Shop Local: Slow Goods
Bridging Artisans Across Continents

BY KYM WHITNEY

In the heart of Paseo 17, there's a gem of a boutique that's not just a store but a testament to slow living, craftsmanship, and global connections. Slow Goods, founded and curated by the passionate Jessica Ward, opened its doors in late November 2023, bringing a blend of Australian and Californian designers, artisanal homewares, and bespoke accessories to the local community.

SLOW GOODS

Jessica's journey to Slow Goods began long before its opening. It was nurtured over years of travel, exploration, and a deep-seated appreciation for craftsmanship. From living in the laid-back coastal vibes of Byron Bay, Australia, to traversing the globe in search of talented artisans, Jessica's experiences shaped the essence of Slow Goods - a haven for intentionally made, timeless pieces.

The concept of Slow Goods isn't just about products; it's a philosophy deeply rooted in celebrating artisans worldwide. This venture is a labor of love, inspired by her encounters with artisans from Bali to Peru; she has even launched her own line of handmade bags and accessories, showcasing the talents she's encountered on her journey. Jessica's vision is to create a retail space where every item tells a story of meticulous craftsmanship and embodies the ethos of slow living, standing in stark contrast to the fast-paced world of mass-produced fashion.

What sets Slow Goods apart isn't just its carefully curated collection but also the driving force behind it. At the helm of the business is Jessica herself, a young entrepreneur with a remarkable vision. At the age of 25 (26 this month!), she runs Slow Goods single-handedly, infusing it with her passion, dedication, and keen eye for unique finds. The rapid success of Slow Goods is a testament to Jessica's entrepreneurial spirit. From her college days, where she ran a pop-up shop highlighting local craftsmen, to now owning her own boutique, her journey exemplifies the power of passion and dedication.

But Jessica's ambitions don't stop here. She envisions expanding Slow Goods to a second location, bridging more communities, and spreading the message of slow living and appreciation for artisanal work.

Beyond her business endeavors, Jessica remains deeply rooted in the Orange County community. Born and raised in Newport Beach, she cherishes the area's relaxed lifestyle, stunning beaches, and strong sense of community. When she's not immersed in the world of Slow Goods, Jessica can be found exploring local farmer's markets, indulging in wine tasting, or capturing moments through film photography.

And true to her commitment to community, Jessica shares her favorite local spots, from cozy cafes to wellness havens, inviting others to explore and support the vibrant fabric of Orange County.

In a world that often prioritizes speed and convenience, Slow Goods reminds us of mindful living and appreciation for the beauty of craftsmanship. So next time you're strolling through Paseo 17, step into Slow Goods and immerse yourself in a world where every piece has a story to tell.

Jessica's Local Shout Outs:

- Her retail neighbors at Paseo 17 (Purre Boutique, Milligram Coffee + Kitchen, French Buckets, Beauty With a Mission, Mama Bijoux, etc.)
- Vacancy Coffee (Newport Beach)
- The Salt Horse (Laguna Beach)
- AhbA (Laguna Beach)
- Magnolia Wellness (Costa Mesa)
- Daydream Surf Shop (Costa Mesa)
- Willbo (Laguna Beach)
- Mixing Glass (Costa Mesa)
- Eller Bakery (Costa Mesa)
- Asada Tacos & Beer (Laguna Beach)
- Keratin Lab (Costa Mesa)
- Semi Tropic Wines (Costa Mesa)
- Work in Progress (Costa Mesa)

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