



Bamboo is tough. Bamboo is strong—it's one of the strongest building materials in the world. Yet despite its strength, when made into clothing, bamboo is softer than the softest cotton and smoother than the smoothest silk.

Photos: Scott Yavis
 Bamboo clothing: Lula designs, luladesigns.com
 Hair: Cara Rivet, Eclipse Hair Cafe
 Make up: Chrissy Lambert

If bamboo is so luxurious, why isn't it more popular? Is it the price? No. Bamboo designs are affordable and available at many chain stores.

Are designs limited? No. Bamboo is fashioned into designer pants, tops, skirts, pyjamas, and every accessory under the sun. Just about anything wearable is available in bamboo—and for both genders.

Perhaps it's because bamboo is a new fibre. Psychology tells us that most people like the familiar—it takes a while to accept something new. Here are some great reasons to choose bamboo.

Bamboo is naturally clean

Bamboo contains a natural carbon odour-control system that neutralizes perspiration odour. Bamboo's natural antibacterial properties ensure it resists mold, mildew, and fungi growth, making it the perfect fibre for cloth diapers, washcloths, and towels.

Bamboo is also naturally nonstick and sweat wicking. This makes the fabric perfect for the fitness fanatic, with fitness pants available in crop bootleg, yega, and capri. Other styles of bamboo-fibre pants are available, including cargo, angler, zip-off, and military styles.

Bamboo is stylish

Basic T-shirts are where soft yet strong bamboo really goes to work. T-shirts knit from bamboo fibre may be your new clothing basic as they generally sell for less than \$20. You can also find thermal knits made of bamboo combined with organic cotton. Sweaters are available in bamboo, too.

Bamboo and pandas

Another important benefit of bamboo cultivation is that it helps sustain China's endangered panda population. Some bamboo clothing companies donate a percentage of their net profits to help protect panda bears and other endangered species. Most bamboo clothing is panda friendly because it comes from the *Phyllostachys pubescens* (Moso bamboo) plant. Giant pandas usually eat only the four or five kinds that grow in their habitat of southwestern China. Giant pandas rely on *Pseudosasa japonica* (arrow bamboo), although they have been known to also eat *Phyllostachys ngra* (black bamboo) and *Phyllostachys bissetii* (bissetii bamboo).

A friend to the environment

Bamboo is a critical element in the balance of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. It reduces the carbon dioxide gases blamed for global warming. Bamboo is protective, forming a canopy for regreening of degraded areas, generating up to 35 percent more oxygen than an equivalent stand of trees; it also rapidly metabolizes carbon dioxide.


Unlike most trees, bamboo is not killed during proper harvesting, so topsoil is held in place. Plus, bamboo can be grown in soil wrecked by overgrazing and poor agriculture techniques. Bamboo grows rapidly and can be harvested every three or four years. After harvest, bamboo regenerates quickly, sending out an average of four to six new shoots each year.



Pairing your bamboo top with a feminine skirt is easy with bamboo. The fabric drapes naturally, which makes it ideal for every style of skirt, from mini to full-length prom gown.

Makes leisure a pleasure

The comfort and softness of bamboo lends well to leisure wear, including pyjamas and scrubs, the working man's pyjamas. Like other clothing varieties that embrace bamboo's strong softness, pyjamas and scrubs in bamboo and bamboo blends are available in many styles and colours.

Want to get in on the new trend? Next time you're shopping at your fair trade, natural-fibre clothing shop, try on a few pieces of bamboo clothing off the rack; or order bamboo clothing online. Either way, you'll help the environment prosper while enhancing your wardrobe. 

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