

SHOPPING



BY NIKE BADA

STYLISHLY SUSTAINABLE

BERMUDIANS HAVE ADAPTED TO CLIMATE
CHALLENGES TO BALANCE LOOKING GOOD WITH
CARING FOR THEIR LOCAL ENVIRONMENT.

Creative Bermudians are embracing the sustainable without sacrificing style — but this has been a necessary move. Situated as it is in the middle of the Atlantic, the island of Bermuda has become increasingly susceptible to the effects of global warming and other changes to the environment; and, as such, its residents are particularly aware of the importance of conserving and protecting biodiversity and the marine environment. As a result of this increasing awareness, more care and attention are being given to what we put in our bodies and on our skin — as well as over our skin.

On an island where there is little to no manufacturing and much of what is consumed is imported, the question of how best to balance the impact this inevitably has on the environment is being addressed in innovative ways.

Image courtesy of Indigo Song

Local retailers and designers are attempting to counter the damage and inequality caused by the fashion and beauty industries by offsetting the burden of their environmental responsibility and by placing a greater emphasis on social responsibility.

FASHION FIXES

Science has been called into the fight against the polluting effects of the fashion industry. Many design houses are eschewing the use of leather and fabrics that are difficult or environmentally harmful to manufacture, and virgin petrochemical fibres like polyester, nylon and acrylic are also being phased out. Some local fashion collections have caught on to this trend and are using materials that have been recycled from waste items recovered from landfills and the ocean, including fishing nets, fabric scraps, carpeting and industrial plastic. These products are broken down and converted into new nylon fabric of a standard and quality that is equal to the original and then reused. One of the benefits of this material is that it has the potential to be recycled indefinitely.

Extending the life of an item goes a long

way to reducing waste, and another way local businesses have lowered their consumers' environmental footprint is through a healthy disregard for so-called "fast fashion." Several small, independent boutiques have launched in Bermuda in the last few years focusing on the careful curation of better-quality, timeless pieces which last longer and create less waste. The sale of second-hand clothes in Bermuda has also always been popular and is a great way of keeping functional and still-beautiful items in circulation for years to come.

CONSCIOUS CARE FOR THE BODY

The changes that have taken place do not only relate to fashion but extend to beauty and body care. Several local entrepreneurs have created their own natural blends for body and hair which can be found islandwide, whilst other niche retailers on the island offer natural, ecologically friendly ingredients in their products.

SMARTER SHOPPING

Zero waste bulk shopping is available in several of the more discerning supermarkets and

stores, and everywhere you are encouraged to bring your own shopping bag or coffee cup as we move to minimise the popularity of single-use plastics.

With regard to social responsibility, local businesses are putting the spotlight on and giving their support to manufacturers and businesses that pay and treat their employees fairly, ensure a safe working environment and minimise waste. Others promote brands from women-owned companies or smaller producers that source their ingredients from reputable suppliers and make the environment a priority.

GOING FORWARD

In Bermuda we understand the issue and impact the environment has on the well-being and welfare of the people who live here, and, as such, we are passionate about taking care of the resources we have. Bermudian brands have woken up to the fact that making a difference and giving back socially can actually be good for business by creating a situation where, like the nature that abounds on the island, style and substance coexist in harmony.