

## Vancouver restaurateur greens up his business Harry Kambolis looks beyond the sustainable food he serves

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Vancouver restaurateur Harry Kambolis has established himself as a leader in offering environmentally responsible food items at his three city restaurants.

His C Restaurant was a founding partner in the Ocean Wise program that promotes the protection of ocean species and habitats.

Now he has taken that green initiative one step further by hiring Burnaby-based Wisent Environmental to help make his business operations more sustainable.

Traditional cleaning supplies have been replaced with pH-neutral concentrated products that eliminate extreme acidic and alkaline properties and require far less packaging.

Restaurant paper products now meet or exceed green-standard certifications -- such as Green Seal, EcoLogo and Green Restaurant Association. Wisent says the use of the paper products at Kambolis's C, Nu and Raincity Grill restaurants will save about 58 trees, 255 kilograms of landfill waste and three kilograms of atmospheric pollutants every year.

Existing takeout supplies and packaging are being replaced with biodegradable and compostable supplies made with sugarcane or corn instead of styrofoam plastic. Biodegradable cling wrap is currently being tested in kitchen trials.

Future energy and water conservation measures could include lighting and fixture retrofits and the introduction of touch-free automatic faucets and low-spray valves.

Kambolis said it makes sense to push harder for green business operations now because it has become an affordable option and may even be less expensive than doing business the old way.

"Fifteen years ago, it would have cost 50 per cent more to take this route," he said in an interview. "You'd have to go out by yourself and find each individual product one by one.

"To actually have somebody on your side helping you move forward makes it so much easier."

Wisent partners Brad Mephram and Tom Chisholm said their service is not restricted to restaurants as the measures can be applied to almost any kind of business.



CREDIT: Ian Smith, Vancouver Sun  
Bringing sustainability to C Restaurant, Wisent partners, Tom Chisholm (left) and Brad Mephram (right) are helping owner Harry Kambolis switch to more environmentally friendly ways to run the business.

"Every single business out there has an environmental footprint," Mepham said. "We look at what they're using today and replace it with better products in a financially viable way that makes sense."

Kambolis said his customers are concerned about the environment and expect him to do whatever he can to make his business operations more sustainable.

"We can make choices, save money and do the right thing so why not choose that route?" he said. "If we don't, those guys over there who are doing it are going to take all the business and run with it."

B.C. Restaurant and Foodservices Association president Ian Tostenson said a handful of higher-end restaurants have embraced the concept of sustainable business operations but expects many more will jump on board soon.

He said the biggest challenge now is to get more chain restaurants and quick-service restaurants to move towards greener operations.

Tostenson said former U.S. vice-president Al Gore's recent Vancouver appearance forced many city entrepreneurs to consider adopting more sustainable business practices. He said Gore told him that within two years, businesses that aren't sustainable will pay a heavy price.

"If you're not seen to be doing something for the environment, you're going to lose business or be out of business completely," Tostenson said. "There's just so much momentum out there that consumers are demanding change."

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