

ADVICE FROM GREEN BLOGGERS

What other factors do you consider important when choosing handmade green items to feature?

Not only do I look at the aesthetic factor of the product, but I also look at how much information is given about it that lets me know its green credentials: what materials were used, where were they sourced, how was it made. If it's an unusual material, I'd like to know why the artisan chose that material, what their overall vision is.

We have to like the items and think they are unique. We're also interested in the back story. Who is making and why. Where do materials come from. We also tend to be more interested when the artist contributes a portion of profits to support a non-profit.

While we always evaluate the "greenness" of the product, we also care about whether the artist is making an attempt in every aspect of her business to be green. No one is perfect, but what we want to know is that the artist is looking for sustainable packaging materials to replace plastic bags for instance or that she re-uses all her packing materials.

To clarify, the product doesn't have to have ALL of the features listed above, but it DOES have to have some significant eco-friendly feature or features before I will consider. I also tend to consider the quality of the product (how long it might last), whether it can be adapted to other used, and whether it can be given a second life, either by being given to someone else or upcycled for another purpose.

quality, beauty, usefulness

With all handmade items, eco-friendly or not, I look for style, quality and originality.

Its uniqueness, amount of recycled/reclaimed/organic material used.

What would you say is the most important factor that you consider when choosing green products to feature?

I'm looking for green items that are BEAUTIFUL. Just because something is made from recycled materials doesn't mean that it's a good idea or is has been well executed. We look for gorgeous photos and fine craftsmanship, something special that someone would love to have in their home, or something really useful.

Whether the product is green enough for us. We prefer to support artists who are really attempting to create an environmentally sustainable business. We aren't too big on choosing those where every item except one or two are green. If the bulk of an artist's work is not green or moving in that direction, yet they submit something to us that is green, we are less likely to want to feature that one item.

I tend to prefer products that use reclaimed materials but that is my personal choice

That the product be BOTH stylish and truly green in at least one way.

quality, beauty, usefulness

That it still match the aesthetic quality of my blog- there is lots of amazing stuff out there, but I can't write about everything, so it has to catch my attention, or my eco-friendly guest blogger Liz' attention and align with either of our own personal styles.

That it is relevant to the blog

What advice would you give to artisans about how to get a green blogger's attention for their products?

Always send pictures, and make sure they're great pictures (color, lighting, clarity). if you're not a photographer, find someone who is. Great photos will do more to get my attention than anything else.

I know every blogger will say the same thing. Familiarize yourself with our blog. Know that what we talk about in general falls in four categories for green celebrations, special events etc: decor, food, activities and gifts. That's a pretty wide range, but there are still some things outside of it.

Write short emails as if we are a fairly popular blog we will get many submissions a day and ensure that you link to your shop/blog/flickr photograph. And always ensure that your photographs are in focus :)

To be honest, I tend to gloss over typical press releases. The products that get my attention are the ones that:

1**Come with a personal message that shows the artisan actually took at least a little time to see whether the product would be a good fit for my blog. (Ex. I focus very specifically on home decor and household products, so I would be unlikely to feature a purse or clothing unless it was a VERY special circumstance, like maybe a Mother's Day green giveaway)

2. Have great photos, no less than 600px wide

3. Solve a green problem that other products haven't considered.

4. Is something I haven't already featured.

5. The artisan has a clear commitment to green principles that goes beyond ambiguous terms like ""green"" or ""sustainable."" I need to know specifically what makes the product green (organic textiles, recycled materials, etc.)

6. The artisan is willing to answer questions about their product if any points need to be clarified."

Just be kind, brief, down to earth and to the point. Include links (make sure they work) - No pretentiousness please. Also would prefer when sending out info that you select one blogger at a time,

take turns with bloggers, vs sending out a mass email to all bloggers. If you don't hear back within a set amount of time (say a week) - then go to another blogger.

Research the blog and make sure that it is appropriate for that blog.