

Wants & Needs

Bottler's Conscience Not Watered Down

It's likely the biggest irony in the beverage industry today: the most natural thing we can consume is responsible for a byproduct flooding our landfills and adding to fossil fuel emissions. Can a bottled water business have a serious environmental conscience?



At least one firm says yes.

While most bottlers use reverse osmosis to purify their product (and often waste as much water as they bottle) Canada's redleaf uses ultraviolet purification, utilizing all the water they pump from its replenishable aquifer in Chilliwack, British Columbia. No de- and/or re-mineralization needed.

Bottles are made from 25% recycled plastic, and everything surrounding the water, from cap to earth-friendly inked label is recyclable. Even electric forklifts whisk cases from

the plant to waiting bio-fuel powered trucks.

The only thing redleaf adds to its water is oxygen. "Micro-oxygenated" water, redleaf says, gets more of the vital gas into your bloodstream than does tap or their competitors' products.

Such ultra-premium water comes with a price - \$6 for a dozen 17-ounce bottles; \$8 for 24, available at select Albertsons in New Mexico. We found redleaf tastes better than many of the other bottled waters we've tried, but no better than our favorites similarly priced. Still, if your environmental conscience guides your buying decisions, and you just can't stomach environmentally friendlier tap water, redleaf is worth considering.

May They Rest (& Charge) In Peace

The explosion of portable, rechargeable battery-powered devices has in many ways made life simpler. On the other hand, it's led to a few more problems. One of them: Where do you store all this stuff when you're not using it?



BlueLounge offers The Sanctuary, a compact design that conceals a universal charger compatible with more than 1,500 electronic devices, and able to charge as many as a dozen at the same time.

We found the initial setup simple. In fact, one of our staffer's 12-year-old customized the product for her dad's electronics in less than 10 minutes. It's worked flawlessly ever since.

Now, one could argue that \$130 is a lot to pay for a glorified cell phone charger. But if you've added other electronics to your portable arsenal, you've also accumulated a pile of chargers that now rest on the floor below a single electrical outlet on the wall. Or worse, they're plugged into walls all over the house - outta sight, outta mind.

With The Sanctuary, our gadgets found a permanent overnight home with an always powered connection at the ready.

For more information, visit bluelounge.com.

Jewelry That Speaks

Function blending seamlessly with form used to be reserved for luxury car companies and Swiss watchmakers.

No more.

Micro- and Bluetooth technology, as well as a fair amount of design and even more marketing has elevated the once lowly cellphone headset to near jewelry status. Leading the way is Jawbone's latest creation - the ICON.

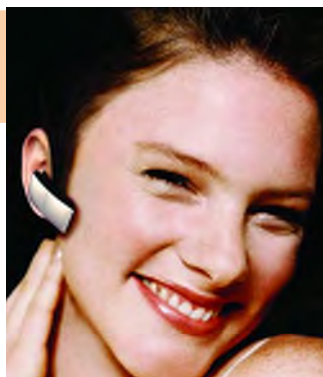
"Sexy or smart, flirty or fierce," ICON asks. "What's your inner voice?" The company has colors and designs names like Hero, Rogue and Bombshell.

But if you're going to ask \$100 for an earpiece, better have some *ooohhh* to go with the *aaahhhh*. ICON delivers.

Most impressive is its NoiseAssassin® technology, which almost eliminates sounds beyond your voice that the person you're calling might otherwise hear. Wind, crowds, music are all drastically reduced. The same technology also works wonders when paired to a phone with voice dialing. Say, "Call Mom" and your phone won't ask "Call Tom?"

Downloadable applications permit easy directory assistance access; even go international by switching to commands in Spanish, French or German.

For more information, visit jawbone.com



The Next Cut Above?

What do you mean, that tiny can opener doesn't work well? Fold down that file next to it; now turn the handle counter-clockwise. No, those are the pliers!

Maybe we ask too much of our multi-tools, especially the pocket-sized versions.

Finnish scissors maker Fiskars has joined the game but rewritten the rules with a new full-sized

tool that first and foremost remembers its roots.

The Cuts+More Scissors slice through paper, plastic and fabric just as well as the orange-handled originals. But thanks to a few strategically placed innovations, the Fiskars also handle twine, wire and bottle caps with ease. Best of all, not one of the scissors' functions is compromised to make room for another.

Titanium coated blades are billed as three times harder than steel, but just in case, a plastic blade cover also doubles as a scissors sharpener.

The scissors are scheduled to be available in November through Amazon.com and at Office Depot for \$20.



A Shade That Finally Sees the Light

Drawstrings that raise and lower shades seem simple and safe enough until we hear yet another report of a youngster accidentally strangling himself.

Oddly enough, a company has never offered a worthy alternative until this fall.

Kenney's Truly CordFree Roman Shades can be raised and lowered with the simple twist of a wand, much like the slats tilt on a blind. They come in a variety of colors and materials, from light filtering to insulating to full blackout.

Kenney's shades are available at select Wal-mart stores and scheduled to be available online at kenney.com in November. Prices range from \$28-\$45.



A Swimmingly Good Show

Take 90 athletes and entertainers and a state-of-the-art stage; pour into a custom designed theatre in the round; and stir in thousands of gallons of warm water. That's *Le Rêve*, a magical concoction that the luxurious Wynn Las Vegas has been serving grateful patrons for five years.

The spectacle is a blend of beautiful choreography and jaw-dropping acrobatics so polished and precise, that the show will mesmerize a lover of ballet as much as a football fan. Critics may complain *Le Rêve* mimics Cirque du Soleil's, but Wynn's production is more intimate, in part thanks to its theatre in the round



that's only 12 seat rows deep. The closest to the stage is called the Splash Zone.

Like the rest of Las Vegas' strip presentations, there's no longer anything most of us would call a great deal; tickets start at \$99. But if you want to see an unforgettable performance you'll be telling your friends back home about for days, start saving your pennies.

For more information and show-times, visit wynnlasvegas.com

Rightful King of the Stage

Books often make good movies. So do plays. But when a movie, especially an animated one, can be crafted into a theatrical performance, that's no small feat.

No wonder *The Lion King* has garnered more than 70 major awards.

The costumes alone, would make this a must-see. Marvels of bio-mechanical engineering and art meld with performers portraying near life-size elephants and giraffes as well as zebras and gazelles.

The smaller costumes were just as impressive. Several of the lead characters are actors, singers and puppeteers. They carry it off so well that we eventually learned to look at actor and puppet as one.



The music alone would make this a must-see. Dramatic Grammy and Tony winning scores with a full orchestra up front and giant African drums on side balconies envelope the audience. The vocals soar.

Though Broadway boasts the first theatrical performance, Las Vegas may be more accessible for residents of the Southwest. Now playing at Mandalay Bay with tickets starting at \$64. For more information, visit, mandalaybay.com.

"Tow" the Line

Those rolling bags with retractable handles have made life easier at airports and hotel lobbies. But try pulling a bag with each hand and you're suddenly a wide load without much coordination.

Travelers with this much luggage now have a simple fix with the Train Reaction, which connects two bags well enough that they roll as simply as one.

The most difficult aspect of using the device is remembering to place the shorter bag up front and attach through that bag's extended handle; the other end attaches to the larger bag's riveted handle. It defies logic until you try it just once. Then it's happy towing. Available for \$15 at trainreaction.com



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