

# The beauty of bamboo

Two sisters from Minnamurra have come up with an environmentally friendly way to be fashionable, writes ILSA CUNNINGHAM.

Even as children growing up in Minnamurra, sisters Eloise Danby and Amanda Naess had business-woman brains.

School holidays were spent scrounging lemons, chokos and whatever else they could get their hands on to sell in their little stall by the side of the road. They even convinced neighbouring kids to mow the stall, giving them a bag of lollies and 10 cents for their efforts.

Little did they know that this early foray into the business world would stand them in good stead for running a successful clothing company some 20-odd years down the track.

The duo teamed up 18 months ago to create the bamboo fibre fashion line Bamboo Body.

The range features T-shirts and boxer shorts for men, unisex socks, and tops, pants and dresses for women. They went for a casual yet dressy style. Some outfits are even suitable for the gym, with their ability to wick away sweat.

The bamboo fibre not only absorbs moisture readily, it has anti-bacterial and anti-odour properties, making the gym wear and socks particularly popular.

It was only through Danby's research that the sisters became aware that bamboo fibre could be used in clothing.

Naess had asked Danby, a business analyst, to help her investigate a new

career option after she left nursing.

She'd started her own clothing store in Brisbane, but wanted to generate her own clothing range.

During the research, Danby was intrigued by natural fibres. When she discovered how wearable bamboo fibre was, the business opportunity was too good to resist.

And, for a child raised by environmentally conscious parents, the eco-friendliness of bamboo fibre was also appealing.

"Cotton takes a lot of water, pesticides and chemicals, whereas bamboo grows easily and you don't need pesticides," Danby, 32, says.

Adds Naess: "We designed something that anyone can wear. Most worn pieces stay in fashion, so we went for basics so they don't end up in landfill after a season."

The sister's design the clothes in Australia before sending them to China to be changed from plans into clothing.

With Danby based in Sydney and Naess in Brisbane, the phone is essential for keeping the business on track.

They work on designs together, but each reveals in their separate roles within the business.

"I'm the planner," Danby says. "And I'm the doer," her sister adds.

"I always want to have a list to know things are a goer," Danby says.

"But I'm like, there's no time to do that!" 29-year-old Naess adds.

While it might be tricky living in different states and running a business, the pair believe being sisters has really helped.

"We don't get sick of each other. We know each other so well that we understand each other and if we have a fight it's over in five minutes," Naess explains.

A few fights have actually proved quite productive, forcing the sisters to concentrate on adopting a good plan for the future.

They're now concentrating on their new line - sweaters made from a bamboo/cashmere blend and ladies underwear, to be released in February in plenty of time for winter.

They believe their South Coast upbringing has played a large part in the creation of their environmentally friendly clothing line.

"In Kiama people are fairly environmentally conscious. There was always a big emphasis on protecting the environment, it was a big part of our lives. We were always looking at power, recycling and water use," Naess says.

"Ethical fashion is not just for hippies, it's accessible for everyone, so we designed simple clothes for everyone to wear."

Their range is available online at [www.bamboobody.com.au](http://www.bamboobody.com.au) or in Sydney at Cotton Wool, 2/15 Bungan St, Mona Vale.

## The Fashion



Ruched singlet, black, \$49.95 and the essential skirt, black, \$69.95



The wrap top, black, \$119.95 and the essential skirt, black, \$69.95

CENTRE: The perfect dress, berry, \$109.95  
BELOW: The Kath dress, cinnamon, \$79.95



Cross-front top, black, \$69.95



Unisex socks, \$14.95



Crop pant, black, \$69.95



Spaghetti camisole, cinnamon, \$49.95



Cross-front top, \$69.95



Eloise Danby and Amanda Naess. Picture: KEN ROBERTSON