

Connecting to nature with KOALA ECO

We spoke to Koala Eco co-founder Jessica Bragdon about eco-friendly products, the importance of sustainability and keeping in touch with nature.

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CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AND THE INSPIRATION BEHIND THE BRAND?

I'm originally from the United States. While studying in NYC I met Paul, who grew up on a sheep and wheat farm in WA. When we got together, and especially when we started our family, it was our shared preference to use natural remedies and solutions as part of our household routines and lifestyle. We looked for safe, non-toxic household cleaning products that also worked well, but we couldn't find what we wanted. In 2017, we decided to start a company to make plant-based products for the home and body, using beautiful aromatic essential oils from Australian native botanicals.

HOW HAVE YOUR FORMULAS AND RANGE DEVELOPED?

In terms of the fundamentals – plant-based, 100% pure essential oils primarily from Australian native plants, biodegradable, not tested on animals – nothing has changed. Our range has broadened considerably, however. We started by launching cleaning products for the home and laundry and then introducing products for the body. Since then, we've released spray mists for rooms and linen, hand and surface sanitisers and even a Natural Dog Wash.

WHY IS SUSTAINABILITY SO FUNDAMENTAL TO YOUR BUSINESS?

We don't want to use or do anything that harms our loved ones or the planet, and we want to be transparent



about this. Our bottles are made entirely from rPET collected locally and shipped to you in a recycled cardboard box. rPET plastic is entirely recycled and recyclable. We also offer concentrates, glass bottles and refills. We're making products developed from nature for nature, and we think we're offering people a strong alternative to the usual choices.

WHY IS CONNECTING WITH NATURE KEY?

Connecting with nature is one of the easiest, cheapest and most meaningful ways to invest in personal wellbeing. It's medicine. Our company mantra is essentially 'More Nature, Feel Better,' and our purpose is to help people bring more nature into their everyday lives. One easy way is to use household and personal care products that not only are made from nature, but are also environmentally friendly.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR KOALA ECO?

We're continuing to research and develop products in the lab. During 2023, we're formally launching the



business in the US. We're focusing on spreading the word about the mental and physical health benefits of caring for and connecting with nature, and sponsoring initiatives that help make that happen.

WHERE IS YOUR FAVOURITE PLACE TO TRAVEL IN AUSTRALIA?

From our home in Sydney, it's about a five-hour drive south to Eurobodalla National Park. It reminds me of my childhood summers in New England. We also love heading back to Western Australia, and visiting family as well as the Margaret River Region. Prevelly Beach is just pure heaven! **TA**