



THE “GREENEST RESTAURANT IN AMERICA” IS CLOSER THAN YOU THINK

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PHOTOS PROVIDED BY CINCINNATI ZOO & BOTANICAL GARDEN

Where is the “greenest restaurant in America”?

And the 2015 title goes to the Base Camp Café at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden!

According to the Green Restaurant Association (GRA), which is on a mission to create an environmentally sustainable restaurant industry, Base Camp Café, located in the Zoo’s Africa exhibit and operated by System Service Associates (SSA), earned the title for 2015 from the GRA scoring 462 points, a 4 Star SustainaBuild Certified Green Restaurant rating, for environmental sustainability in the restaurant industry.

“In fact, when the Green Restaurant Association took a look at our new Base Camp Café,” writes Zoo Director Thane Maynard on his zoo blog, “the Cincinnati Zoo scored the highest sustainability rating of any restaurant EVER!”

The GRA, which founded the green restaurant movement and is one of the pioneering founders of the green business movement, awards points for energy-saving, environmental categories including energy, water, food, waste, disposables, furnishings and building materials and requires 300 points for a 4-star rating.



Base Camp Café, located at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, was recently named the “greenest restaurant in America”.

(Photo provided by Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden)

“... a truly phenomenal accomplishment ...” according to Michael Oshman of GRA in a recent news release from the Zoo.

The Cincinnati Zoo, which has saved one BILLION gallons of water since 2006 -enough to provide indoor and outdoor water use for 10,000 households for a year, models effective ways to “Go Green” not only because it is good for the community but also good for the world.

According to the Zoo announcement on the recognition, Base Camp Café, which offers more outdoor

seating and a great view of the Africa exhibit, sources 70% of its produce from vendors who are within 100-250 miles of the zoo. Much of it is grown at the Zoo-owned EcOhio farmland in Mason in partnership with Green Bean Delivery, which supplies the Zoo and Zoo campers with organically-grown produce. A greenhouse just outside the restaurant provides year-round fresh vegetables through an aquaponics system, which grows fish to eat (aquaculture) and vegetables (hydroponics)

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Signage that explains green practices at the restaurant are on display in Base Camp Café.

(Photo provided by Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden)

together where wastes from the fish are food for the plants, and the plants clean the water for the fish.

“Huge problems like habitat loss and climate change will only be solved by hundreds of millions of better, more informed, decisions being made every day across America,” says Zoo Director Thane Maynard.

Other Base Camp Café sustainability features include:

- LED lighting and natural lighting throughout building;
- Recycled 1930s building to divert construction waste from landfills;
- 95% of all post consumer waste from the Café is diverted from landfills;
- Uses certified grass-fed burgers from White Clover Farms;
- Most of the equipment in the restaurant is Energy Star rated;
- Old grease is turned into

biofuels; and

- Furniture is made of plantation-grown teak.

“... part of why our “Go Green” program is so effective is that we actually save a fortune through our sustainability program.” writes Maynard in his Zoo blog. “That way, we can invest those utility savings in upkeep and improving the zoo – for both our animals and our visitors.”

Visit the Zoo and see for yourself why it is home to “The Greenest Zoo in America” and now the “greenest restaurant in America”.

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