.

### Scuffs - Crafted

Scuff lines can be buffed out with some vigorous cleaning/polishing with a recommended polish, Countertop Magic, Pledge Extra Moisturizing Furniture Polish or Pledge Lemon Furniture Polish. Please refer to our Caribou Surface Cleaning Instructions and our Caribou Standard Operating Procedures.

### Scuffs/Dings, Scratches - Crated

Please see our refinishing instructions for any damage to your crated surface. This product can easily be refinished or touched up on site.

### Heat

Never place pots or dishes directly from the oven or burner on an unprotected Caribou surface; extreme heat can cause cracking or blistering and will void the warranty.

### Notes of Caution

- Abrasive cleaners can damage your surface; do not use them
- Do not use Bleach or Ammonia
- Steel wool and other abrasive pads will damage Caribou and End+Edge finish
- Do not work with oven cleaners on an unprotected countertop. Wipe spills away promptly and rinse several times with water and dish soap

### Relative Humidity + Moisture Content

Architectural woodwork needs a moisture content within an optimum range. The space where the architectural millwork is installed needs to be engineered with the appropriate controls to maintain an optimum relative humidity.

Warranty is void if product has been modified or subjected to improper humidity. Tops must be always kept in a humidity-controlled environment at 27% - 40 % humidity.



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### What is Dimensional Change?

For centuries, wood has served as a successful, renewable material for architectural woodwork. Wood products perform with complete satisfaction when they're correctly designed and used. Problems directly or indirectly attributed to wood's dimensional change are usually the result of faulty design or improper humidity conditions during site storage, installation, or use.

Architectural woodwork products are manufactured from wood that has been kiln-dried to an appropriate average moisture content. This moisture level is maintained until the product is delivered. Subsequent dimensional change is an inherent natural property of wood. Wood is a hygroscopic material, which means that all wood products contain some moisture under normal use and conditions. This molecular moisture is exchanged with the water vapour in the surrounding atmosphere according to the existing relative humidity. Wood picks up moisture and swells in high humidity, while it releases moisture and shrinks in low humidity.

Oxidation is a reaction of the acids within the wood combined with iron, oxygen, and direct moisture or relative humidity. Moisture control can protect wood products from stains as a result of oxidation. When combined with proper design, fabrication, and installation, humidity control can help prevent dimensional change problems. As normal fluctuations in humidity occur, the resulting dimensional response won't be significant if the product has been properly designed and constructed.

### Warranty

Caribou Crafted carries a Limited Lifetime Warranty for Manufacture and product defects.

Caribou Crated carries a 1-year Warranty of Manufacture defects.

We believe our Caribou surfaces stand above all other wooden surfaces on the market today in stability and finish performance. At the end of the day, Caribou stands behind our product and customers.

See [www.cariboublock.com](http://www.cariboublock.com) for a more comprehensive description of our warranties.