



Bamboo fabric

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Bamboo Body

Bamboo is one of the most successful plants in the world. It is very fast growing and resistant to bacteria, insects and disease. Bamboo creates a livelihood for many poor rural communities and has a diverse range of uses including scaffolding and shelter, food, utensils, arts and crafts, and furniture. Clothing made from bamboo is now quickly gaining popularity as a very wearable, environmentally friendly alternative to cotton and synthetics.

There are over 1,000 different species of bamboo on Earth. The species of bamboo used in bamboo fabric is called *Phyllostachys edulis*, more widely known as moso bamboo. The moso bamboo species is not the species eaten by the endangered panda and the bamboo used in textiles is not taken from natural forests or panda habitats. The bamboo grows naturally without the aid of pesticides, insecticides, fertilisers or any chemicals whatsoever. One of the reasons bamboo is such a successful plant is because it is rarely attacked by pests or infected by pathogens. Bamboo contains a natural antibacterial agent and pesticide known as 'bamboo kun'.

This inherent quality of bamboo means that it is not necessary to treat the bamboo crop with pesticides or chemicals. The crop is grown completely naturally. The antibacterial properties found in the bamboo plant have been shown to be transferred into the bamboo fabric, making it naturally antibacterial, antifungal and odour resistant.

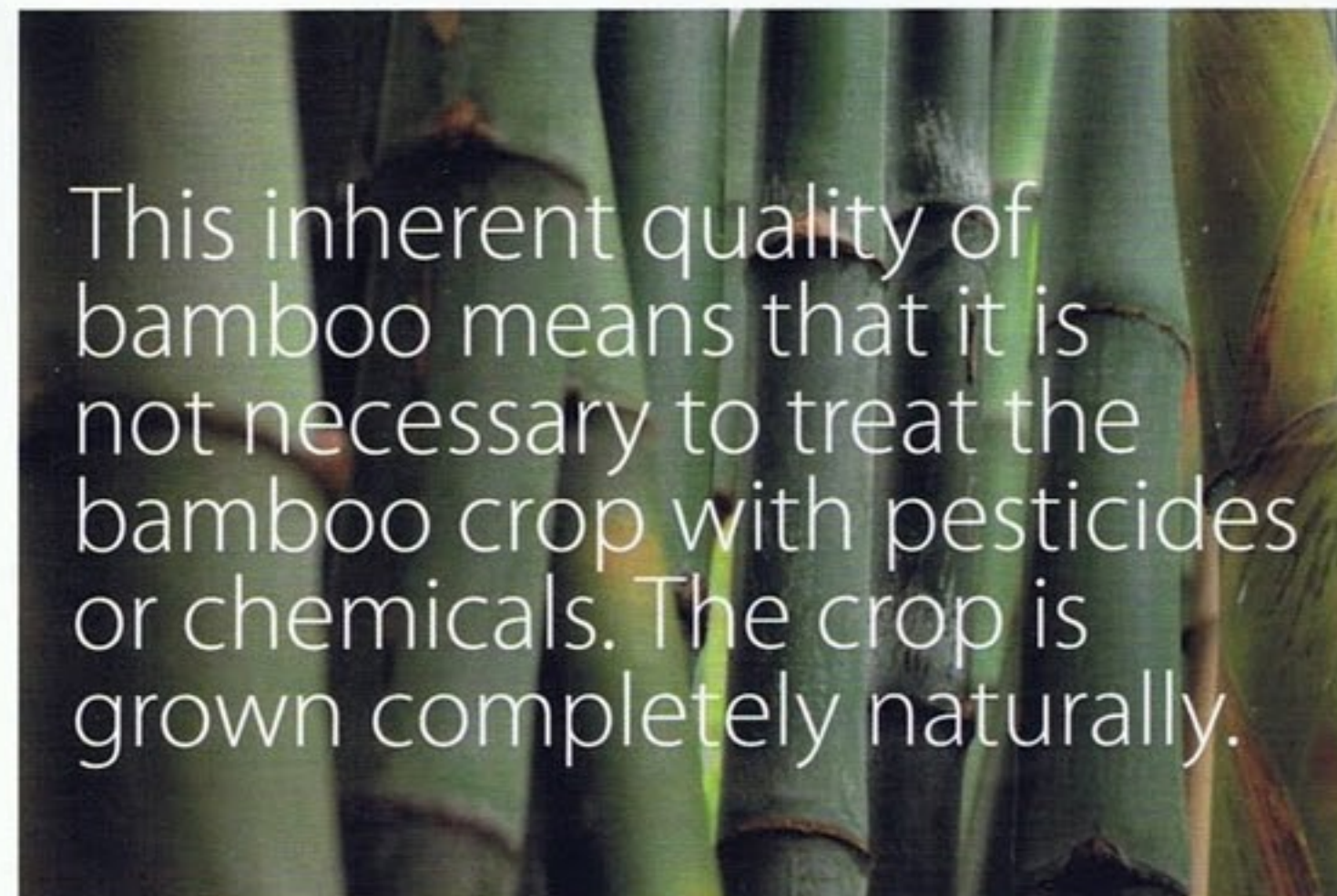
Bamboo fabric has been compared to silk and cashmere because of its buttery soft feel. It not only feels wonderful against the skin,

