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What if food waste is unavoidable? Sustainable recycling!



Darmstadt, December 7th, 2017 *** The main criterion of a sustainable lifestyle is handling the natural resources with responsibility, both in everyday life and when traveling. That means, the main requirement is avoiding wastefulness – that applies to packaging waste as well as to food leftovers. The second main requirement: Where food waste is unavoidable, a reasonable recycling is necessary. And creativity.

How to realize that? Step one: raising awareness, for example by involving tourists in the local food cultivation by demonstrating the value of the resources. Step two: creating the right conditions and an infrastructure that reduces wastefulness. Step three: implementing sustainable recycling concepts. These [Green Pearls®](#) hotels set an example.





Raising awareness for the local circumstances ...

Regulating the variety of supply and creating a sustainable supply chain is obviously an important aspect of avoiding waste. In the Peruvian **Inkaterra** hotels, tourists are actively involved in the subject of sustainability. Through outdoor activities and workshops, they get informed about the value of local products. Here, one learns about recent sustainable agroforestry projects in the rainforest, about the development of ecological cultivation of cacao, Brazil nut, aromatic herbs, tropical vegetables and fruits. The objective behind that: giving visitors an idea of the culture and the circumstances, passing on traditional knowledge and showing ecological possibilities through practicing them – from effective water consumption to the use of organic fertilizers and compost production. Moreover, they learn how to reduce one's carbon footprint through using biodiesel that is produced out of burnt vegetable oil in **Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel**. There are many local initiatives that support this kind of exciting projects around the Inkaterra hotels.



... and harvesting your own dinner

An interesting example is the “Earth to Table” concept at **Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba**: the guests are invited to harvest their own produce from the 10-acre organic farm. Among others Quinoa, Urubamba giant corn and a variety of potatoes are nurtured here – with traditional hand tools and oxen. Those who have harvested the food on their plates, as it had been done traditionally for centuries, probably won't leave it unfinished. This is an effective way of raising cultural and economical insight as well as creating an understanding of the processes and the food we consume. It works as a tool of information without regulations or moralizing.



A fully natural cycle: Biogas plants

Despite all awareness, it is unavoidable to produce waste when operating a hotel. Hence a reasonable recycling structure is needed. At the **Reethi Beach Resort** on the Maldives about half of the daily food waste is collected for the biogas plant. The produced gas is used for cooking; water and sludge are used for irrigations and as fertilizer. An effective way of recycling. The new property on the Raa Atoll, the **Reethi Faru**, will operate three plants to utilize 100 percent of this food waste in the future.

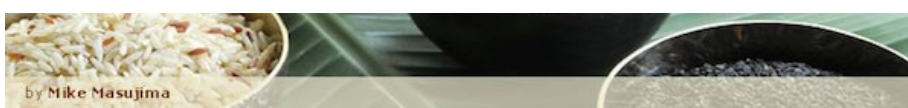


Also: vermicomposting and paper upcycling

The Indian hotel group **CGH Earth** also works effectively with biogas plants on many of their properties. The Methane gas is used for cooking and the organic fertilizer is employed in their rich herbal and vegetable gardens. At the **Spice Village** a vermicomposting system is in operation. Cooked food, meat and fresh vegetable are composted in big tanks and are converted into manure using a species of worm. 150 to 250 kg of the daily waste can be efficiently recycled that way.

And not only kitchen waste finds a new purpose: Old magazines and newspapers are used to produce handmade paper. For the binding the crown of a pineapple is being used. Who would have expected that? The old newspapers are used as stationery, invitation and for the menus. An especially nice kind of upcycling.





Food peels for cleanliness, coffee ground for beauty

Food leftovers can be used reasonably as shown by [The Tongsai Bay](#) on Koh Samui. The ground from one's morning coffee will find a new purpose in the spa as body scrub, it leaves the skin perfectly smooth. Fermented pineapple peels make a great cleaning agent. Peels and leftovers from other fruits and vegetables, used lemon grass straws as well as fish bones are also fermented and then used as a fertilizer in the organic garden. The food leftovers that cannot be used for anything else are given to a swine farm and to a Dog and Cat Rescue in Samui.



Vegetable garden on sandy ground – thanks to composted kitchen leftovers

On the Maldives in the Indian Ocean, food leftovers are not just recycled – they are the basis for [Gili Lankanfushi](#) for serving their own fresh herbs and vegetables. The seedlings are supposed to grow and flourish on the typically sandy ground of the Maldives. Without the produced compost, this wouldn't be possible for many plants. The Rocket Composter of [Gili Lankanfushi](#) looks as spectacular as the name indicates. It needs little energy, waste can be added constantly and will be converted into compost at no time. 90 percent of the kitchen waste can be used to ensure those vegetables to grow and thus enrich the cooking.

To sum it up: Of course the first step should always be the conscious and responsible handling of food and other resources. But wherever producing waste is unavoidable, responsibility is extremely important. There is a wide range of interesting possibilities for recycling and upcycling.

The German Green Pearls GmbH with place of business in Darmstadt, Germany unifies international tourism companies that support environmental protection and demonstrate social commitment. Thereby, Green Pearls is the first holding company worldwide that consolidates sustainable hotels, destinations and restaurants in a global data source.

Among the criteria of admission to Green Pearls® Unique Places, are a sustainability plan on management level, sustainable architecture, comprehensive water, energy saving and waste recovery measures, the use of seasonal and regional ingredients in the kitchen, as well as a large commitment for the social balance in each of the vacation regions.

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