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1. Prometheus by Safretti Named for the Greek god who stole fire from the gods and offered it to humans, the flueless Prometheus is suitable for indoors or outdoors. With a rather ceremonial form that combines hollow and convex aluminum, it burns a potato-infused bio-alcohol. Located in the Netherlands, the hot spot of the cradle-to-cradle movement, Safretti embraces this approach by using fully sustainable product and packaging materials.

2. Fire Ribbon by Spark At almost two metres wide, the Fire Ribbon embodies dramatic elegance that capitalizes on the versatility of traditional gas fireplaces. Delivering 80 per cent efficiency, it burns natural gas or propane, and can be installed to vent through the roof or a side wall. It comes with an optional media tray, along with various decorative rock and glass enhancements.

3. 30-up by Stuv This more traditional wood-burning fireplace employs modern technology for an 80 per cent efficiency rate and minimal carbon monoxide emissions, to meet stringent European standards. The compact design comes in three options: an open fire, one that can be covered with a glass door, or one with an opaque door that turns it into a high-performance stove.

4. Cubic 240 by Wittus While it's based in New York state, Wittus specializes in Danish-quality fireplaces and stoves. The Cubic series of seven wood-burning steel fireplaces, which deliver high efficiency, was created by Danish architect Anders Nørgaard. The 240 model, the largest, incorporates wood storage space along its side, enough for an entire winter.

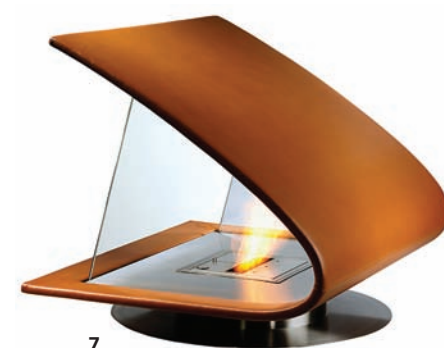
5. Lotus Fire Bowl by Tulp A quick-and-easy set-up for an outdoor fire, this tri-lobed bowl was designed by

Roderick Vos for the Dutch company. "I hate intellectual stories about dead-simple appliances," says Vos. "Lotus is just a beautiful, large bowl in which you can light a nice fire." The blasted, untreated aluminum unit comes with a removable base in high and low versions, and the bowl's ripples make it a snap to create the perfect stack of logs.

6. Chimo by Blomus This company's Chimo range of stainless steel fireplaces funnels a bio-ethanol fuel into the burner, making it possible to have a fireplace with no chimney or gas line. It features an adjustable flame, and a reservoir that lets the fire burn for up to four hours.

7. Zeta by EcoSmart If you're in the market for a compact, flueless gas fireplace to meld with your minimalist decor, Australia's EcoSmart is the industry leader. Its latest portable model, the Zeta stainless steel firebox,

is enveloped in elliptical plywood with an outer layer of stitched leather in such colours as chocolate, white and red. Glass fins enclose the flame, and the chrome-plated base swivels.



7