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JAW WOODSHOP
NEWTOWN, CT

Founder: Johnny Williams, jawwoodshop.com

It's safe to say that Johnny Williams wasn't cut out for his desk job in marketing and consumer research. "I was writing all these reports about the artisanal movement and craft scene out in Brooklyn in a windowless office, and I just wanted to be doing it myself," he says. So, Williams quit and began taking courses in woodworking and furniture craftsmanship. At his charming studio in Newtown—a 1940s red barn—he now makes beautiful tasting boards from New England hardwoods such as maple and walnut. "I alternate the growth rings, hand plane all the edges and reassemble it in a way that it becomes warpless," Williams says. He also meticulously constructs stunning custom dining room tables, coffee tables and desks, from lumber sourced from local mills. But he has discovered one unexpected job challenge: "People often offer me tree stumps from their lawns," Williams says, laughing. "I have to explain that you have to pay a tree service to do that." JAW Woodshop products are sold at Back 40 Mercantile in Old Greenwich, CT and Axel Interiors in Norwalk.

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