



## posh pouches

Being eco-conscious need not mean stifling your design desires

**E**co-entrepreneur Irvan Damon and brand expert Gabriella Alberoni, the brains behind design label Carbon d'AFreeque, are on a mission. By transforming old PVC billboards – that would otherwise be clogging up landfill sites – into bright and funky laptop bags, statement-making clutches and eye-catching carry-alls, the dynamic duo aims to 'save the planet, one bag at a time'.

Designed to withstand blinding sunlight and blistering cold, and to shrug off wind, hail and rain, PVC billboards live a short life as roadside distraction before ending up on garbage dumps, where they do not biodegrade. Aside from transforming them into bold and sassy accessories for planet-friendly fashionistas, Irvan and Gabriella have worked with big-name brands like Toyota, Virgin Mobile and Tanqueray gin to create shop-fittings and marketing material out of the billboards that once advertised their own products, giving these billboard 'skins' the chance of a second life.

The busy pair also lead the Jo'burg arm of Green Drinks ([greendrinks.org](http://greendrinks.org)), a social networking group for like-minded 'greenies', and host *Hybrid Living*, a new local eco-lifestyle television show. With the branding options seemingly limitless, Gabriella and Irvan are brimming over with ideas. Next on the agenda is a collaborative effort with interiors expert Tanja Tomaz of Onyx Interiors, which will see furniture pieces like classic chairs and ottomans upholstered in retired billboards. We've no doubt this project will give renewed impetus to the innovators' ideal, 'To make the planet a cleaner, greener place – in style'. ☺

**See our great Reader Offer on page 12. Carbon d'AFreeque, 011-465-8801, [carbonfree.co.za](http://carbonfree.co.za)**

### Q+A WITH GABRIELLA AND IRVAN

**Your favourite green product?** Other than our handbags, my solar-powered mobile phone charger (Gabriella).

**Your dream project?** To collaborate with Philippe Starck and Steve Jobs to create the sexiest green boutique hotel (Irvan).

**The biggest challenge facing eco-entrepreneurs?** Changing people's perceptions. Going green need not mean giving up the finer things in life (Gabriella)

**The big green trend for 2008?** There will be a change in the definition of ultimate luxury – people are aspiring to using planet-friendly products (Irvan).

**TOP** The Ruby clutches and Maxi (with strap) are all made from Tanqueray gin billboard skins. **LEFT** Irvan displays a Scoolie Satchel made from an Aquafresh billboard. **Gabriella** holds a Ruby clutch and a Maxi, with a ShoppaStoppa at her feet.

