

White + Warren Weaves Its Way Into Sustainable Cashmere

Contributor



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Caroline Tell

Dec 4, 2017, 11:12am EST

When it comes to cashmere, sustainability isn't always top of mind. But for Susan White Morrissey of [White + Warren](#), her goal isn't just to design accessibly-priced cashmere, she wants to feel good doing it. So last month, White + Warren, purveyors of luxurious cashmere essentials like sweaters, lounge pants and its top-selling travel blankets, created a new collection of the luxury wool titled Reclaimed Cashmere, featuring old cashmere that has been stripped to its natural fibers and rewoven into reclaimed styles.

"Sustainability has always been incredibly important to me as an individual, growing up in a household where my mother would wash and reuse tinfoil, and it's something we strive for daily as a fashion label," said Morrissey, who's celebrating the brand's 20th anniversary this year.

Morrissey stumbled onto the idea of sustainable cashmere while her design team was attending a luxury fabric trade show in Italy this past year. There, they were introduced to a family-owned mill in the Tuscany region that strips old cashmere down to its natural fibers and reweaves it into plush, gorgeous reclaimed wares.

"It's something we've decided to incorporate into our collection as evergreen pieces and we'll continue to introduce further styles next year," said the designer.



Reclaimed cashmere by White + Warren WHITE + WARREN

The process of reclaiming cashmere involves artisans who sort through unworn cashmere to select the highest quality fibers. The sweaters are then deconstructed and separated into panels, transformed back into cashmere fiber through a shredding process and stripped of their original color. The fiber is then re-dyed, re-spun into new yarn and reborn into brand new knits. As soon as the yarn

became available, Morrissey said she jumped at the opportunity. "It made perfect sense to add it into the cashmere assortment in timeless silhouettes," she said.



The mill where White + Warren creates Reclaimed Cashmere WHITE + WARREN

In addition to pursuing a sustainable collection, the brand donates past seasons' wares to various causes, including the [University Settlement House](#) on the Lower

East Side of New York, and a San Francisco-based line called [MODify/d](#) that recycles cashmere into plush, stuffed animals for children.

White + Warren was founded in 1997 after Morrissey left her job in corporate retail to spend more time with her children. Just then her friend presented her with an opportunity to connect with a cashmere supplier in China who was looking to do business in the United States. "I had no background on how to start a fashion brand, but I did know how to put together a strong business plan and run a business," Morrissey said. "Over 20 years later we're still working closely with that supplier on building our beautiful cashmere collection season after season."

In little time, White + Warren became a thriving business with 800 retail partners globally and a profitable e-commerce site. "Cashmere historically always came at a high price," she said. "We started the brand in order to create an accessibly priced-collection of knitwear that quickly grew into a covetable, respected label."



Caroline Tell

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I'm a lifestyle writer covering everything from style, to travel, to social trends and luxury wellness. My work has appeared in the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, Condé Nast Traveler, W, Travel Leisure, Robb Report and more. I've held staff positions at Time magazine and Women's Wear Daily and, from 2012 to 2016, served as the senior style contributor to The Observer. I live in New York with my husband and two young children.