

Bamboo. Who Knew?

A photograph of a bamboo forest. The image shows several tall, slender bamboo stalks with distinct horizontal nodes. The leaves are long and narrow, creating a dense canopy of green. The lighting is natural, highlighting the texture of the bamboo and the vibrant green of the leaves.

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What I learned about bamboo.

I have recently been writing some articles for an internet site that, on occasion, require me to do research. The one on bamboo sheets was an eye-opener. Here is some of what I learned:

Bamboo is a renewable resource; it can grow four or five feet per day. Bamboo has a natural antimicrobial quality; no pesticides are needed while it grows. This microbial quality carries over to bamboo fabric; studies performed by the China Industrial Testing Center (CTITC) and the Japan Textile Inspection Association (JTIA) have shown bamboo sheets will kill bacteria and destroy odors. Bamboo wicks moisture away from a perspiring body while retaining warming properties. The fibers produce a non-shrinking, non-pilling silky thread that can be woven into a 1000-thread count fabric.

Bamboo is used for garments as well: Fifty test subjects, all sufferers of athlete's foot, were given 100 percent bamboo socks to wear. ALL fifty subjects reported the disappearance of the burning and itching of athlete's foot within 1-2 days of wearing the socks. (Reference below).

After learning these things, I asked around. Two of my friends say that their favorite garments of all time are bamboo knits. They are warm and cool, wash like a dream, don't stain and wear forever. The sewer in the bunch said the knit bamboo was a charm to deal with. The sheet connoisseur said the bamboo sheets beat the high-quality cotton on all fronts. Not scientific research exactly, but it's always good to hear what the common folk say. So, then I went looking for the negatives about bamboo. I had to look awhile. This is all I could find:

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The majority of the bamboo used in bed-sheet fabric production is grown in Southeast Asia. The transportation costs of sending the fibers to mills in other countries have negatively affected the price of the products. Because of the astounding advantages of bamboo, it has become a highly sought-after sheet fabric, which has also increased the price.

Interesting, no??

Source: Treehugger, A Discovery Company; "Bamboo Sheets Keep Germs Out of Bed"; Lloyd Alter; 2007

http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/01/bamboo_sheets_k.ph

