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Are You “Metrospiritual”

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So now there's yet another word for our modern spiritual confusion. Ariana Speyer [reports](#) that the newest packaging of pop spirituality is the “metrospiritual wave.” Writing at [Beliefnet.com](#), Speyer explains that the “metrospiritual” phenomenon emerges from a blending of Eastern mysticism and Western consumerism.

Form her report: *Do you go out of your way to buy organic food? Have you thought about the wu wie in your home? Have you tried yoga, belly-dancing, or surfing recently? Are you attracted to traditional crafts from other cultures or have you started knitting? Do you own a Prius or have you thought about buying a hybrid car? Are you a tea connoisseur or an organic wine- and beer-drinker? Is there a certain aromatherapy scent that brings you comfort, especially in candle form? If most of your answers are yes, then count yourself among the growing numbers of metrospirituals—the kinder, gentler post-Yuppies who want to treat the earth and native cultures with respect, connect with their inner source and inspiration, test their bodies and expand their minds with ancient physical practices—and do it all with serious style.*

Kinder, gentler post-Yuppies unite! Head for Jamba Juice and Whole Foods in order to meet fellow metrospirituals.

More: *Metrospirituality is the mainstreaming of Taoist, Buddhist (thanks to Richard Gere and Uma's dad, Buddhism scholar and practitioner Robert Thurman), and Hindu values, among others, into an easily digestible, buyable form. Take Hampton Chutney Company, for instance. This highly popular New York-area food empire makes traditional Indian dosas and uttapams—the kind of thing you might make and eat at an Indian ashram—which is exactly where the owners, Gary and Isabel MacGurn, met in 1990. They now have three thriving outposts at very tony addresses—one in Long Island's Hamptons, one in New York City's Soho, and one on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. At the Soho store, pictures of yogis decorate the walls and devotional Indian chants pour soothingly out of the stereo.*

As James Twitchell, author of *Adcult USA*, explains, the demand for luxury goods has been translated into a spiritual quest. Speyer summarizes the point this way: *The metrospiritual takes luxury-buying to a new level—reaching outward for connection to the planet and to each other.*

Reaching out to the planet and to each other by buying luxury goods for ourselves and our homes? Fighting the crowds at Whole Foods to buy our peace foods? As Speyer makes clear — being metrospiritual takes money. Christians are called to faithful stewardship, and we must admit that today's church (in the United States at least) is far too enmeshed with consumerism and materialism. But, one can be just as materialistic when buying organic apples as non-organic. As a matter of fact, the sense of elitist satisfaction that often comes with buying the “right” products can just amount to consumerism of a different flavor.

This is but another symptom of our age and another reminder that pseudo-spiritualities are all the rage. Read [the article](#) and then check out [this chart](#) of what's in and what's out. [Matthew Hall](#) considers this new trend as well.

