

Buy American Mention of the Week

A Made in America Christmas for 2012

By Roger Simmermaker

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The best way to build a better, more-prosperous America is to buy American and keep your dollars within our borders so they can generate authentic American activity. And when Christmas comes around, we can provide a much needed boost for our economy not by spending more, but rather by using the money that we're already planning on spending anyway to buy America-made goods. Below I have assembled a list of some of my favorite American companies and their websites so when we go shopping for those special people in our lives this Christmas, we can keep those dollars at home where they should be. Every single cent you spend with the All American Clothing Company (www.allamericanclothing.com) stays in America to support workers in this country. This company is perhaps best known for their high-quality and high-durability jeans (which are 100 percent American right down to the zipper) but their line has expanded over the years into other types of apparel and accessories like khakis, belts, and boots. In fact, I just ordered a couple of belts and some soft cotton sweatpants from All American Clothing. Norton's U.S.A. is a brick-and-mortar store in Barrington, Illinois, and has been around since 2007. But don't worry. If you're not in the area, you can visit this great store online at www.nortonsusa.com. Among many other things, it's a great place to get the Original World's Thinnest Wallet, which is a product that I'm a big fan of since company that makes these wallets recently brought its manufacturing back from China to the United States.

Union House opened their brick-and-mortar store way back in 1992, and is probably the first one of its kind established in the USA. Not everything they sell is union made, but everything is definitely American made. You can also check them out online, where they've been established since 1998, at www.unionhouse.com. The Union Shop (www.theunionshop.org) has over 1,800 different clothing options to choose from and none of them are made outside the United States. This company is well-known for its impressive selection of handmade leather goods as well as its unique collection of custom-carved glass in the likeness of aircraft, angels, lighthouses, and sailboats, just to name a few. Whatever it is you need to carry from point A to point B, Tough Traveler has a way for you to get it there. This fine American company based in upstate New York designs and manufactures all of its products in the USA and has been doing so since 1970. At www.toughtraveler.com you'll find all kinds of bags and carriers for all kinds of purposes, such as backpacks, child carriers, garment bags, hiking packs, briefcases, computer bags, duffel bags, handbags, purses, camera bags, and even pet products.

The Wilson Bohannon Company (www.padlocks.com) began producing locks in 1860, making it the oldest family-owned padlock company manufacturing padlocks in America today. Each lock can be customized and stamped with your name, company name, or logo. The non-customized padlocks that I have purchased personally feature the Wilson Bohannon logo on one side and an engraved American flag on the other, with *Proudly Made in America* displayed underneath.

One of the easiest ways to choose American-made products this year is by visiting the e-commerce site www.choosemadeinusa.com which was established on Veterans Day in 2011. A people-led economic recovery is the belief system that's behind Choose Made in USA, where you'll find American-made items in categories like patriotic products, holiday items, books, clothing, products for the home, office products, sports/outdoors items, and toys.

The soft traditional yellow floating rubber duck was actually invented in the USA. Now every rubber duck is made overseas, except for the ones made by CelebriDucks, that is. CelebriDucks has companies and organizations from Harley-Davidson to The Future Farmers of America making rubber ducks for them in America. The first batch of Hatched in the USA ducks sold out right away, but they are now back in stock for the holidays, so check them out at www.CelebriDucks.com.

At www.madeinusashop.com, you'll find American flags and stickers, brooms and mops, brushes, candles, Christmas ornaments and stockings, games, puzzles and toys, kitchen knife sets, skillets and griddles, office and school supplies, pillows, playing cards, posters, purses, sandals, socks, toys, wall coverings, and wall racks. And now that Christmas is here, the Made in USA Shop has American-made stocking stuffers to help fill up those Christmas stockings that are sewn with American hands.

And so, as the Christmas season draws near and you're making your list, I hope you check it twice to see if there are any items on it for your loved ones that could be purchased from any of the companies that are highlighted in this article. Foreign-owned companies and their products? BAH HUMBUG!

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.