

## shops around the world

BY BRIDGET FABI

### Berkeley, Calif.

#### ECOHOME IMPROVEMENT

2619 San Pablo Avenue  
www.ecohomeimprovement.com

Located in West Berkley, between the Lucky Bait Shop and Big O Tires, sits Ecohome Improvement, the brainchild of partners Taja di Leonardi and Nina Boeddeker. Not exactly an idyllic or likely setting for a hip store focused exclusively on green and healthy home improvement options. Yet, Ecohome has exceeded all sales forecasts, expectations and the owners' wildest dreams.

Opened in 2005, Ecohome's mandate is to provide consumers with new eco-friendly products. Its slick and elegant interior displays present products in home-like settings with the goal of showing customers that environmentally friendly design is fashion-forward.

On offer are numerous recycled-glass items including countertops from Vetrazzo ([www.vetrazzo.com](http://www.vetrazzo.com)), funky knobs and pulls from Spectra Décor ([www.spectradecor.com](http://www.spectradecor.com)) and tiles from Terra Green ([www.terragreenceramics.com](http://www.terragreenceramics.com)). Marmoleum, an eco-friendly alternative to linoleum ([www.themarmoleumstore.com](http://www.themarmoleumstore.com)), is popular, as are Paperstone countertops ([www.paperstoneproducts.com](http://www.paperstoneproducts.com)) made from recycled paper. There's also a large selection of toxin-free paints and stains.

With such a mind-boggling selection of fashionable eco-friendly products, the locals have no reason to visit the big-box stores for their home improvement needs.

### Des Moines, Iowa

#### EDEN (below)

500 East Grand Avenue  
www.edeniowa.com

Growing up Jennifer Hansen loved to play store and would often organize garage sales for her mother. From the beginning, she seemed destined to fulfil a lifelong dream to create Eden, an intimate eco-friendly boutique in the East Village of Des Moines.

When it opened in 2003, Eden was one of the city's few small boutiques offering green goods. "I wanted to create a store experience that exceeded people's expectations," said Jennifer. "We continue to seek out the best, freshest, most natural products available and display them in a clean, sunny manner."

From organic cotton onesies from Kee-Ka ([www.kee-ka.com](http://www.kee-ka.com)) and Caldrea's eco-friendly home cleaning products ([www.caldrea.com](http://www.caldrea.com)) to bags made from recycled plastic water bottles, Eden is a treasure trove of unique eco finds. ■



Eden Owner  
Jennifer Hansen.