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## Food for thought

Local restaurants take steps toward sustainability.

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These days, it's all too easy — and trendy — to talk about being "green," but many area restaurants are walking the walk by implementing a variety of eco-friendly practices.

One popular change

across the board is the reduction of plastic. Coppa, Davio's, Little Donkey, and Toro are among the many establishments that have done away with plastic straws.

Myers + Chang pro-

vides straws to guests only upon request, encourages diners to bring their own takeout bags, and offers compostable bamboo chopsticks as an alternative to plasticware. Assistant Manager Heather Thompson says, "Like many restaurants, we do our best to eliminate waste and be conscious of our impact on the rest of the planet, in a way that doesn't diminish our guests' experience. We believe strongly that small changes will accumulate into major impact."

Five Horses Tavern, which has locations in Somerville and Boston, introduced biodegradable containers and bags several years ago, stopped including plastic forks and knives with takeout orders, and recently made the switch to paper straws. Beth Schunke, director of operations for the restaurant group, adds that the staff was pleasantly surprised at the positive guest response to the changes.

Others have gotten even more creative with their efforts. The menu at one of the newest kids on the block, Alden & Harlow's sister restaurant The Longfellow Bar, was created with the environment in mind. Nearly every item on the menu can be eaten without silverware — though it's available if requested. Chef and owner Michael Scelfo

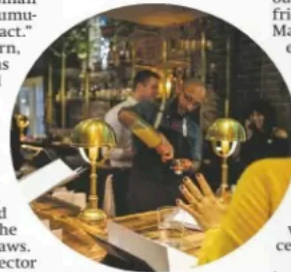
explains: "Not only is it fun and communal to eat with your hands, but one of my favorite aspects of the idea is our reduced chemical consumption washing silver, which saves water and energy as well."

Over in the South End, tiki bar Shore Leave and its secret sushi bar, No Relation, share ingredients in order to minimize food waste. For example, at the end of every service

to make a positive impact on the planet. Now through April 27, Juliet — one of two Massachusetts restaurants certified as "Ocean Friendly" by the Surfrider Foundation — is joining forces with ZeroFoodprint and pledging one dollar per diner in order to offset their emissions and go carbon neutral.

At Chopp's American Bar and Grill in Burlington, bottled water options are being swapped out for recyclable, earth-friendly cartons from Massachusetts-based Everybody Water. A portion of the proceeds from Everybody Water sales goes directly to Waterlist International, an organization that provides permanent clean water systems to families around the world with limited access.

In addition to making changes in their own restaurant, Joanne Chang and Christopher Myers of Myers + Chang have also worked with Lovin' Spoonfuls Food Rescue since it began in 2010 to provide food (which would otherwise go to landfills) to the needy. Assistant Manager Thompson adds, "It's especially proud of, since the philosophy behind Lovin' Spoonfuls — that helping people and helping our planet go hand in hand — is one we also practice here in the restaurant."



at No Relation, leftover sushi rice is saved for use in the crispy rice salad at Shore Leave.

At Coppa, Toro and Little Donkey, environmentally-conscious food sourcing is a priority for chef and owner Ken Oringer. "The oceans are vital to the health of our planet," he emphasizes, "So we try to do our part and carry as much sustainably-sourced seafood as we can."

A number of restaurants have also partnered with nonprofits

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