

Development based on the views of female customers:

Release of “*konoka*”
A Shift to Homes where Residents Can Enjoy Just Being Themselves
Opening of new model home at Mitaka, Tokyo

Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd. announced today that it will begin selling a new product “*konoka*” from its Development through Women’s Perspective Project, and that it will open a new model home that embodies the *konoka* worldview at the No. 2 Mitaka Housing Plaza¹ (Mitaka City, Tokyo).

The project was launched in March 2013 for the purpose of making more comfortable and agreeable lifestyle proposals by leveraging women’s perspectives in product development and services. After bringing in members from branches and affiliates nationwide, the interdepartmental project got into full swing in October 2013. Previously, the project provided the “*comama*”² spatial design proposal in May 2013. It also planned and designed nine spec homes at East Hills Seya (Ikoma-gun, Nara Prefecture) in August 2014.



1. No. 2 Mitaka Housing Plaza, Asahi Shimbun Display Home Village
2. A spatial design proposal that relieves stress related to storage in living areas

■ **Features of the “*konoka*” development**

Product concept extracted from the views of female customers, before being developed led by female employees

The goal of this project is for Sumitomo Forestry to be a home builder that is supported even more by women. In order to reflect the views of female customers in its products, Sumitomo Forestry collaborated with “*LEE*,” a women’s magazine published by Shueisha with a readership of the parenting generation in their 30s and 40s who prefer a refined, natural way of living that incorporates trees and greenery. As a result, completed questionnaires were received from about 1,600 readers.



In addition to analyzing the questionnaire results, group interviews were conducted, inviting readers including those who intend to purchase a home in the next five years. Led by female employees on the project team, views and concerns on ideal floor plans and interiors were extracted. Products were then developed while taking these results into account and by also incorporating the ideas and proposals of team members and their views as women.

■ **Background to product development: Extract four key words and form product concept**

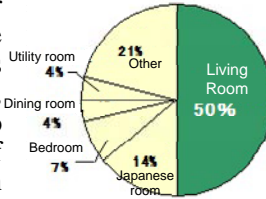
Based on the results of the questionnaire and the group interview, the project team members extracted four key words on which to base the product concept.

Key word (1) Living Room: Home building that begins in the living room

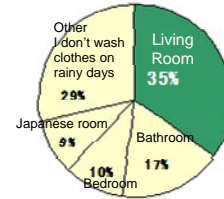
The magazine questionnaire revealed that the room where women feel most at home is the living room. Results of a questionnaire conducted at Sumitomo Forestry’s Sumai Haku housing fair also showed that for women aged 20–49 “the room that most thought goes into when considering building a new home” is the living room.

At the same time, the living room is also where some respondents put their makeup on in the morning, or do the ironing, or fold their washing, etc., and while some people want to do these things while relaxing in the living room, they also commented that they do not want to introduce a sense of everyday life into this room. Given this, it was decided to rethink, not just the interior of living rooms, but also the whole home based on a “living room concept.”

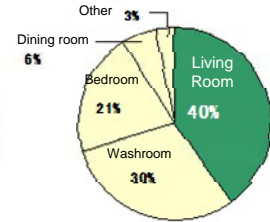
Q Where do you iron clothes?



Q Where do you hang clothes to dry on rainy days?



Q Where do you put on your makeup?



Key word (2) Natural: Natural interior styles

Based on the project team’s view that “your home also includes interior style,” the questionnaire also asked about interior design. The most preferred interior styles were “those that foster a sense of raw material, such as the feel of timber and plaster” and “a Nordic interior design.” In addition, the team also summarized the styles that Sumitomo Forestry customers have actually adopted. The team aimed to realize a comfortable natural space that also includes interior design.

Key word (3) Attachment: High quality and materials that you can enjoy as they change over time

According to the questionnaire survey, the top responses for factors that create an impression of good living are: “high quality,” “healthy” and “lasts long”; while “brand-name goods” was one of the least given responses. This suggests that people feel value in selecting things that they personally sense as being good. From the same question, there was an awareness that “perhaps people are looking for materials that they can enjoy as they change over time.” For instance, more respondents indicated “materials in which you can put effort in” than “materials that don’t require effort.” Consideration was given to the development of materials, as well as to how Sumitomo Forestry’s unique materials are put on view, for instance how beams are left visible.

Key word (4) Self: I want to value being myself

The top answer given to the question “What do you consider important in your everyday life?” was “my happy family circle.” The second-top response was “my own time,” ahead of “housework” and “raising children.” The project members also endorsed this, and as a consequence, aimed to create spaces where family members can spend time being themselves despite their busy lifestyles. In addition, they incorporated proposals in which customers can choose their own style.

■ **Features of “konoka”: Four features based on key words.**

1. “Koko living room concept”: planning for making living rooms sophisticated and attractive

Proposals for characteristically ideal homes that are inspired from the living room are made based on three points.

(1) “Stylish storage” elegantly keeps unwanted things out of view in the living room

- “Special cloakroom” set up where people walk by makes going out and coming home a delight
- “Pantry” and “eco station” (space for recyclable waste) for putting away plenty of things in the kitchen

- (2) “Sophisticated work spaces” where chores can be performed in comfort, without cluttering the living room with a sense of everyday life of work and housework
 - “Work terrace,” a multifunctional space, such as a utility area and work space
 - “Sunroom” positioned taking into account the movement of people doing household chores, where clothes can be hung unaffected by the weather
 - “Study” where work, computing and various other objects can be left spread about without causing bother
- (3) “Extra living rooms” designed for keeping the main living room clean, where you can enjoy your own time
 - “Sunken living room”: making the floor a little lower than the main living room creates a different line of sight, meaning that it is a place of your own while still being aware of other family members
 - “*Tatamiser*,” a small *tatami* mat room that can be used for midday naps, displaying seasonal decorations or leaving friends’ bags
 - “Al fresco,” for relaxing comfortably outside on fine days

2. “*Konoka* styles”: comfort drawn from the texture and feel of wood, coordinated from the interior style

Within the natural space proposed by Sumitomo Forestry, three styles are offered which achieve a characteristic interior design for each and every customer.

