

Trading in their corporate ambitions for a foray into the world of bridal boutiques, Julia Lichtman Kepniss and Carin Rosenberg Levine opened **Hitched** (1523 Wisconsin Ave. N.W., 202-333-6162) in December. The longtime friends, both recently married, wanted to create a one-stop shop for today's bride. The result is a place where gowns, veils, gifts and even invitations are



Cinderloop's reversible wrap dress from **Unsung Designers**

available under one roof. But, Kepniss stresses, "this is not your mother's bridal boutique." Edgy gifts such as *Kama Sutra* kits cater to playful bachelorettes, while gowns from designers including Elizabeth Fillmore and Judd Waddell offer elegance for the big day.

Unsung Designers began as an online boutique to promote emerging fashion designers, but has since gone back to bricks and mortar with its Adams Morgan showroom (2412 18th St. N.W., 202-234-1788). Open from noon to 6 p.m. on the first Saturday of each month, the store showcases pieces from up-and-coming designers. So, mark your calendars and head over to check out John Wye's funky belts, Scott Gibson N.Y.C.'s draping blouses and AJS Designs' beaded cuffs.

Make an eco-chic statement while supporting fair trade with a tote bag fashioned from recycled plastic bags. The Eco tote line, available at **Gecko Traders** (2499 N. Harrison St., Arlington, 703-533-3939) includes a handy messenger bag (\$46), roomy totes (\$44 to \$50) and a trio of zip-top cosmetic bags (\$22). Bright colors and durable nylon straps make these one-of-a-kind bags a great find. Aside from their good looks, the bags provide sustainable living for disabled and disadvantaged workers in Cambodia, where most of the production takes place.



West Elm features home accessories with modern flair.

For contemporary furnishings, check out the new **West Elm** (1961 Chain Bridge Rd., McLean, Va., 571-633-0227). The shop, which opened in September as part of the massive Tysons Corner expansion, boasts a softer price point than its older sibling Pottery Barn and also offers sleek shapes and organic materials that look right at home in a downtown loft. The store also features tableware, bedding and rugs.

—Amanda McClements