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While most of us are versed in plant-based food and are aware of the billions of lives it saves each year, how many of us have considered the additional number of animals murdered for leather sofas, wool rugs, down comforters, and fur throws? Products contributing to planetary devastation.

*Leather* processing plants slaughter approximately 2.3 billion animals per year worldwide, wasting 15,000 gallons of water for each “hide” produced. On top of that, they create chromium-based waste in bulk on a daily basis, resulting in hundreds of thousands of tons of toxic chrome shavings deposited in our landfills each year.

Poisonous chemicals like mineral salts, formaldehyde, coal-tar derivatives, toxic oils, dyes, and cyanide-based finishes are also used in today’s tanning process.

The *wool industry* is another guilty contributor. Exploiting and killing millions of animals and using, on average, tens of thousands of pounds of insecticides per year, causing irrevocable damage to the land due to overstocking and waste.

Last, but certainly not least, the *fur industry* utilizes a soup of toxic chemicals to convert the decomposing raw skin into marketable material, this to keep it from rotting in the buyer’s closets. On top of this add the horrific breeding, animal exploitation, and abuse.

While these three industries make up a mere fraction of design production elements consumers innocently purchase every day, the devastation they cause is unimaginable.

## Laying the Foundation

When Deborah DiMare, founder of DiMare Design began designing interiors for those with Sensory Processing Disorders (SPD), she had no idea of the rabbit hole she was entering. Approaching her



*“My signature approach comes from my lack of interior design education”*

Deborah is all about the psychology of the space.

Questions like, *Where is the nucleus of the home? Is this family connected? Where do they spend most of their time? Are there any companion animals sharing the space?* offer Deborah much-needed information and details which are used to determine her design approach for each client.

Determined to create healthy neurological and physical development and balance within a space, Deborah began sourcing materials that didn't include the chemicals which seemed to offend her SPD clients and their family members.

## Designing Diva

In 2004 her intuitive and trailblazing style landed Deborah a spot on the groundbreaking TLC design show *“In A Fix.”* Touted as the show's Hot Designing Diva, Deborah, along with a construction team, would rescue homeowners from stalled “do it yourself” renovation projects.

Deborah's business exploded! Although she was, at the time, quickly becoming famous for her “cruelty-free” design expertise, at home it was meat on the menu as usual.

Fast forward to 2014. While conducting her usual chemical-free research, she came across, for the first time, the dog leather industry. Primarily exported from China, dog leather was a material Deborah had no previous experience with or knowledge of.



ALL animal products.

*"Once you see the darkside you don't go back, right?"*

*"During our interview, Deborah, with cell phone in hand, is frantically texting everyone she knows. She is actively trying to find a forever home for a pitbull she found earlier wandering around the streets of Miami."*

Her decision to adopt a 100% vegan lifestyle came with a hefty workload.

Although she had been focusing on products that were more acceptable to those with SPD, she had no idea how far and wide the cruelty existed.

It was not only the animals that were being exploited and used in horrific ways, it was the child labor, the migrant workers, the lakes, the streams, the rivers, the ocean, methane issues, and other factors she now needed to seriously consider in her practice.

Her goal was to now identify all new materials and product resources that reflected this...and this was no small feat. Not only was she backpedaling to find alternatives to all the materials her clients desired, she also needed to expand upon that inventory with production companies and materials that now reflected her higher cruelty-free standards.

Class is in Session

In 2015, Deborah received a call from a fellow vegan designer in Australia. Filled with questions, the



to benefit from Deborah's expertise and her ability to share her knowledge in a functional way.

She then created another course titled *Nursery Design*. One year in the making, this course focuses on chemicals while teaching designers as well as parents how to create ethical kids' spaces. This course has also become popular with entrepreneurs – attracted to the ethical process and how they would apply this to their own business.

Vegandesign.org now offers multiple courses, resource guides, and tip sheets for everyone from interior designers to caregivers and consumers. There are also industry statistics, consumer trends, and an impressive list of furniture, including a 100% compassionate custom furniture line and decor recommendations that would gratify the most discerning customer. Deborah now offers on-site interior design packages, phone consultations, and most recently [virtual design consults](#).

*“Her work is revolutionary, as she's always aiming to make each and every one of her clients' homes remain sustainable, timeless, trend-free, and vegan.”*

*~ peerspace.com*

Deborah has also been featured in Better Homes and Gardens, LA Times, The Hollywood Reporter, Forbes Magazine, The London Press, and Unique Homes just to name a few.

Deborah's educational presentations on design at international conferences and industry gatherings have been attended by thousands. 2 years ago she was invited to speak at The Future of Naval Design conference in Italy to introduce successful sustainability practices within interior design. She has also provided certi wellness design practices all over the world.



Deborah's advice to any future interior designers:

*"Think about who your clients will be. The future of luxury design is a healthy, clean, and natural space without toxins, chemicals, or cruelty.*

*Our industry must focus on reaching a tipping point when enough consumers are educated and excited about this new focus. Then and only then will 'cruelty-free' interior designers have the liberty of focusing on that market and that market only."*

The dream of Deborah DiMare Design is to produce a TV show – a platform to entertain and educate the public about sustainable design choices and cruelty-free materials and processes.