

Ethical Fashion  
Vegan Finds

# style

## A Passion for Feel-Good Fashion

Emmy Award winner Bianca Alexander shares her expert advice on how to dress stylishly and sustainably for every occasion.

By **Zoe Helene**

The host of Conscious Living TV and producer of the T.H.R.E.A.D.S. and Vert Couture Eco-Fashion Shows across the country, Bianca Alexander (photo next page) needs to look good for a wide range of occasions—and she pulls it off with great personal style and a passion for eco-fashion. “My work requires a versatile wardrobe that can take me from yoga mat to TV studio to front row at Fashion Week,” says Alexander. “But the old rules of fashion no longer apply. Style at the price of people and the planet is not beautiful.” Here are her fundamentals of feel-good fashion and some of her favorite things to wear. →

### GREEN GODDESS GOWN

“David Peck of CrOp’s garments are made in the U.S. with certified organic, fair trade and natural fabrics,” says Alexander. “This Jessica Rabbit gown is my go-to for green carpet events and parties. I also love Allison Parris ([AllisonParris.com](http://AllisonParris.com)) and Silk Utopia ([Silkutopia.com](http://Silkutopia.com)) for earth-conscious cocktail dresses.” Curvy Goddess Gown, \$1,695; [DavidPeckCollection.com](http://DavidPeckCollection.com)



## Bianca Alexander's Eco-Fashion Fundamentals

**KNOW YOUR FABRICS** It takes nearly a third of a pound of pesticides to make one conventionally grown cotton T-shirt. These chemicals harm our planet and pollute our drinking water. Instead, look for pesticide-free organic cotton or renewable materials like Sashawashi (seaweed), Tencel, Modal and animal-loving fabrics like Ahimsa or Peace Silk.

**THINK COLOR** Support designers and brands that employ sustainable coloring methods, like no-impact dyes and all-natural plant- and earth-based dyes. Natural dyes are not just good for the environment. They're better for your body, since our skin absorbs toxins from clothes. Fine imported dyes preserve traditional artisan dye-making and often support poor rural communities.

**AVOID FAST FASHION** Fast fashion—stocked at most big box and novelty fashion stores—is manufactured in sweatshops that deny humane working conditions to women and children laborers in China and other developing countries. Instead, look for garments manufactured locally in accordance with fair trade principles, which help preserve the environment and ensure artisans receive a fair living wage.

**ROCK VINTAGE** Freshen up your wardrobe with retro looks that never go out of style. Vintage clothing keeps trash out of landfills and will keep you looking like an original.

**BE MINDFUL** Before you make an impulse buy, think about where and how that product was made. Will it fall apart in a few months and eventually end up in a landfill? Was it made by child laborers? If you don't know the answer, you may want to hold out for a more sustainable option. When in doubt, follow the chain of production. It will always lead back to a set of values—make sure they match yours.

**VOTE WITH YOUR \$** Informed choices support artisans who make the garments you wear and companies doing their part to take care of Mother Earth. Though it might cost a little more than what you find at a discount chain, it feels good knowing you are a part of the solution, not a part of the problem.

### RECYCLED GRAPHIC GLASS

"Pairing pendants is a fun and easy way to create bold color statements," says Alexander. "These recycled glass pendants by Modern Organic Design are one-of-a-kind." Modern Organic Design Pendants, \$68 each; [ModernOrganicDesign.etsy.com](http://ModernOrganicDesign.etsy.com)



### BOLD VEGAN TOTE

"I am crazy about this 100% cruelty- and sweatshop- free Gunas Tote. The lines are great, it's roomy, and the bright color just makes me feel happy." GUNAS Melrose Tote, \$249.99; [GunasTheBrand.com](http://GunasTheBrand.com)

### VEGAN WINTER WARMER

"I met vegan activist and designer Leanne Mai-Ly Hilgart of Vaute Couture during a cold winter in Chicago," says Alexander, "and can report firsthand that her weather-resistant outerwear will keep you warm and toasty!" Alicia Pea in Bittersweet, \$275; [VauteCouture.com](http://VauteCouture.com)



### GLOBAL YOGA

"Prana is a leading eco-activewear brand for yoginis who enjoy intense colors and structure you can trust in Tree pose or Warrior. Shining Shakti ([shiningshakti.com](http://shiningshakti.com)) and ALO ([alosport.com](http://alosport.com)) are also excellent yoga resources." Leyla Top in Bougainvillea Ikat, \$65; [prana.com](http://prana.com)