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THINKING INSIDE THE BOX: EIGHT CREATIVELY REUSED SHIPPING CONTAINERS

Culture, Innovation

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THIS IS PART I OF A TWO PART GALLERY SHOWING ALL THE WAYS SHIPPING CONTAINERS CAN BE REUSED, AND EVEN HELP GROW **FOOD** FOR CITIES. [CATCH PART II HERE.](#)

There are 20 million shipping containers in existence today, and they touch almost everything you own or eat – from cans of paint to human plasma to seafood to tea kettles. With so many containers floating around, there’s an abundance as they become decommissioned. In fact, in the United States there is a surplus of shipping containers because the nation has imported more than it has exported.

In response to these discarded steel boxes, shipping containers are being increasingly reinvented in a variety of new and creative ways across the globe. As far as building materials go, cargo containers are widely available and relatively inexpensive, which makes them desirable in creating low cost, eco-friendly structures.

German-born, New Orleans-based architect Stefan Beese has used containers to design and build several large scale, temporary structures that were easily assembled (and dismantled) on-site — another benefit of building with containers.

“There are thousands of unused shipping containers available on shipyards around the world that can be recycled for ‘cargotecture’ use,” explains Beese. “And with their uniform measurements they are a worldwide-available, gigantic LEGO block-like structural element that can be stacked to create larger structures, can take heavy loads, are pretty resistant to harsh weather and can be transported on the roads, railroads and by sea.”

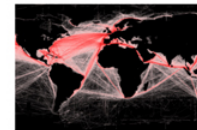
However, this cargotecture movement is not without controversy; there are plenty of designers and architects who are vehemently opposed to using repurposed containers as building blocks, particularly as a proposed solution for mass housing.

Check out these eight uses for creatively refurbished containers and let us know in the comments what you think about cargotecture!

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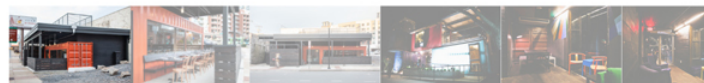
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1. 404 Kitchen



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Copenhagen's first indoor **food** market, which opened last May, features 35 **food** stands, 14 of which are housed in shipping containers. The restrooms are also in containers and, out on the pier, six containers are stacked and used for terraces and outdoor seating.

4. Quicksilver NY PRO Surf Athlete Zone and Judging Tower

Beese also used containers to build the Quicksilver NY PRO surf events in Long Beach, NY. Two 40-foot containers were attached side by side to create the Athlete Zone with a roof viewing deck, and four 40-foot containers were set in double rows next to each other (and double stacked) to create the 16 foot tall judging tower. One 40-foot container was cut open lengthwise and given a large canopy roof to create the Roxy Village. Finally, two 20-foot containers were used as overnight storage and to elevate a large screen.



5. Soak

Since San Francisco's Mission Bay, the site of a former rail yard, is years away from transitioning into a public park, developer District Development plans to use the space for a variety of interim uses, including the addition of an eco-conscious urban bathhouse made from five shipping containers. Soak founder Nell Waters is still fundraising for the project, which will be designed by Christopher Haas.

6. The Pool Box

When German-born architect Stefan Beese moved to New Orleans, he made waves in the architectural community for his Pool Box design. A 22- by 7-foot container was used to create the structural vessel with flat walls, which holds the pool liner and does not require any additional wall support.



7. Voodoo Festival Grandstand

When Beese was asked to design a grandstand for New Orleans' annual Voodoo Fest, he used six 40-foot cargo containers. Four containers aligned in double rows were placed on the bottom to house bars and a lounge, and two containers were placed on top, perpendicular to the bottom ones, to create balconies and smaller bars.



8. The Container Guest House

Architect Jim Poteet's client lived in a repurposed commercial building in San Antonio that lacked guest accommodations, so Poteet's firm designed The Container Guest House as a retreat for guests, including visiting artists. Since then, Poteet gets at least 5-6 calls a week about this container project, and his company has several more currently in the works.



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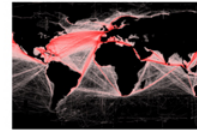


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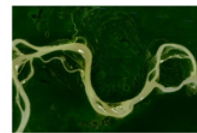
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