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BRING SUNSHINE

LEADERS *in* SUSTAINABLE LUXURY

SUSTAINABILITY IS NOT A TREND, BUT THE FUTURE FOR THESE LOCAL BUSINESSES AND PROPERTIES

by *ALEXANDRA LEE*

Biodegradable, energy efficient, eco-friendly, clean. All buzzwords we're used to hearing on an everyday basis, yet luxury and sustainability are not two words that usually commingle; often, it's perceived that environmentally conscious practices will come at the expense of opulence, functionality, and aesthetic. As Santa Barbara is in a unique position to exist in harmony with the abundant natural beauty of the American Riviera, the tide is changing as the luxury sector recognizes environmental protection is less a marketing ploy and more a requirement for the success and wellbeing of business, Earth, and humanity as a whole.



Photo by Jared Fix



Photo by Cameron Caldwell

KOPU

Imagine a world where plastic no longer crowds the ocean more than fish, and where mountains are shaped by trees rather than heaps of garbage. Santa Barbara based Kopu Water is revolutionizing the notorious reputation of bottled water, replacing harmful single-use plastic with recycling-friendly (and reusable) aluminum. According to Kopu founder Justin Mahy, luxury too often comes at the expense of the earth, and they're taking every step to change this for good. Kopu's top-quality water, decadent yet smooth with champagne-like bubbles, reflects their belief that purity is synonymous with luxury. As the most sustainable bottled water on the market, Kopu's newest line is sourced domestically from untouched artesian springs in the Cascade mountain ranges of Oregon. This source not only cuts greenhouse gasses through lack of transport emissions, but almost completely eliminates packaging waste with its reusable aluminum bottles—which, as Mahy explains, effectively keeps the recycling industry afloat. If you think glass bottles are friends of the environment, think again—glass actually has a negative recycling value, resulting in more landfill waste. Plastic bottles never break down—they'll degrade into smaller and smaller pieces forever, clogging our waterways. 75% of the aluminum ever created, however, is still in circulation today. So, next time you order a refreshing chilled bottle of water at a hotel or restaurant, pick Kopu—better water, for a better earth.

SUN AIR JETS

A private jet that's environmentally friendly? Enter Sun Air Jets, a private aviation company pioneering sustainability through renewable energy. Located out of Van Nuys and Camarillo, this exquisite and luxurious boutique jet service is one of the first to use Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), crafted out of organic and renewable materials instead of traditional petroleum, reducing carbon emissions up to 23%. For the emissions that it does produce, Sun Air reduces its footprint by working with carbon offset company TerraPass, balancing its output with other sustainable solutions such as expanding wind farms and methane digestion. A certified Green Aviation Business, not only are the jets themselves centered around sustainability, but Sun Air's 62,000-foot hangars feature a solar roof system and electric vehicle charging stations. Ever wondered how people live so close to airports, with the constant roar of departing planes? Sun Air addresses noise pollution, taking part in the Quieter Nights Program in an effort to avoid unnecessary noise for the surrounding communities. According to Mary Brehm, Director of Business Development at Sun Air, sustainability within the aviation industry has faced false negative perceptions, due to the slow adoption and lack of trust surrounding the new technology of SAF. Achieving sustainability has long been regarded as an almost impossible feat within the aviation industry, due to its massive carbon footprint—all the more reason to prove this stereotype wrong. With increasing awareness and technological advancements on the horizon, the sky is most definitely the limit.

— SAN YSIDRO RANCH —

Tucked in the winding back roads of Montecito, San Ysidro Ranch features some of the most cutting-edge sustainable practices within the global hospitality industry. From electric golf carts and lawn mowers to a Nespresso pod recycling program, the property has no limit on creative methods to reduce its environmental impact, all the while giving back to less fortunate communities. If you've visited this Ty Warner property, you've surely taken in its abundance of citrus trees and sprawling gardens, which, as it turns out, are not just for show. Much of SYR's fine dining production is sourced immediately through its organic herb gardens and onsite citrus groves, which are also incorporated into spa remedies. For food that can't be grown at the property, SYR sources fresh fish from Santa Barbara's own Kanaloa, the first ISO-certified seafood company in North America. They're careful to serve purple sea urchin instead of red, which feeds on kelp forests—restoring natural ecosystems through our diet. As the first hotel in the world to feature Boomerang, a self-bottling water system for guests, the property is tackling single-use plastic and waste through several wavelengths. Even its used soap bars, body wash, shampoo, and conditioner are donated to underdeveloped countries through the Clean the World program. Find electric car charging stations for every parking spot. SYR is the definition of achieving sustainable hospitality without skimping on modern luxury. How are they looking even further into the future? Installation of purple line water for irrigation, elimination of non-reusable plastic by 2023, and more energy-saving alternatives. A trip into the future is customary at San Ysidro Ranch—take it from General Manager Ian Williams:

“We are committed to a more sustainable future and believe we all have a responsibility to protect our native ecosystem and the planet.”

“SYR IS THE DEFINITION OF ACHIEVING *SUSTAINABLE* HOSPITALITY WITHOUT SKIMPING ON MODERN *LUXURY*.”



Photo by Silas Fallstich



— OJAI VALLEY INN —

Similarly taking great strides in the art of sustainable hospitality is the luxurious, sprawling Ojai Valley Inn. One of Southern California's best kept secrets, the hotel features a golf course, multiple pools, a tennis court, Spa Penthouse, and destination dining. These lavish amenities, however, don't exist without cutting-edge sustainability technology. The frontrunners of Ojai Valley Inn's efforts include a state-of-the-art system for watering golf courses, organic herb and vegetable gardens, energy-efficient pools, a single-use plastic free initiative, and even a waterless pedicure. The Farmhouse, the Inn's epicurean culinary destination, sources most of its fresh, organic produce from on-site gardens, and the Spa Cafe has transitioned to biodegradable-only take-out containers. Stop by the spa, which even offers a "Mindful Pedicure" to leave you and the environment in the most nourished and healthy of states. The hotel's Green Initiative features several subsets from Green Golf and Edible Ecosystem to Outdoor Education, Guestroom Conservation, and more. Electric car charging stations can be found throughout the sprawling property, and even the pools are energy efficient in their heating. Lighting is designed to cut off energy use during daylight hours, a genius addition for any California property. Ojai Valley Inn operates as if it's running its own small city—which, in a way, it is. If this charming hippie town isn't already on your list, the Ojai Valley Inn should be reason enough to visit...and while enjoying its gorgeous features, feel confident that you're giving back to the environment. *