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WHAT IS BAMYAK?

A Philadelphia textile company jumps at the chance to include a new innovation in fibers, a blend of bamboo and yak, in their line of home furnishings accessories.

As cashmere becomes more and more of a commodity, a new luxury yarn needs to be discovered. Yak may seem like an unlikely candidate for luxurious textiles, but it measures up to the competition. It is warmer than wool, softer than cashmere, extremely durable and lightweight. It is also hypoallergenic, breathes well in warm weather, and doesn't itch. If you combine this with lightweight and lustrous bamboo, you have a really gorgeous fabric. For over 5,000 years yaks have been essential to the lives of the nomadic peoples of Tibet, and 80% of the world's yak population lives there. Since the yaks are free roaming and native to the Tibetan highlands, yarns made from their coats are as eco-friendly as can be. Bamboo has become very popular lately due to the rising interest in eco-friendly materials. It is fast growing and easily replenished.

Kevin O'Brien Studio is working with their partners in Tibet to create a hand-woven throw made of this new fiber blend of yak and bamboo, or "Bamyak". Their throw has an extremely soft, slightly fuzzy texture, fringed edges, and a romantic chocolate color (dark chocolate brown is the most common natural color of the yak). The company has also created a version of this throw with modern-styled hand-stitched embroidery, as well as a bamyak baby blanket. Yak fiber can stand up to any other fiber for warmth. After all, the yak rarely descends below 15,000 feet in the Himalayas. They have two coats to insulate them from the cold weather. The outer coat, or "guard hair", consists of coarse, long hair. This filament is used to make things such as ropes, rugs, and various other products. The inner coat is a layer of down, which is a soft, short, superfine hair. This part of the yak's coat is spun into yarn for luxurious garments and home accessories. Blended together, yak and bamboo fibers embody the most up to date idea of a luxury material- no compromise on softness, warmth, and durability, paired with green practices and contemporary design.