

Golden Treasures Luxury Villas



Villa Wooden Decks

Swimming pool and patio decks for private villas

Edward Rivas

2010

Wooden Decks can be one of the best choices you make in terms of getting the most out of your patio or swimming pool area. When we consider making use of an outdoor space we think about the type of soil, because that area will define the activities and the use we can give to the place. Decks are integral part of many of the [Dominican Republic villas for sale](#) in the North coast.

Floor alternatives are many, but one that certainly is natural and harmonious with the environment is the wooden deck, a wooden floor very stable and durable which is great in small patios, terraces or transit areas in the garden.

A few decades ago, using wooden floor boards was limited to the decks of ships. But it was relatively in recent years that the idea jumped from its original habitat to other areas, which also display its beneficial qualities both in aesthetics and in the strictly functional. Indeed, decks are ideal for areas **exposed to the weather**, which until a few decades ago it was only limited to classical ceramics and natural stones.



Outdoor deck with Jacuzzi mounted on a solid beam base with three steps. This type of deck is widely used in private beach villas and some resorts in the Caribbean.

Garden accents and an outdoor umbrella will add the special touch to the area, which can also be fitted with a small bar area.

This type of deck can be added to several luxury villas for sale in the North coast of the Dominican Republic, it takes no more than a few square meters and it would make the villa more attractive to potential buyers.

Possibilities and advantages

Deck floors provide an intelligent alternative for those tough locations such as galleries, the edges of **swimming pools**, an outdoor living space or a solarium. This is only possible thanks to the many qualities in the wood: there is no doubt that its color, warmth, texture and noble appearance is unparalleled.

It is well known that wood, having low heat absorption, is suitable for **sun-exposed areas**, which allows you to walk barefoot on it, no worries, unlike certain stones. It is also interesting to note that having a small separation between the beams; it never leaves stagnant water on their surface, which reduces the risk of slipping.

Installation

As a first step, a subfloor must be done. This is absolutely essential to give the necessary support structure, and can be made of cement and pebbles, or coarse sand and a plastic coating to prevent the emergence of weeds. In case you are thinking about making a deck on a terrace or a patio, protect the floor tile or asphalt cement with a membrane covered with aluminum and polyethylene, to prevent any cracks from leaking water. Since **luxury villa** owners are so demanding, all the needed steps must ensure that the deck will perform as planned, and no water leaks will make the wood rot and damage the deck.



This wooden deck has a pergola on top of it, which is perfect for having some shade for the semi-circular lounge area seen below it.

The installation of this deck clearly shows symmetry in the board's placement, and a clear coat of protective varnish that still shines.

The space below the pergola can also be used to add a Jacuzzi and the board area shade extended with a longer pergola design.

Below the wood you see, decks have a quite simple support structure. Some have buried posts, which may be of wood with cement or concrete. Then there is the support structure (should be 5 x 15cm with no more than 60cm apart). Most decks seen in **Dominican Republic villas** are raised 3-4 feet over the ground depending on the villa owner's requirement.

The boards are placed across, or the deck itself, about 1 inch (2.54 cm) thick, preferably with rounded edges, and separated at a minimum. Remember that this separation is to allow water runoff, but it should be just enough because they could hurt your fingers when walking barefoot or jam the heel tips of women's shoes.

To set the decking boards it is advisable to do it with screws, the fasteners (even spiral) can be lifted. Note that the screws should be, or yes, stainless steel or galvanized. A novel method includes PVC, thus masking the joints made with bolts, solving the problem of screws aesthetics.

Both the structure of the deck and the subfloor should be given a declining slope so that water will slide out instead of building up and damaging the deck and other areas of the **villa** for which it was built.

Changes in color

The decks are very attractive but, as in the case of all things naturally beautiful, you must implement certain measures to retain the original charm. In particular, what is altered fastest is color, so the maintenance on this aspect is fundamental.

Many people choose not to protect them and rather let the wood be burned with the sun to achieve a **natural look**. The result is that the color of the deck will go off gradually, and veer to the gray color so common to see fishermen on the docks of the Delta, for example. If that is the effect you are looking ahead, keep in mind that once wood gets that silver-gray, wood never regain its original color.



DECK WOOD SHOULD BE OF HIGH QUALITY IF YOU EXPECT IT TO LAST

Maintenance

All **weather-exposed wood** should be protected with oils, varnishes or lacquers for high transit surfaces. The effect achieved is more flexible fibers and waterproofing it as much as possible. It is a low maintenance, always depending on the type of wood, which generally requires only one or two applications per year depending on the villa usage throughout the year (if it is a **vacation rental** it might require more maintenance).

