

What Is Mushroom Leather & Why Do People Love It?



Plant leathers are the hot new thing in fashion – and among them, mushroom leather is gaining ground quickly. Just last year, iconic French fashion house Hermès (which is known for its leather goods) launched a bag made from mushrooms. Rooted in tradition and mindful of heritage, Hermès was perhaps the last brand many expected to make a move like this. But it's a sign of the times that vegan leather is reaching even the most elusive corners of high fashion.

Mushroom leather doesn't require much water or almost any chemicals at all in its production, and it also replicates the look and feel of cow skins very closely.

There are many reasons why this vegan leather, made from the root structure of fungi, is touted as the material of the future. Firstly, it saves lives. Leather kills approximately one billion animals every year, most of them having lived their entire lives in factory farms where they endure extreme confinement. Needless to say, none of this is an issue with plant-based leather.

Secondly, mushroom leather is a win for the environment : it eliminates the need to farm millions of animals for leather (animals are often farmed and killed specifically for their skins).

How exactly are mushrooms transformed into leather? The journey starts with mycelium – a root-like fungus structure. The process starts with engineered mushroom cells grown into 3D structures which form a tough, resistant material which boasts the durability and longevity of animal leather. . Any remaining materials are subsequently composted. This material is also certified bio-based and on its way to becoming plastic-free.

The production process of mushroom leather requires very little water and energy to produce, further minimising its environmental impact compared to animal skins. And after many years of research, the material is ready to compete with cow skin in terms of aesthetics. And while today these materials are still a rarity, we're without a doubt moving towards a future where mushroom leather will just be...leather.

Abridged from Sascha Camilli, <https://immaculatevegan.com>, a blog