FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Green Chic: Saving the Earth in Style
Christie Matheson
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Everyone talks about the environment these days, but all the doom-and-gloomsayers seem to demoralize people who would like to do something but feel that the problem is too big to solve. Enter Matheson and her new book, written in a very chatty style that promises, girlfriend-to-girlfriend, that it's just a matter of being chic the right way.

While this oversimplifies the author's approach, the tone of the book is certainly light and breezy. Matheson breaks down "chic" living into categories that twentysomethings (and tweens, thirty-, and fortysomethings, too) can tackle without feeling that they're being scolded or pushed into lightening their footprints on the Earth. Matheson has done her homework, offering statistics couched in language that makes them anything but dry (although to serious save-the-Earthers, her manner is probably a bit too flip). Yet the information is solid, the suggestions are sound, and her attitude toward going green is certainly far more approachable than most of what is heard today.

Dealing with everything from beauty tips to clothing to food, Matheson explains the issues in terms that people not yet into the environment-as-cause will understand: how to choose the right kind of fluorescent, energy-efficient light bulb to replace those soft romantic lights in the bedroom; why it's good to lighten the load in one's closet ("go through your closet and pare it down so it only contains things you love, love, love to wear"); why repair rather than replace; and what sort of horrors lurk in most modern cosmetics ("look out for lead … in eye makeup, because it's a neurotoxin"). She also gives technical information, enlightens readers about the whole chain of production involved in most trendy products ("the production of one little 18-karat ring…creates more than twenty tons of mine waste") and points out that if one is wearing non-organic cotton one is also wearing pesticides and chemical fertilizers—whether that cotton is in a cute tee-shirt or a tampon. As Matheson might say, *ick*.

She doesn’t stop at trivialities. Taking on such major categories as the modern wedding, a behemoth that can cost upwards of $50,000, and cars, she offers lots of excellent suggestions on greening one’s nuptials and why it’s cool to live without a car (“green women don’t get fat”).

This is an excellent, reader-friendly introduction to green living that can really make a difference.

Marlene Satter