it has the benefit of good looks, too. The fabric has a luxurious drape and a natural lustrous sheen. The versatility of the fabric makes it suited a wide range of applications from ladies' evening wear to yoga and exercise gear. The antifungal and odour-resistant properties of the bamboo fabric also make for very appealing underwear and socks. Additionally, bamboo fabric is a suitable alternative for allergy and eczema sufferers. The natural fibres are breathable, smooth and soft and do not cause itching or rubbing. The fabric is also known to be thermodynamic, keeping the body warm in cool weather and cool in warm weather.

The increasing use of bamboo textiles is a positive step, considering all of the benefits bamboo plants bestow on the environment.

Bamboo has an extensive shallow root system. The root system stabilises the earth, preventing soil erosion and sustaining riverbanks. The complex root system also acts as a watershed and can not only prevent flooding, but preserves water in the soil by creating a natural reservoir. Bamboo can help mitigate soil and water pollution as it can rapidly take up excess nitrogen, phosphorus and heavy metals. This ability could make bamboo an alternative to sequester excess nutrients contained in waste waters from manufacturing, livestock farming and sewage.

There is evidence that the water-use efficiency of bamboo is twice that of eucalyptus trees. This could be because bamboo has a different and more efficient method for photosynthesis than trees. Bamboo has what is called C_4 carbon fixation, which



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makes bamboo plants more able to handle conditions of drought, flood and high temperatures than trees.

Like trees, bamboo soaks up CO_2 , uses the carbon in the process of photosynthesis and releases oxygen into the atmosphere as a by-product. Interestingly, bamboo absorbs up to five times more carbon dioxide and releases 35% more oxygen into the atmosphere than an equivalent stand of trees. Bamboo plantations have a large canopy that can protect the soil from baking in the sun. The leaves and sheaves from the canopy fall to the ground and create a thick natural cover that protects, enriches and fertilises the soil.

Bamboo is a woody grass and grows differently to trees. Bamboo shoots emerge and grow longer, like the grass in your backyard. Bamboo has been known to grow as much as one metre in 24 hours! A tree trunk grows in thickness as it matures. It can take many decades for a tree to reach maturity.

When a tree is cut down it will need to be replanted. In contrast, when bamboo is cut down it is not destroyed and does not need to be replanted. Bamboo's root system remains in place. The bamboo simply regrows and can reach maturity in three years. Bamboo is completely renewable and sustainable.

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www.bamboobody.com.au. Bamboo Body offers a stylish collection of clothing made from beautiful bamboo fabric.*

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