

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## UK's Anya Hindmarch steps up war against leather waste with new Patchwork Edit collection

September 4, 2020



*Anya Hindmarch is yet again upping its sustainability credentials with its Waste Not Want Not and its Patchwork Edit. Image credit: Anya Hindmarch*

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

British leather goods maker Anya Hindmarch has launched a new Patchwork collection that is made from castoffs of textile and animal skin waste.

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Known for its eco-sensibility, Anya Hindmarch has previously taken a firm stand against plastic garbage with its recycled bags made of the same material. Now, the London-based company, via its Waste Not Want Not effort, is doing its bit to address the estimated 92 million tons of textile waste created each year by the fashion business.

"As we re-emerge from this global pandemic, it has never felt more important to behave wisely and responsibly; less but better, make do and mend and waste not want not. Our Grandmothers talked a lot of sense," said Anya Hindmarch, founder of her eponymous brand, in a letter to the company database.

"As a brand this is front of mind and we are very focused on how we can be more responsible as a business," she said. "How can we adopt a circular approach and reduce waste in our supply chain."



*Anya Hindmarch is making its Patchwork Edit collection from leather off-cuts. Image credit: Anya Hindmarch*

The **Patchwork Edit collection** comprises six totes and handbags made of castoff leather skins, ranging from \$850 to \$1,795. The colorful ensemble makes it almost a pioneer in its application.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led many consumers to rethink their eco footprint and also their consumption habits. It has also forced marketers to rethink their carbon footprint and manufacturing practices as they work to improve their sustainability credentials.

Per Anya Hindmarch, he equivalent of one garbage truck of textiles is landfilled or burned globally every second.

"The problem of dead stock and waste is enormous," the company said in a statement. "In an effort to reuse what we already have, we created the Patchwork collection."

Historically, due to the varied sizes and shapes of leather skins, only the center and largest part of a skin is used to produce a bag. Although the rest of the skin may be used for smaller items such as straps and handles, it is typically rated as waste.



*Anya Hindmarch's new bags of discarded leather bits. Image credit: Anya Hindmarch*

In 2017, the United Nations said 800,000 tons of leather off-cuts were wasted annually.

The Patchwork collection is meant to tackle this issue and pitch in its bit for the circular economy to ensure that a larger proportion of the skin is used.

Due to the complexity of using a leather patchwork technique in luxury accessories, Anya Hindmarch worked with one of only a few suppliers in Tuscany specializing in intarsia and patchworks.

Each piece of leather is skived down to create a uniform thickness and to ensure the final patchwork is perfectly flat, the company said. It is then laser-cut and every edge is hand-polished. The piece is then placed onto a panel using water-based glue to create each design.

"Due to the intricate nature of the designs it is not possible to sew the patchwork through a programmed machine," the company said. "Instead a skilled operator has to manually control each stitch from beginning to end."

In this letter below to the company's database, Ms. Hindmarch spells out her thoughts on the Waste Not Want Not effort:

"There is no waste in nature"

I wanted to be in touch to personally explain our latest project around the subject of waste.

As we re-emerge from this global pandemic, it has never felt more important to behave wisely and responsibly; less but better, make do and mend and waste not want not. Our Grandmothers talked a lot of sense

As a brand this is front of mind and we are very focused on how we can be more responsible as a business. How can we adopt a circular approach and reduce waste in our supply chain.

I spent 2 years researching and developing the 'I Am A Plastic Bag' collection (which makes bags out of plastic bottles that were destined for landfill) and throughout the process, I was also alarmed to learn about how much leather goes to waste in the fashion industry.

"In 2017, the United Nations revealed 800,000 tons of leather off-cuts are wasted annually."

Historically, due to the varied sizes and shapes of leather skins, only the center and largest part of a skin is used to produce a bag and whilst the rest of the skin may be used for smaller items such as straps and handles, much of it ends up being thrown away.

Armed with this knowledge, we developed the 'Waste Not Want Not' patchwork collection, which ensures a larger proportion of the skin is used and saves the off-cuts going into the bin and ultimately into landfill.

Making leather patchwork in luxury accessories is an involved process, which meant we worked with one of only a few suppliers in Tuscany specializing in intarsia and patchworks. Each piece of leather has to be manually skived (thinned) down to create a uniform thickness and to ensure the final patchwork is perfectly flat. It is then laser cut, polished and placed onto a panel using water-based glue to create each design.

The work is very intricate and it is therefore not possible to sew the patchwork with a programmed machine. Instead a skilled operator has to manually control each stitch on every bag from beginning to end.

It is often so much easier (and certainly more economical) to work with new skins rather than to repurpose these discarded pieces but I hope that you will agree with me that it is important that we start seeing waste for what it is, which is as a resource'.

You can learn more about the project here and as always, we are here to answer any questions you may have.

With my warmest good wishes to you.

Stay safe

Anya Hindmarch

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