

Aspen Distillers adds beauty and sustainability through material selections

All materials in Aspen Distillers' construction process were selected with an eye on responsible sourcing and environmental impact.

ASPEN, CO, USA , January 11, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As construction on Aspen Distillers' nears its end, the distillery sheds light on its carefully selected building materials and process to ensure responsible sourcing and minimize environmental impact.

In seeking to become the most sustainable distillery in the world, construction on the distillery combined modern engineering with a low maintenance exterior. Aspen Distillers has an intentionally limited materials palette – mostly wood with limited use of steel and concrete – and has chosen to leave several systems exposed, more than in a typical building, in order to limit unnecessary and potentially harmful materials.

The selection of building materials was guided by the Living Building Challenge, a rigorous green building certification that Aspen Distillers is working to complete. The "Materials Petal" of the challenge aims to remove the worst known offending materials and practices in construction with a goal of driving business toward a truly responsible materials economy. The five imperatives include:

1. Sourcing materials that are Red List free
2. Tracking embodied carbon from construction
3. Using salvaged materials and responsibly sourced wood and stone



The black exterior of the buildings was created using Shou Sugi Ban, an ancient Japanese architectural technique that was used to preserve wood by charring the surface with a hot flame.

4. Striving to eliminate waste during construction

5. Sourcing materials from local industries

“Achieving the Materials Petal required a great deal of coordination between the various project teams,” says Matt Patel, Aspen Distillers founder. “Our architecture, interiors, structure, civil, landscape, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing teams all had to work together to ensure responsible sourcing, eliminate waste, and minimize impact.”

The lumber for the buildings was sourced from the US Forest Stewardship Council. The responsibly managed forests provide environmental, social and economic benefits.

The black exterior of the buildings was created using Shou Sugi Ban, an ancient Japanese architectural technique that was used to preserve wood by charring the surface with a hot flame. The process involves charring the wood, cooling it, cleaning off any soot or burnt debris on the surface, and finally finishing the boards with an oil.

Shou Sugi Ban is a sustainable means of naturally protecting exterior siding that enhances durability and is a natural means of preserving wood without chemicals, paints and other surface treatments. The process is environmentally friendly and doesn't contribute to harmful pollution. The technique gives Aspen Distillers' buildings their dramatic black appearance in the landscape, and there are no chemicals present in the siding to potentially leach into the environment.

The Embodied Carbon Footprint Imperative strives to minimize a project's carbon footprint – the carbon that is associated with the materials used to construct the building. In addition, the Imperative aims to offset the environmental impact of the project's construction process.

To meet this Imperative, the design-build team incorporated carbon reduction strategies early in the project's design phase. For example, wood framing is the primary structural element because it has one-sixth of the embodied carbon of steel or concrete.

The roof eaves use Beetle Kill Pine harvested from stands of dead timber. If not harvested, these trees are left to fall over and decay, resulting in millions of board feet of kindling in our forests ultimately releasing their carbon back into the atmosphere as they decompose.

ABOUT ASPEN DISTILLERS

Aspen Distillers was founded by Matthew Patel who assembled an ecosystem of talent to develop the first distillery in Pitkin County. The project is inspired by Aspen's beauty and is firmly anchored in the “Aspen Idea” — first articulated in the 1940s — that human beings reach their highest level when the mind, body and spirit are empowered by nature's beauty. Aspen Distillers has built its foundation on a commitment to protecting the environment, corporate responsibility and sustainability. The distillery will meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and

Environmental Design) Platinum certification and will go through a one-year audit governed by the International Living Future Institute to meet the Living Building Challenge, the most rigorous award for regenerative building practices.

PRESS CONTACT:

Kaylee Harter
Aspen Distillers
kharter@aspendistillers.com

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