

A New Bench in Paris Helps You—and Your Cell Phone—Recharge

Source: architecturaldigest.com

Published: January 12, 2016



Designer Mathieu Lehanneur creates a solar-powered bench and charging station

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Photography by [courtesy of Mathieu Lehanneur](#)

When you're on the go, the only thing harder to find than a spot to sit is an outlet to recharge your dying phone. But fortunately for depleted Parisians, French designer Mathieu Lehanneur has created an innovative—and eco-friendly—solution to satisfy both needs. Called Clover, the design is part bench, part charging station, and part streetlight. The components are constructed of several species of wood, which have been combined and shaped through a special industrial process. The natural-looking result balances the high-tech features of the design. At the top of the mast are three petal-like elements: two containing LED lights and a third with solar panels that can collect three hours' worth of energy. A hatch at the light's base reveals an outlet that can be used to charge smartphones. Clover can be adapted depending on its location; for instance, the bench can be customized to span 50 feet.

Clover was installed in front of the Ministère de l'Écologie to coincide with COP21, the United Nations Conference on Climate Change, which took place in December. This is not the first time that Lehanneur, who is also the chief designer for Chinese telecommunications company Huawei, has made life easier for busy urbanites. In 2012 he installed covered Wi-Fi access stations—complete with seating and a green roof—at the Rond Point des Champs-Élysées.
