



“ECO-CHIC” SUSTAINABLE LIVING


There are two basic ideas behind IslaVerde. On one hand, we intend to create a cozy space where travelers can meet, relax, share experiences and ultimately make their stay a special and positive chapter of their trip. On the other hand we are working hard to create, on a small scale, a way of living where two main premises guide every single move we make: respect for the environment, and enjoyment of little details that we believe make a big difference: gourmet cooking, beautiful decoration, gorgeous surroundings, technical comforts, spa services, and artwork.

The hotel was conceived as an ecological venture to protect the wonderful landscape around us and to minimize our impact on the environment.

Whenever possible, building materials with low environmental impact – both in material composition and transportation requirements – were used. This includes sacks filled with compressed earth, rock, stone, and thatch found on site. We also used as many reclaimed materials as possible, such as bottles, old doors, windows and fittings from demolished houses, tiles, etc. Our buildings were designed to make use of natural lighting and heating to minimize energy consumption, with huge windows throughout our spaces and a southern orientation.

We follow the same ethos in our day-to-day operations. Our water system was designed so that grey water can be used for the garden, and with our biodigestor septic system we ensure that we are not affecting the fragile lake ecosystem. Solar energy provides our guests with hot water and electricity. We use natural cleaning products as often as possible: lemongrass-based disinfectants and floor waxes, vinegar, sodium bicarbonate, salt, etc. Environmental methods are also found throughout our kitchen, where we cook everything from scratch to reduce packaging and avoid preservatives and chemicals in our food. But we don't stop there, and our kitchen makes good use of any idea to reduce waste: pressure cooking and canning, making compost, using reclaimed glass containers to store grains and sauces, using cotton bags as opposed to plastic, reducing transport where possible (hence our promotion of homemade drinks), selling stainless steel canteens as opposed to bottled water, making all of our preserves, sauces, ice creams, breads, granolas, and other foods ourselves. Our office also is guided by environmental practices when it comes to printer use, recycling paper and buying unbleached recycled paper.

Our waste management strategy starts with reduction. We avoid packaged goods as much as possible throughout the hotel and restaurant operations. We do not buy or sell bottled water, but use our own triple phase – sand, activated charcoal and UV – filtering system. With the waste we do produce, we go out of our way to classify and re-use or recycle what we



can. Organic waste is turned into compost for our garden, using both worms and slow methods, and plastics are turned into “eco bricks” to be used as building materials. Finally we use our imagination to reuse whatever is left, ranging from making lettuce beds and paths out of glass bottles, to sprouting pots out of plastic ones.

Our goal is to turn this ecological orientation into something hip and stylish, a concept that we like to call Eco Chic. This is the idea that an ecological lifestyle does not have to mean brown rice and leather sandals, but that we can enjoy the pleasures that we are used to – with a bit of intelligence and awareness. We hope you can see this philosophy in action around the hotel.

Our dedication to sustainable tourism extends beyond the natural environment and into the social one. We have taken the responsibility to ensure that our local staff has access to education in fields that are interesting and useful to them, and aim to improve health and housing standards. Please talk to us if you are interested in contributing financially or by offering your own time to teach computing or English lessons.

In conclusion, IslaVerde is a place where all of us are able to enrich our interests and contribute to the positive energy brought by varied and colorful clientele. We intend to make our guests feel part of our family and help in the organic growth of IslaVerde by simply sharing our lives for a few days, or by collaborating in specific projects. We welcome ideas, constructive criticism and even helping hands (our signs, hot tub solar system, fountain, compost system, and other details are gifts of guests and friends). But if you prefer, just relax, enjoy our space, and be part of the IslaVerde dream... we will take care of the rest!