

Fact Sheet & FAQ

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Company Profile:

Birch Willow is a green woman-owned small business founded in 1997 that makes unique lighting fixtures from naturally harvested materials. Located in a sunny studio in the Fort Point Arts District of Boston, Massachusetts, Birch & Willow offers in-house production from design to delivery. Skilled artists customize earth-friendly lamps, luminaries and shades that bring nature into homes or commercial spaces.

Q&A with Birch & Willow Owner/Designer Katherine Ahern

What natural materials do you use and where do you get them?

Our primary lamp making materials are saplings, vines, twigs and beach stones. With very few exceptions, we collect natural materials that are not native to New England. These exotic vines and trees like Norway maple, bittersweet vines, wisteria vines and grapevines overrun indigenous species and harvesting them can provide space for native species to thrive. They are ideal for our use because of their beauty, flexibility and abundant availability. We gather them from wild spaces, overgrown edges of parking lots and along roadways and untended hedges in Massachusetts, Vermont and Rhode Island. The beach stones we use for our table lamps are washed up by New England winter storms.

What makes Birch & Willow a green business?

Respecting and preserving the environment has been one of our guiding principles for over ten years. Birch & Willow is proud to be in compliance with the guidelines of the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) ReGreen Initiative for ecologically sensitive businesses.

As previously mentioned, most of our materials come from renewable resources. We use water-based finishes and adhesives, natural patinas, and recycled packing materials. At all points in our designing, manufacturing and shipping processes, we encourage energy efficiency and reuse of byproducts. The byproducts of one design can spur the creation of a new design that uses those materials. Visit our web site at www.birchandwillow.com to find out more about our environmentally conscientious business practices.

We are also developing our own green self-assessment guidelines for designing, manufacturing and shipping our lighting products. These guidelines will be in keeping with EnergyStar, GreenSeal and U.S. Green Building Council (USBGC) guidelines. When completed, they will be posted on our web site.

Who are Birch & Willow's clients?

Birch & Willow works with individual clients, designers, architects, small and mid-size companies and large corporations. Our clients choose Birch & Willow because they appreciate the quality of our fixtures, the low-environmental impact of the creation process, and the social and economic benefits of supporting a green woman-owned small business.

Birch & Willow lamps and luminaries provide lighting in varied facilities all over the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean, including restaurants, spas, yoga studios, private homes, offices, hospitals, hotels and conference centers. Among Birch & Willow's clients are: Marriott Hilton Head Beach Spa in South Carolina, Zia Restaurant in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, W Hotel in Montreal, Canada, PDX Conference Centre in Portland, Oregon and Exhale Spas in Boston, Dallas, Chicago, Santa Monica and New York City.

How are Birch & Willow lights used?

Birch & Willow lights can be used to minimize or emphasize the contrast between indoors and outdoors. As with the experience of being in nature, Birch & Willow lamps and luminaries evoke a sense of peace and warm belonging. They can be used as design focal points and/or to provide soft overall illumination. Our product line offers a mix of ambient light, strong architectural statements and functional decoration.

How does Birch & Willow work with clients?

Our business model is a blend of service and manufacturing. Birch & Willow offers the service of customizing size, color, material and lamping specifications. We work with our clients to create design solutions ranging from making a single decorative lamp to creating signature looks for large commercial spaces. All Birch & Willow lamps and luminaries are made to order.

We collaborate with designers to integrate our lighting fixtures with their lighting designs and to coordinate our fixtures with other design elements. We are happy to scale up our production for larger orders and to customize our designs to meet building specifications. We also create client-designed fixtures and make lampshades to order for existing lamps.

How can Birch & Willow lamps be purchased?

Orders are placed directly with Birch & Willow and shipped from our studio in Boston, Massachusetts.

Does Birch & Willow have a catalog?

As part of our environmental commitment, we urge our customers to save paper & shipping costs by visiting our web site. At www.birchandwillow.com, a wealth of information is available. On the site, our lamps can be seen illuminated and unlit, along with samples of paper, weaving and fabrics. More specific detail can be obtained by downloading our high or low resolution cut sheets. We will also mail paper samples upon request. If necessary, a full hard copy catalog, including cut sheets, actual paper swatches and weaving material samples, can be obtained for \$60 USD plus shipping and handling.

In addition to the images available on your web site, where can the lamps be seen?

To locate public spaces where our lamps are installed, refer to the client list on our web site (www.birchandwillow.com). We also encourage people to visit to our studio. Check our web site for the next scheduled Open Studio event or call us at 617.423.3437 to arrange a visit.