

EcoLiving Ideas

Spotlight on Fair Trade: Shanti Boutique Handmade Jewelry

By [Silvia Milanova](#) on Jul 1, 2013

1 reviews |

[Login to Comment](#)  [Login](#)

[ShareThis](#) 

[Prev](#) [Next](#)



When you pick up a new pair of earrings, or try on a ring, what goes through your mind? *How do I look? Is this the right fit?* Do you think about how the purchase positively or negatively impacts people around the world? Or how the purchase affects the artisans who made the jewelry?

Buying fair trade jewelry ensures that the people behind the production of your treasured necklaces, earrings, rings and bracelets are being paid adequate wages, have decent working conditions, and receive fair terms of trade for their products. Fair trade requires companies to pay sustainable prices for products, addressing the injustices of conventional trade and the exploitation of workers in developing countries.

The truth is, a lot of jewelry is mass-produced in factories far away from here. There is nothing special about it. And the process of making a nice pair of earrings or a beautiful bracelet has nothing beautiful about it. To say the least, this business, like many others, is a dirty business. If you've ever heard of the term *blood diamond*, that says it all. Jewelry that is not fair trade may not be made in an ethical, clean, or safe way.

Fortunately, it's easier to find fair trade products these days than in the past. If you're looking for jewelry that is beautifully crafted and benefits both people and planet, look no further than Shanti Boutique, EcoPlum's first fair trade [handmade jewelry](#) supplier.

Founded in 2004 by Crystal Water, Shanti Boutique is a company that focuses on providing unique, handcrafted designs that make people happy, while striving to make the world a better place, one piece at a time. EcoPlum selected Shanti because it is a member of the Fair Trade Federation and a Gold Certified member of the Green America Business Network. (Note: EcoPlum is also a [Gold Certified](#) member of the Green America Business Network).

The Fair Trade Federation supports businesses and owners who are committed to:

- Offering fair and timely payments to artisans and farmers
- Forming lasting relationships with artisans and farmers
- Solving problems that arise without negatively affecting artisans and farmers
- Setting realistic timelines for the produced work, without overworking artisans and farmers

The Green America Business Network ensures that members:

- Use business as a tool for social change
- Have values and are not simply profit-driven
- Are socially and environmentally responsible in the way they source, manufacture, and market their products, and run their offices and factories
- Are committed to employing innovative practices that benefit workers, communities, customers and the environment

Shanti's manufacturers are all chosen based on their fair trade principles. These include proper treatment of workers, a good working environment, building sustainable business relations, and using sustainable materials as much as possible. Waters has known the artisans who make Shanti's jewelry for many years. They are all either family-owned or operated, or cooperatives, in Indonesia, India or Thailand.

Shanti's manufacturers are treated fairly, have the opportunity to advance, and work under good conditions. This differs from other companies who may hire people in these countries at a low minimum wage, make them work long days and give them no benefits.

Shanti also applies its ethical standards to other areas of business. Shanti's green efforts encompass the

Gia's Plum Picks



traditional motto of 'reduce, reuse, recycle', as well as efforts to minimize usage of shipping and packaging resources, lessen the use of electricity and heating, eliminate driving to work, and neutralize carbon emissions.



"In our busy world, it is important to think about the earth and the environment, not for short-term profits, but to look towards the future," said founder Crystal Water. "We have to protect nature and make sure that we have a nice environment to live in. It is vitally important to us all."

In addition to practicing fair trade guidelines and being an eco conscious business, Shanti Boutique also donates a portion of its proceeds to helping developing countries. One organization that is dear to founder Crystal Water's heart is the Tibetan Children's Education Foundation (TCEF). The organization is dedicated to maintaining the practice of Tibetan culture. Waters also serves on the board of directors of TCEF. Every year, she sponsors a Tibetan child and an elder.

Shanti Boutique began as a business representing all of Water's favorite things: travel, fair trade, design, health, languages, green business, internet, and wearable and meaningful art/jewelry. But it has evolved into a business looking to change the world by encouraging consumers to be more mindful of the environment through their purchases.



"As humans are natural consumers and we even need to consume in some ways to survive, we need to do our part by supporting local and recycled products and those that have less impact on the environment," said Water. "As consumers, we have the power to make a difference by our choices, whether that be by choosing to transport ourselves by bike or becoming vegetarian or buying from small businesses that support the local community."

Jewelry is a very personal thing, and while some people love big dangly colorful items, others go for the dainty and classic. To satisfy consumers of all walks of life, Shanti offers many traditional pieces made of silver and gold, more contemporary jewelry made of eco friendly recycled glass and recycled brass, as well as items based on Hindu theism and

the "7 Chakras". "Chakra" is a Sanskrit word that means "wheel" or "turning." It is used in many Hindu texts and practices, and refers to the "force center" or "energy center" of the body. These stunning pieces are among Shanti's most popular products.

"As an environmentally conscious business, we strive to use sustainable materials as much as possible in our productions as well as keeping our environmental impact low by reducing paper and electricity usage."

Although Shanti Boutique makes its pieces using different mediums, one-of-a-kind designs and a variety of colors, its whole aura screams "green." Check out the company's beautiful and sustainable [fair trade jewelry](#) pieces. There is something for everyone!

This is part of a series of articles EcoPlum is running spotlighting [fair trade](#). An earlier version of this article appeared on our site on June 26th, 2013. The article has since been updated with new information.

[See All EcoLiving Ideas](#) | [Login to Comment](#)

Reviews

By **Debbie Lance** on Jul 1, 2013
Rating:
Comments:

Follow us

Find us on Facebook

www.ecoplum.com
Like

for cosmetics which makes it...

19 hours ago

www.ecoplum.com
Flexible Glass Could Make Tablets

5,475 people like www.ecoplum.com.

Facebook social plugin
www.ecoplum.com on Facebook

Most Recent EcoClipz™



Upcoming Events

April 9
Green Drinks
6:00pm - 9:00pm
MIST (at The Kalahari)
46 West 116th
[Information](#)

April 18
Making Green From Green Event
Food Waste's Shocking Truths: Hunger, Business and YOU
Baruch Performing Arts Center (BPAC)
55 Lexington Ave. enter 25th St, betw Lex + 3rd
[Information](#)

April 20-21, 2013
Green Festival
Location: Javits Center
North, New York, NY
[Information](#)

April 22, 2013
Earth Day

Follow EcoPlum



Sign up for the ECOPLUM PIE
Newsletter



WOMEN PRESIDENTS'
ORGANIZATION®
Reaching Farther. Together.



Greenhouse
Neutral
Foundation's
Voices for
Change Honor
Roll

[Home](#) > [EcoLiving Ideas](#) > **V**

[ShareThis](#)

[Home](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [Privacy Statement](#) | [Terms of Use](#)
Copyright © 2007-2011. EcoPlum Inc. All Rights Reserved. [NEW SERVER]
Powered by Amazech Solutions | Graphics Design by Planet Media
This site is best viewed on Internet Explorer 7.0 or higher, Mozilla Firefox 3.0 or higher.