

Monday, December 13th, 2010

BOSTONISTA

Store Opening: Sudo Shoes

By: Lauren Landry

Being kind to the planet doesn't have to mean being cruel to your fashion sense. That's the philosophy behind Sudo Shoes, Boston's first-ever vegan shoe store, now open in Porter Square.

The boutique is filled with footwear for both men and women, along with bags and accessories galore. Sudo's tagline is "Unreal Shoes," which owner Scott Fitzsimmons says is a sly way of saying "vegan." But what's really unreal is that none of the merch is made from animal products of any kind. Instead of leather, the shoes are constructed from a microfiber that looks, wears, and breathes just like it – meaning they're stylish and sustainable to boot.



The recycled-steel shelves lining the crisp white walls hold shoes from about 25 brands, including familiar names such as Patagonia and Steve Madden. "Half of our customers have no idea they're walking into a vegan store," says Fitzsimmons, a vegetarian for 18 years and counting. He says was attracted to the "great energy" in Porter Square, where businesses with similar ethics (like eco-friendly curio shop [Greenward](#) across the street) are sprouting up everywhere.

Before Sudo opened, the closest store dedicated to cruelty-free shoes was in Manhattan, where the company Moo Shoes pioneered the idea. Fitzsimmons was nervous at first that the vegan concept might scare away nonvegan shoppers. But after checking out the stock of beautifully crafted shoes, belts, and other accessories, the only fear you'll be feeling is for your bank account balance.



Sudo Shoes, 1771 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, 617-354-1771, sudoshoes.com.