

# Sustainable Fashion: Redefining Consumption in Rome

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These days we all hear a lot about the issue of pollution, the consequences it brings to our world, our health and other living beings. There are hundreds of environmental problems, especially concerning waste disposal, waste such as plastic, paper, bottles... but what about **textile waste**? Consider the staggering accumulation of clothes, many of which languish in our closets, some never even worn, only to find their way into our streets, waterways, and landfills.

A deluge of polluting chemicals from synthetic fiber processing contaminates our local rivers. The production exceeds genuine market demand, resulting in surplus material that, instead of being recycled or repurposed, is callously discarded into the environment.



Figure 1 “Venere degli Stracci” by Michelangelo Pistoletto\_Naples

## How can we effectively address this pressing concern?

**The solution lies in 2 words: sustainable fashion.** Sustainable fashion embodies a holistic approach that honors both the environment and society throughout every stage of the process—from conception and production to distribution and sale. This ethos of fashion aims to embrace less environmentally harmful materials, minimize waste during production by cutting down on water and electricity usage, and craft durable pieces that promote mindful consumption. Additionally, this model advocates for a more humane production process, free from the exploitation of workers and characterized by fairer remuneration.

## But let’s analyze the situation in Rome, the city where I live.

The grim reality of textile waste is starkly evident in Rome, where a staggering 6,117 tons accumulate each year, prompting an urgent need for solutions.

First of all, it's crucial to recognize that when textiles cannot be reused, donated, or resold, they should not be carelessly discarded into undifferentiated rubbish bins. Instead, they should find their way into the 1,500 designated yellow street bins spread across all 15 municipalities. These bins can be easily located through the website [amaroma.it](http://amaroma.it) or the 'Amaroma' app, offering a convenient avenue for responsible disposal.

Secondly, strolling through the streets of central Rome, we encounter a **beacon of hope**: Humana Vintage. Operated by Humana People to People Italia, a humanitarian organization dedicated to international cooperation, this establishment has been instrumental in fostering significant growth in the textile sector for over two decades.

Humana champions a **tangible shift in the world through actionable steps**, recognizing that every individual can contribute to their community's betterment, striving for a future free from textile pollution. At Humana Vintage & Second Hand shops, donated clothing receives the respect it deserves. Each garment, regardless of its condition upon arrival, is meticulously sorted and cared for. While items in the worst condition are earmarked for recycling, the shops embrace garments from all eras, with those from the 1960s to the 1990s proving particularly popular. These cherished pieces undergo meticulous treatment, ensuring they are revived to their former glory and ready for reuse. Every garment at Humana Vintage is distinct, with offerings differing between online and physical stores, adding to their allure and uniqueness.



Figure 2 Humana Vintage & Second Hand shop in via Cavour, Rome

"It starts in the old continent and reaches Africa, Asia and Latin America. It is the desire to change something in the fabric of the society in which we live. A transparent and unbreakable bond that we nurture with enthusiasm day after day. It is not just about sustainable fashion, circular economy and development projects. It is a commitment to stimulate and collect the small gestures that transform the world, making it a more welcoming place, for everyone."

This is the powerful message echoed by Humana Vintage in Rome Cavour, the shop where I often go with my friends.

Humana holds a special place in my heart as they breathe new life into cherished garments, embodying values close to my own: environmental responsibility and compassion for others. Their efforts not only rescue clothes from disposal but also make a significant impact on reducing pollution and conserving water resources. Through their innovative **circular economy approach**, they not only give these garments a second chance but also generate invaluable resources to support crucial social and environmental causes.

Whenever I visit the Humana Vintage website, I feel inspired by the wealth of offerings that reflect their dedication to sustainability. Exploring the 'sustainable fashion' section reveals a world of opportunities to engage in eco-conscious practices and celebrate the beauty of second-hand clothing. From the thought-provoking Fashion Revolution Week to the hands-on Upcycling events that ignite creativity in service of the planet, and culminating in the elegant lifestyle choice of Dressing Vintage, Humana's commitment to timeless style with a conscience resonates deeply with me and my values.



Figures 3,4 Humana Vintage & Second Hand shop in via Cavour, Rome

Seeing examples like this encourages me to embark on a personal journey of giving by donating my clothes—the ones lingering in my closets, collecting dust and forgotten. Those pieces I've pondered over for ages before tossing them in the bin. Instead, I may wash them, breathe new life into them, and pass them on to places where others can marvel at them just as I did..

It's a journey we can embark on together, for our own well-being and the sustainability of our planet.



#### Consulted sites:

- [Amaroma.it](http://Amaroma.it) - Official website to locate textile waste collection points in Rome
- [Humana Vintage website](http://HumanaVintage.com) - To learn more about Humana Vintage initiatives in Rome and elsewhere
- [United Nations Agenda 2030 website](http://UnitedNationsAgenda2030.org) - For information on Sustainable Development Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
- [Rome municipality website](http://RomeMunicipality.com)

**The photos have been taken by me**