

eco shopping - our favourite buys



Why buy green?

When choosing amongst products made from renewable or non-renewable materials, keep in mind that every decision you make counts. That's not to sweat the small stuff — otherwise it gets overwhelming. But as Tanya Ha, author of *The Australian Green Consumer Guide* (\$29.95, UNSW Press), says, "When people buy a green alternative, the demand for the environmentally harmful alternative declines and, in line with this decreased demand, less are manufactured." Sounds good! There's more: "when you buy a greener product you are rewarding a manufacturer

or company that is a good global citizen, you're also contributing to investment in the research and development of products that are better environmental alternatives."

Furniture

Beautiful products that have a low impact on the environment, are designed to last and classic in style ensure your house will look fantastic while enjoying a small, snug footprint.

Try: Timber tableware, stylish seating, beds, rugs and lighting from www.koskela.com.au. They use timber sourced from recycled Australian hardwood; keep packaging to a minimum (without compromising on safety) and all waste products from manufacturing is reused recycled or returned to nature. Clever.

Paints

Non-toxic paints are just as easy, washable (in water) and durable as the rest.

Try: Bio Products Interior paints, \$77 for 4L, and wood floor varnishes (satin or gloss) at \$160 for 4L, available at www.ecoathome.com.au

Dulux Eco Choice Wash & Wear, \$17 per litre, contains less than five grams of Volatile Organic Compounds per litre and releases less emissions and fewer odours. www.dulux.com.au

Towels

Going organic in the bathroom doesn't mean drying yourself with a hemp bag. You'll be pleasantly surprised at how soft organic cotton is post-shower, and how long it will last you.

Try: Organic Bath Sheets from www.organicembrace.com.au, \$59.00 each, are made with totally natural eco-friendly colours and fibres — and they won silver medal for most

Vacuum

Electrolux Ultra Silencer Green \$399.95: 55% of the vacuum is made of recycled plastic material; 90% of total vacuum can be recycled; it uses 33% less energy; and has low noise pollution.

Beauty

"For a lot of people 'natural' or 'organic' means more expensive, but I want to prove that this isn't the case. Today there are a lot of beautiful natural products available for all budgets", says Ere Perez, owner of Australian-based natural cosmetics company whose products range from \$19.95 to \$34.95.

Try: The new biodynamic range from Jurlique www.jurlique.com.au grown on their Certified Biodynamic and Organic Farms in South Australia. They contain no parabens, mineral oils, Propylene Glycol, Sodium Lauryl Sulfate, Synthetic Emulsifiers, Artificial Colours or Fragrances.

Try: Ere Perez Natural Cosmetics — chic, understated and nourishing. Only natural ingredients (oils, plant extracts and minerals), blended with antioxidants ... to create gentle, highly effective cosmetics. Australian owned, not tested on animals www.ereperez.com

Try: Sanctum Organic Skin Care

Greg Milham, owner & chemist of Sanctum, says "using natural skin and body care products has a huge impact on your health — you're avoiding synthetic ingredients and preservatives (many of which are already banned overseas for safety reasons). Plus, there's less waste in manufacturing and no nasty herbicides and pesticides washing into our water systems.

Sanctum formulate and manufacture all products in house and keep advertising and packaging expenses to a minimum.... So it's 100% Australian and completely affordable. www.sanctumaustralia.com

Fashion

Trends in fashion have an unfortunate way of adding to the goods that come and go in our disposable economy. Sustainable fabrics, like bamboo and organic cotton, are the opposite of a quick fad. They're now more often made into clothes that are made to last. So the next time you go clothes shopping, buy garments that suit your style so you wear them for longer, diminishing the tread your wardrobe makes on our environment.

Try: Vintage clothing made into one-off originals from www.handcut.com.au; soft and sustainable classics from www.bamboobody.com.au; sweatshop-free, organic cotton, and very cool Australian pieces from www.fulllystoked.com.au — they donate 30% of their profits to environmental protection and conservation projects worldwide; ethical clothing and interior décor made from high quality and sustainable fabrics (including bamboo, organic cotton, hemp, soy and silk) www.purepod.com.au

Try: Kids Environmental Bibs, \$22.50, designed with chickens, frogs or pig prints. Biodegradable bib designed by Cocoboheme, waterproof and washable with a sponge.

Try: Water-powered desktop clock, \$17.95, and calculator, \$24.95. No need for batteries or electricity, ever.

Re-use, re-fill. "By using reusable drink bottles, you're save money because you are encouraged to fill your bottle up at home instead of buying bottles of water when you are out," says Tracey from Biome.

Try: SIGG water bottles — beautiful designs, lightweight, practically indestructible and useful for cold or hot liquids. \$38.95 for 0.6L. Sounds like a lot for a water bottle? If you buy a bottle of water every day, you would have spent that within about two weeks!
www.biome.com.au
