

Buy American Mention of the Week

American apparel and accessories for all ages

By Roger Simmermaker

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It's an unfortunate fact that around 97 percent of all the apparel purchased in America comes from outside the country, but you can buy American apparel and accessories if you know where to find the three percent that is made in America.

A longtime favorite apparel company of mine is All American Clothing Company (www.allamericanclothing.com), and the story behind how it all began is about as patriotic as you'll ever hear. It starts roughly a decade ago when owner, Lawson Nickol, worked for a U.S. jeans manufacturer in a job he loved, which produced its apparel in America, and for Lawson, this was important. He believed that he was working for a company that was as American as apple pie and baseball. And that was true, until the day the company decided to outsource to Mexico. Upon hearing this, Lawson resigned immediately.

Then, with a hope and a dream, Lawson started his own jeans manufacturing company the very next day. His hope was that one day he could build a truly American business, one that didn't compromise, one that didn't outsource, and one that was true to the Buy American cause. That business that Lawson created is the All American Clothing Company, and it represents Lawson's dream fulfilled.

Every pair of jeans made by All American Clothing Company comes with a Certificate of Authenticity. Thanks to the traceability number, you will know exactly which American farmers and which American mill produced the cotton from which your jeans were made.

The list of clothes sold by All American Clothing is extensive: regular denim jeans, carpenter jeans, carpenter shorts, cargo shorts, gusset jeans, ladies jeans, khaki pants, heavy-duty belts, tee shirts, polo shirts, stylish vests, ladies shirts, sweatshirts, denim shirts, denim jackets, hooded pullovers, rain jackets, boots, women's fleece capris, and Wigwam brand socks.

Speaking of Wigwam, this is another one of my American favorites.

Wigwam (www.wigwam.com) has been making socks in America for over 100 years and sources almost exclusively from American yarn spinners, who in turn buy from American woolgrowers. So when you buy Wigwam socks, you're doing your part to keep American workers working.

One thing I really like about Wigwam is that when it comes to keeping your feet comfortable, the company knows that you don't want to sacrifice quality for less-expensive labor, especially if you're an advocate of Buy American. Wigwam never makes such an unnecessary sacrifice.

How many companies exist today that can say that they produce 100 percent of their goods in America? Wigwam is one that does! And it does so not just because it cares about the financial implications that the deluge of imports has thrust upon our country's economy. It

also does it because it cares about American virtues like honesty and integrity, which are the cornerstone of its reputation.

Your feet are your foundation. With Wigwam, you'll be protecting that foundation in a comfortable fashion regardless of the activity you pursue.

It can be distressing enough when it comes to finding American-made apparel in general, but if you're a proud parent of a toddler, or perhaps a new baby, and have tried buying apparel made by fellow Americans, you're no doubt aware of the extra frustration when it comes to not knowing where to look.

That's why I am so happy that over seven years ago I became aware of a company in Michigan called Laina Line, and I've been pointing patriotic consumers to the company's website ever since. In short, if you thought it was impossible to find American-made clothing for children from six weeks to ten years of age, you really need to look no further than www.lainaline.com.

For girls, you'll find dresses, pants sets, sweaters, white blouses, as well as seasonal apparel for

summer, fall, winter, and holidays like Christmas, Valentine's Day, and St. Patrick's Day. Most outfits have matching accessories available, like fleece hats, floppy hats, hair flowers, and ribbon bows. For boys, you're able to browse sweaters, vests, pants, and more.

With the ranks of American footwear manufacturing jobs wearing thin these days, one way to stand up for an American industry that is in danger of extinction is by wearing American-made work boots from The Union Boot Pro. At www.theunionbootpro.com over 140 styles are offered, so you're bound to find something that fits your needs.

The United States once held a position in footwear manufacturing that was virtually unchallenged. Imported footwear didn't pass the 10 percent share mark until 1964, and it topped 75 percent in 1985, according to the Footwear Industries of America. By 1999, 94 percent of all footwear purchased in the United States was imported, and I doubt that today's percentage is any more favorable to American industry.

The Union Boot Pro has an unbeatable 120 percent best-price guarantee, which means that if you see an item for a lower price on another website, it will refund you 120 percent of the difference. So saving money and getting a guaranteed great pair of American made boots couldn't be simpler. Just visit www.theunionbootpro.com and start to walk your patriotic consumer talk.

Now I know that the name Okabashi sounds like it just has to be foreign in origin or based in a foreign country, but this footwear company is actually based right here in Buford, Georgia. Over the years, I've owned several pairs of Okabashi sandals, and I've always found the same things to be true about them: they're comfortable, inexpensive, long-lasting, and best of all, American-made.

At www.okabashi.com you'll see colorful, American-made flip flops, clogs, and sandals for men, women, and kids. Okabashi footwear is available on the website for \$14.99 (sometimes even less), and you can print a coupon to use right from the website too.

With Okabashi, you get high quality, low prices, and American workers that make American wages to fortify the American standard of living that we have all come to appreciate and from which we all benefit.

So there you have it! Five great ways to keep yourself covered from head to toe with American-made apparel and accessories, courtesy of American workers that help keep our economy strong!

Roger Simmermaker is the author of *How Americans Can Buy American* and *My Company 'Tis of Thee: 50 Patriotic American Companies American Consumers Should Know About*, and writes "Buy American Mention of the Week" articles for wnd.com and his website www.howtobuyamerican.com. Roger has a degree in Electronics Engineering Technology, is president of his local Machinists Union, has been a frequent guest on Fox News, CNN, and MSNBC, and has been quoted in *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, and *Business Week* among many other publications.