



The green house

Eco-interiors expert **Sarah Whittaker** takes a look at the wonders of recycled glass

Glorious glass

The other week Monty Don said, "I think it should be the law that we all have to make something beautiful from our recycling." Now imagine that. Maybe a little too much to ask from most of us mere mortals? But, looking at it another way, if we're all doing our bit for the environment, separating our glass and plastics, instead of having it all shipped abroad for recycling, why can't we bring some of it back into our homes as something beautiful?

Across the UK we are now recycling about 25% of our waste. On average, each household in the UK uses 331 glass bottles and jars a year. Recycling rather than dumping them would save enough energy to power a computer for five days. While this may not sound like much, when you add together energy savings from households across the UK, it can make quite a difference. For example, British Glass estimates that the 587,000 tonnes of glass recycled in 2001 saved enough energy to launch 10 Space Shuttle missions.

So where does it go? It's been suggested that some may end up in landfill sites in China. Not a nice thought. But glass is actually the perfect recycling material because it is made of such simple materials. Glass can be reused time and again, making it a perfect eco-friendly material for the home and recycles relatively easily into glassware. Unless it's green glass, which doesn't. Recycled green glass can be crushed and used in road building but if at all possible buy clear glass and then buy it again as homeware.

Try and source eco lighting made from recycled glass. I love the glass garden lanterns from Hen and Hammock. Imagine a whole gardenfull! Magical.

If you're doing interiors projects on a larger scale it gets a lot more difficult to keep to your environmental principles, but there is quite a wealth of resources available to help you source whatever you might need. Structuran and Decoran (for interiors) create 'Glass Ceramic', a new generation of 100% recycled glass material which has the combined characteristics of glass and natural stone and can be made to mirror natural stone's opacity, levels of translucency or even transparency. Wrap can help you source environmentally sound materials for all types of construction.

And finally, an obvious but effective piece of advice: reuse and feel good about it. I've been using a milkman since last year. Each bottle is used at least 12 times and then can be directly recycled into clear glass again. And the milk tastes so much better for it.

- www.henandhammock.co.uk
- www.structuran.com/gb/home.html
- www.greenhouseeffect.co.uk
- www.wrap.org.uk
- www.findmeamilkman.net



Recycled glass garden lanterns from Hen & Hammock



Feng Shui your way to happiness

Have you ever walked into a room and immediately felt cold or gloomy? Or perhaps there's that one place (the office at work, for example) where you always come out feeling depressed or stressed. Well that's your innate 'Feng Shui sense', experiencing the unhappy or disharmonious atmosphere of that home or office environment.

Feng Shui can heal your home or office and create a sanctuary of health, harmony and happiness. It's a little like acupuncture for your home. With acupuncture the fine needles are used to alleviate blockages in the movement of chi, or life force energy, so that energy can flow to and heal the body systems.

With simple recommendations on furniture layout Feng Shui, like acupuncture, can remove those blockages of energy in your home, office or clinic. When the blockages in your surroundings are removed your life runs more smoothly, you feel more energetic, positive, healthy and happy.

Colours, textures and furniture can all have an effect on the way we feel and our relationships with others. For example, some people might feel joyful with bright colours throughout their home whilst others may feel happier and more peaceful with softer, muted colours. Feng Shui can help you find the colours you personally need to energise your life and the lives of your loved ones. When each household member is surrounded by positive, uplifting colours then harmony within relationships is created. And when this balance is struck we feel happier.

Feng Shui can be a refreshing way to bring a little magic into your life. With some simple changes you can create a happy place for yourself and those around you.

If you would like to find out how to enhance your home or workplace with Feng Shui, contact Angela or Toby at Real Change Feng Shui on 01273 771944 or email them at angela@realchangefengshui.com. You can also visit their website at www.realchangefengshui.com