

**DURABLE EXCELLENCE AND COMFORT BY NATURE**

## The potential of the cork was already discovered by the Egyptians

### **Suberose parenchyma**

Cork is the name given to the suberose parenchyma, or bark of the cork oak, a tree of the beech. In Egypt tombs dating back thousands of years were found to contain amphorae still being in perfect shape



In the first century Lucia Molumela recommended making beehives because of the low heat conduction.

Also in the first century Mr. Paius Pliny the Elder already referred to roofs of cork as a tradition, which has persisted in areas of North Africa and recommended as an excellent temperature insulation.

### **Tge Greek doctor Dioscorides**

ioscorides the second century Greek doctor, gives medicinal uses of the suberose tissue of the cork oak. One of his recipes states that "charred cork" rubbed on bald patches with laurel sap makes the hair grow again, thicker and darker than before. A picture of Dioscorides shows a bald man.....



### **Cork and it's popularity**

Cork enjoyed an evident popularity in the 15<sup>th</sup>. Century in the abundance of cork motifs on tomb stones, pulpits and altar plinths, in the decoration of frontons and gardens, on capitals and arches of cloisters and so on.

Both the Livro de Horas de D. Manuel and the famous window at the Convento de Christo in Tomar bear eloquent witness to this fashion.

### **Plenty of cork**

The majority of the cork oaks are growing in the area of the western Mediterranean basin. A Cork oak is 150 of even 200 years of age.

During this time the tree may be stripped 15 to 18 times. The average of the cork oaks being in production in Western Europe at present is 85 years and the area under plantation is annually growing by an average of 4%. Therefore the cork production has a rosy future. Legal and very strict stripping regulations make sure the cork oak forests will not be subject to violence or commercial abuse.

### **Cork and it's strict harvesting regulations**

The inner bark is surrounded by cork to be stripped between 10 and 15 years. The first stripping is prohibited from trees less than 9 years of age. The branches of the cork oak may spread high and wide and can have branch spreading over more than 500 m2.

### **Millions of natural cells generate the excellent insulation properties**

Cork is highly homogeneous, consisting almost entirely of cellular membranes through which no channels run. Although cork clings to the tree, cork tissue is formed by dead cells.

The cork cells presents a minimal quantity of solid material and a maximum of gaseous materials, essentially atmospheric air but without carbon dioxide. 1 cm<sup>3</sup> contains around 40 million cells. Cork granules are most excellent insulators and can reduce high and low temperatures substantially.



### **Cork in space shuttles**

Being naturally elastic, cork is an excellent product being used in anti earthquake technology. Perhaps the most exiting use of cork has been as a protective heat shield in missiles and space crafts, including the space shuttle.

