



## Look good, do good: Clothing with a conscience

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LOS ANGELES - In this challenging economy, indulging your fashion desires can feel a bit, well, indulgent. So why not be truly fashion conscious and buy brands that support charitable causes?

Thanks to companies that build giving back into their business plans, you can dress top to toe in trendy duds that help those in need — from victims of violence in Africa to victims of breast cancer at home.

We're not talking "Save the Whales" T-shirts. These are hip styles that celebrities work into their everyday wardrobes. (Does J-Lo know that those jeans benefit breast cancer?)

Some famous folks are so moved by the causes that they become spokespeople. Courteney Cox and pals Jennifer Aniston and Sheryl Crow recently lent their star power to promote OmniPeace, a clothing company that donates 25 percent of its profits to charities working to end poverty and violence in Africa.

"We can bring awareness and we can open people's eyes to things that maybe they wouldn't actually know about," Cox says. "That's our job as celebrities I think. We have to do that and we have to use whatever notoriety we have to push things forward and make things better."

And look good doing it.

Here's how to build an outfit entirely from clothing with a conscience:

\_ Jeans: PRVCY (pronounced privacy) makes designer denim and dedicates 10 to 25 percent of its profits to funding breast cancer research and providing free mammograms to women nationwide. Jeans for men and women come in various cuts and washes, all featuring the brand's "lifeline" embroidery on the pockets, which represents founder Carolyn Jones' transition from corporate executive to compassionate entrepreneur.

Jones started her company in 2003, just after her mom died from breast cancer, and made it her mission to support work toward a cure. PRVCY has since donated "several hundred thousand dollars" to breast cancer-related programs.

"We do it as part of our mission," Jones says. "We're out there making a fashion statement, but it's more than that for our company."

\_ Tops: There are so many high-fashion tees that benefit charities, you can give back every day of the week.

OmniPeace partners with different charities each year with the goal of ending world poverty by 2025. The company makes soft cotton T-shirts for men and women, plus flirty tops, scarves and tote bags, all with the brand's logo: An image of Africa shaped into a hand making the peace sign. Each piece comes with a hangtag that doubles as a call-to-action to President Obama urging him to "use your power to end sexual atrocities against women and girls of the Congo."

The latest designs feature artwork by child survivors of violence there.

Love Yourself also makes super-soft T-shirts, each with a positive affirmation, and gives five to 10 percent of its proceeds to charities "that show our variety of interests," says company co-founder Mastin Kipp.

The brand, which counts Lenny Kravitz and Carmen Electra among its fans, supports environmental organization Global Green; Child Help, which provides services to victims of child abuse; and the Institute of

Noetic Sciences, which studies consciousness and intuition.

"We are participating in what we like to call conscious capitalism," Kipp says. "We'd rather have a high happiness index than a high profit margin."

Swedish clothier H&M blends charity and celebrity with its Fashion Against AIDS collection, made up of T-shirts and bodysuits designed by stars such as Katy Perry, Cyndi Lauper and Dita Von Teese. The company contributes 25 percent of each item's sale price to four AIDS-related charities.

Rockers Tokio Hotel designed a T-shirt with a skull, while Von Teese created a cap-sleeve tee decorated with what appears to be a one-eyed version of her face.

"Maybe you're not so inclined to buy an AIDS T-shirt, but because a celebrity designer is backing it, maybe you're more apt to do that," says company spokeswoman Jennifer Uglialoro. "Creating awareness is the most important part."

\_ Shoes: Choose from Toms Shoes' laid-back styles and outfit a child in a developing nation with a much-needed pair of shoes. The company, founded in 2006, has donated more than 140,000 pairs of shoes to needy children — one for every pair sold.

Toms slip-ons come in canvas, sequined, suede, corduroy and vegan-friendly designs. There are also boots for women and canvas shoes for baby.

\_ Hats: Summer is a fine time for a chapeau, especially a colorful fair-trade fedora from Livity Outernational.

The company specializes in eco-friendly, fair-trade textiles, and provides its wares to surf companies such as Quiksilver and Roxy.

Founder Isaac Nicholson says he started Livity to "show my friends in the surf and streetwear industries that the concept of environmentally friendly clothing didn't have to be priced out of reality."

The company seeks to operate in a sustainable way wherever it does business, Nicholson says, and it supports nonprofit organizations such as Hemp Industries of America (hemp is more environmentally sustainable than cotton, he says, and can be used for clothing and lumber) and the Save Hawaii Foundation, which aims to eliminate pollution off the islands' coast. For each red-star fedora Livity sells, it donates \$1 to Save Hawaii.

\_ Everything else: Donate \$3 to Reading Is Fundamental at your local Macy's between July 1 and August 31 and you'll get \$10 off a purchase of \$50 or more.

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On the Net:

\_ PRVCY: <http://www.privacywear.com>

\_ OmniPeace: <http://www.omnipeace.com>

\_ Love Yourself: <http://www.loveyourself.net>

\_ H&M: <http://www.hm.com/us>

\_ Toms Shoes: <http://www.tomsshoes.com>

\_ Livity Outernational: <http://www.livityouternational.com>

\_ Reading Is Fundamental: <http://www.RIF.org/brighterfuture>

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