

HOW GREEN IS THY KITCHEN?

Fairmont experts find creative solutions for sustainable operations

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TORONTO, November 15, 2007 – As part of Fairmont's Hotels & Resorts' new commitment to organic, sustainable and local menus, measures are taken everyday at Fairmont hotels across the globe to also find creative ways to run an environmentally responsible kitchen. Going beyond simply purchasing sustainable food items, these efforts include recycling, reusing and donating, all resulting in an overall impact that lessens the luxury brand's footprint on the planet.

Fairmont properties have long had partnerships in place that provide them with the freshest local ingredients, and many of these purveyors are as committed to sustainability as Fairmont. For example, Fairmont locations in the Pacific Northwest are partnered with Rodney Strong Vineyards, an organic wine producer that operates with solar power to reduce energy consumption and takes steps to ensure soil and water conservation. Ottawa's Fairmont Château Laurier is taking a leadership role in connecting local purveyors with businesses and recently hosted the first "Farmer-Chef Meet and Greet" to encourage new business contacts and contracts.

British Columbia's Fairmont Waterfront, The Fairmont Vancouver Airport and The Fairmont Empress were also the first hotels to join the **Ocean Wise program** run by the Vancouver Aquarium, which promotes the use of sustainable seafood. Hotel menus note sustainable seafood choices with the **Ocean Wise logo**, so guests are aware of the program and can choose environmentally responsible menu selections. The Fairmont Winnipeg shares this commitment and ensures that the fresh catch of the day featured in the Velvet Glove dining room has been harvested in a sustainable way (for example, without dragnets) by consulting the website www.seachoice.org

Menus at the Fairmont properties in Bermuda are also guided by this interest in responsible choices. Surrounded by a vibrant fishing community, the chefs at The Fairmont Southampton and The Fairmont Hamilton Princess work closely with the local fishermen to source a variety of local line-caught fish. The hotels receive daily updates on the fresh fish that has been brought in and these are regularly featured on the resorts' special menus. The chefs at The Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise also use this philosophy when creating menus for the staff cafeteria, offering a full day, eco-friendly menu that focuses on locally grown and organic ingredients on a regular basis.

These efforts have tangible results. The Fairmont Chicago, for example, uses 200 lbs of organic ingredients weekly, and The Fairmont Royal York in Toronto buys over 22,000 lbs of local onions per year. Twenty per cent of all vegetables used in The Fairmont Hotel Vancouver are certified organic, and the remainder of the hotel's produce is responsibly grown and locally harvested wherever possible. Starting in 2008, the Fairmont Newport Beach will procure the services of a local "forager," who will visit local organic produce markets to make purchases of choice goods for the hotel.

After sustainable food choices have been made, what can be done to ensure that none of it goes to waste? One option is donating to organizations such as shelters and food redistribution programs. Many Fairmont properties have a system in place whereby unplated and untouched food is kept for collection by local agencies. The Fairmont Chicago, The Fairmont Royal York, The Fairmont San Francisco and Fairmont Chateau Laurier, to name a few, all contribute this way. After a recent gala for 1,400 catered by Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth in Montreal, all leftovers were either donated to the Salvation Army or placed in a compost container for the gardeners of the campus of the university where the event was held.

For food that is not suitable for donation or reusing, composting is the next step. The Fairmont San Francisco's composting program produces high-quality compost from excess food scraps and kitchen waste, and has significantly reduced the amount of waste being sent to landfill. A

look at the numbers demonstrates the big impact this can have. Every day, the kitchen at The Fairmont Vancouver Airport composts over 200 lbs of biodegradable waste. Every month, The Fairmont Newfoundland sends approximately 400 lbs of compost material to a local farm and The Fairmont Copley Plaza in Boston sends over 14 tons of food waste out for composting. And in the course of a year (2006), The Fairmont Royal York diverted over 62.37 tons of food waste from landfill.

But it's not just food that gets recycled...at Fairmont, the term takes on a whole new meaning. Inventive ways to reuse items include the Fairmont St Andrews, Scotland's Green Fuels Bio-Pod project, which converts used cooking oil from the kitchens into biodiesel that is used to fuel the hotel's shuttle bus and greens equipment; a similar program is also in place at The Fairmont Banff Springs. Other properties take advantage of this energy source as well, including The Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa, which donates over 4 tons of waste cooking oil to a local biodiesel refiner annually. Other ideas include Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth's use of recycled plastic liquid honey bottles as coulis bottles to garnish dessert plates and The Fairmont Winnipeg's recycling of all emptied food cans through a local scrap merchant.

Other kitchen items that see a second life include paper. At The Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise, all restaurant chits are now recycled, eliminating hundreds of pounds of paper from landfill. Over 400 lbs of paper were recycled from one restaurant alone in only six months, proving how effective these small changes can be. Eco-conscious brides can choose beautiful recycled paper invitations complete with soy ink printing at The Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa and the Fairmont Towers, Heliopolis in Cairo, opening in winter 2007, will print the menus for their "green" meeting breaks on recycled paper.

Another method of reducing waste is to reexamine packaging. Many items are either wrapped or stored in unnecessary layers of Styrofoam, plastics and coating. The Fairmont Royal York decided to make a huge dent in the excessive packaging by installing a seven ft. tall tank to receive cooking oil by tanker delivery, rather than purchasing it in plastic containers. The Fairmont Winnipeg made the switch from canned tuna to pouch tuna, and The Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise is considering a switch to a "to go" container product that is made from cornstarch and sugarcane fibers instead of plastic.

Of course, what counts most towards making these efforts successful is the passion demonstrated by the kitchen brigades. Without this, large hotel kitchens could become a great source of waste. Executive Chefs like Laurent Poulain at The Fairmont Copley Plaza in Boston take the initiative to educate their teams about sustainable and local ingredients. For example, Poulain has posted a New England map featuring the growing seasons, which lists what produce is local at what times of the year, ensuring that all the chefs learn the best time for each fruit or vegetable. They refer to this list as they develop menus for banquets and the dining room.

These efforts may result in small changes for individual guests, who have more healthful or ethical options to choose from, but can have a big impact when one considers the collective efforts of Fairmont hotels worldwide. Green kitchen practices are just one more aspect of Fairmont's Green Partnership Program, an industry-leading, comprehensive commitment to sustainable operations.

With more than 50 distinctive hotels and 22,000 hotel rooms around the globe, Fairmont continues to lead by example with innovative environmental programs and an unwavering attitude to growing the movement of overall environmental stewardship. Under the innovative leadership of its corporate environmental affairs division and hotel-based Green Teams, over 26,000 employees have taken on the role of environmental ambassadors helping to protect the habitat, resources and culture of the places where we, and our guests, work, live and play.

For more information on Fairmont's environmental initiatives, visit www.fairmont.com/environment