

Tote Bag Roundup



Recyclable ChicoBags (left) and organic hemp/cotton ACME bags help lighten your eco-load.

Bag the plastic shopping bags—switch to reusable totes. Just one person making that change could eliminate the need for hundreds of disposable plastic bags a year. While some are recyclable, few plastic bags are biodegradable. Typical plastic is photodegradable—light breaks it down into smaller and more brittle pieces of waste—but it never really disintegrates. And most plastics are made from non-renewable petroleum. Now that San Francisco and China have officially banned plastic grocery bags, more prohibitions may follow.

—Danae DeShazer

To help prepare you for your next shopping venture, *Natural Home* set out to find the best green, reusable totes.

ECOBAGS

The string bag has been a staple in Europe for decades and is very lightweight. Made from certified organic cotton, the EcoBags Classic String Bag is colorful, flirty and pure function (the bags are said to hold up to 40 pounds!). They make a colorful fashion statement that will last through seasons of shopping. Available in more than 30 colors, \$7 to \$10 each; www.EcoBags.com.

CHICOBAG

With a 20-pound capacity, this bag provides ample size and super durability. It's made of nylon, so when you're done with your ChicoBag, return it to the company to be repurposed into new products such as door mats and dog beds. The best thing? ChicoBag folds into its own pouch, perfect for your pocket or purse and ready for shopping excursions. Ten colors, \$6 each; www.ReusableBags.com.

ACME BAGS

The Dual-Handled Lightweight Hemp Tote by acme, in plain black or natural, is made from an organic hemp and cotton blend. With a double set of handles—one short and one longer—you can carry it over your shoulder or in your hand. \$8 each; www.ReusableBags.com.

NATURAL HOME BAG

It's shameless self-promotion time! You can support the environment and your favorite magazine with our sleek organic cotton *Natural Home* tote with a wide-mouth pocket. \$10 each; www.NaturalHomeMagazine.com/Shopping.



SIMPLE LIVING WITH WANDA URBANSKA

offers thoughtful ideas to inspire each of us to make adjustments to possession-cluttered, time-starved lives. Whether it's suggesting that you commit to writing one letter every week, replacing disposable coffee cups with a travel mug, buying a seasonal share of a local farmer's crop or volunteering for a worthwhile cause, we'll provide you with small steps that, taken together by all of us, can make a large impact on your own life and on society as a whole.

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