The best treatment for your deck is to apply substances (phenols or oils) that penetrate into the wood contrary to coats that form a film, such as varnish or lacquer, which later peel off. The impregnating (penetrating into the pores) are usually water-based, which allows fast drying water to evaporate from

the solution. Another advantage is that they have no smell and, moreover, typically contain pesticides and fungicides. Sunlight in the Dominican Republic, as well as the other **Caribbean islands** is very intense and will fade the color of the deck wood faster than in other countries.

Floating Floors

These floors are called "floaters" because they are placed about 60cm from the ground. The boards can not be installed directly on the existing floor because it would rot because of poor ventilation and excess moisture. They are placed over a "pit" (or base preparation), which may well be of earth or concrete. It is also possible to put them on existing balconies, terraces or patios, but always **high enough** so that the wood can get rid of moisture from below too.

Wood Types

The wood is the key to the duration of the deck. The hard and semi hard are better against absorption and loss of water and the harmful effects of UV rays. **Brazilian oak**, laurel, pine, and hemlock are those recommended by installers. And yes, those are also the most expensive: a deck of ipe or teak can cost around \$ 150 m². We may also use softwood boards such as pine elliotii that requires a special soaking treatment.





Solid teak in a high precision board placement for a luxury villa

This treatment will protect the wood from moisture, insects and fungi. Note that this type of wood tends to twist, crack and splinter quickly if not properly aligned, that is, dried horizontally, stacked so that air can move between tables to get normal moisture content.

The decks are constructed with hardwoods, which perform better against absorption and loss of water and the harmful effects of UV rays. While Brazilian Walnut is the noblest and most recommended in these latitudes with an estimated durability of 30 years, teak, African cherry, the curupai or grandis are also good choices. If we used softwoods such as pine or eucalyptus, the lifetimes reach 3-5 years and require more care, and most villas will require a higher quality deck finish.

Locations

- The natural terrain: The simplest and least recommended structure is mounted directly on the ground. For that we must level the ground with proper slopes to avoid deadlocks and to ensure that drainage occurs outside the deck area. A special foil on the top layer will prevent the growth of grasses.

Other recommended options are: make a thin 5cm cement coat and paint it with tar; build posts or columns of treated wood, buried and raised 12 cm above the ground, or use precast concrete blocks that are designed to receive the rafters.

Then, we will post the studs and rafters flush on the support system we have chosen. The recommended



distance is 35/40cm between rafters. Above them, and perpendicular, decking will be placed.

- The covered balconies or terraces: Here the structure can be mounted on the thin coat or directly on the existing coating. The finished floor level will rise between 4 and 5cm.

Prior to the installation, a coat of waterproof paint should be applied on the existing floor. It is recommended to leave inspection covers on the racks and

keep them free of leaves. In this case, the 1" studs on which the structure is supported under no circumstances should be screwed because it could damage the existing water-resistant insulation.

In the case of open terraces we must verify that the studs and rafters do not interfere with existing slopes to the grids. Poor drainage in the event of heavy rain may cause flooding in the interior of the villa.

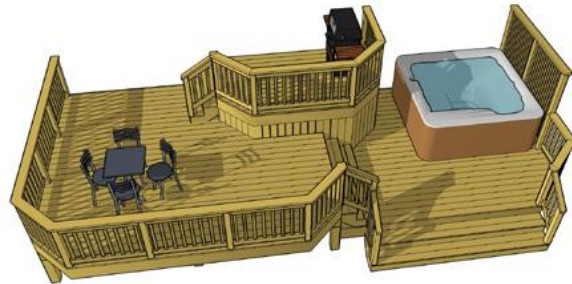
Woodworking

All wood should be treated with one coat of primer and two or three additional hands of bactericidal linseed oil or teak to be applied in all boards. Finish with several coats of a protective coating.

If the deck is outdoors, it should be cared for every four months; if you are in indoors protected areas, may be once a year. When the wood begins to absorb liquid and becomes opaque and gray, this indicates a need for maintenance.

Decks must be cleaned periodically with a damp cloth. In addition to being attentive to dry any spilled liquids at once, after a rain it is important to dry them. This is one of the reasons why property managers always want to have onsite staff in all the Sosua Villa rentals because some renters leave the spilled liquid in the deck long enough to cause stains. A new plan is being implemented by a local maintenance agency to offer special care to all villas with decks located in Sosua, Cabarete and Puerto Plata.

WOODEN DECK PLANS BY WWW.DECKS.COM



RESOURCES:

[DECKS FROM ABOUT.COM](http://WWW.DECKS.COM)

[DECK CONSTRUCTION](#)

[ASK THE BUILDER](#)

[DOMINICAN REPUBLIC OCEANFRONT VILLAS](#)

© Copyright 2010 Edward Rivas