(1) **Natural Nordic**

A natural, timeless style which combines a sense of raw wood materials that increase in appeal the more they are used with Nordic furniture that radiates a charming gentle feel

(2) **French Chic**

An adult, chic style that is not too mellow, which combines classic European style furniture and lighting with fine antique articles

(3) **Retro Modern**

A style that will only increase in splendor over time, using vintage furniture rich in subtle charm, which suits the natural flooring that takes advantage of its texture and feel

3. **Fixtures and materials that engender attachment the longer they are used**

Fixtures and materials have been redeveloped from the perspectives of customers choosing quality based on their own perceptions and feeling attachment from the day they move in.

◆ **Dressers created with special attention to the qualities of wood, allowing customers to relax when putting on makeup**

The wide grain of the countertop achieves a space for customers to “sit and relax” while putting on makeup. Customers are also able to select their preferred colors and materials for wash basins, doors, countertops and under mirror panels.



◆ **Flooring with a distinctive feel**

For flooring, Sumitomo Forestry uses oak, which is also known as the “King of the Forest.” Boldly preserving the knots, pitch streaks, sapwood and brindle while paying attention to how the grain is expressed produces a unique feel. You can feel unity and warmth in the entire space.

4. A garden style that uses flowers and greenery to make life better every day

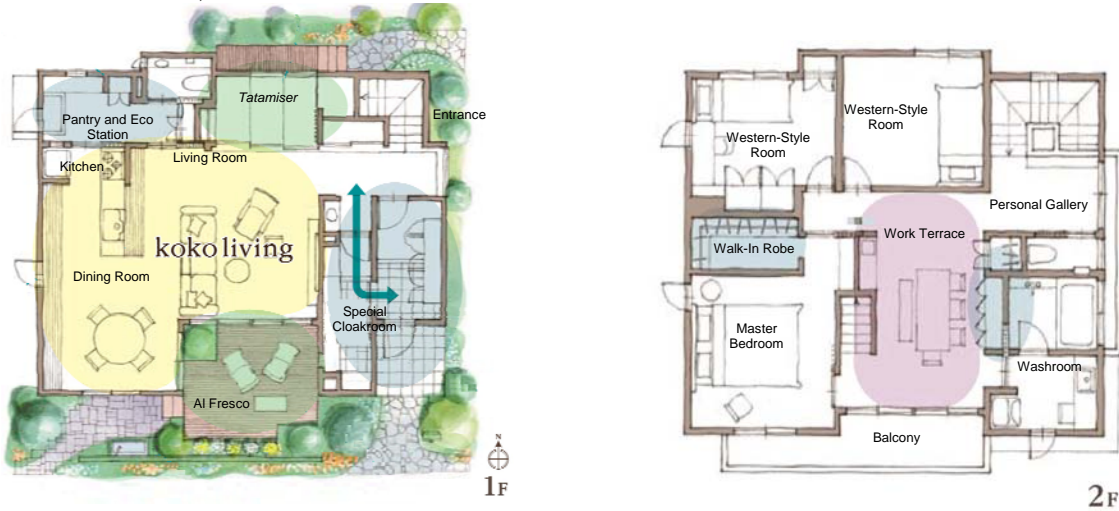
Sumitomo Forestry utilizes *Midori no Sekkei* (greenery design), one of the Group’s strengths, to offer a garden style that enables residents to also enjoy outside spaces such as gardens and terraces in their own way.

This feature provides spaces of flowers and greenery in gardens, entry areas and terraces to better enrich everyday life.



[Overview of the No. 2 Mitaka Model Home]

Based on the results of a questionnaire conducted by Recruit Co., Ltd., which maintained that visiting display homes is the most useful thing in deciding on a home, Sumitomo Forestry made expressing a worldview in its display homes its first priority, embodying the four *konoka* features in its No. 2 Mitaka Model Home. Using the Natural Nordic style for its interior, the model home gives off the feeling of a warm lifestyle as if you had visited the home of a sophisticated friend. (First floor: 75.77 m², Second floor: 82.39 m²)



Going forward, in addition to continuing to promote the active involvement of female employees through this project, Sumitomo Forestry will also engage in house development that values the perspective of women as well as the perspective of residents.

About Sumitomo Forestry

Founded in 1691, Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd. and its Group companies have broadened business activities focused on wood. Based on its corporate philosophy—“utilize timber as a renewable, healthy and environmentally friendly natural resource, and contributes to a prosperous society through all types of housing-related services”—and with its approximately 250,000 hectares of owned and managed forest, the global network that spans more than 20 countries and expertise and technology in housing-related businesses, Sumitomo Forestry Group is developing the Forestry and Environment Business, the Timber and Building Materials Business, the Housing Business, the Overseas Business, the Lifestyle Service Business and other businesses both in Japan and abroad. Adding such businesses as wooden biomass power generation and Timber Solution, it will continue to pursue the potential of timber.

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