



## **SOMM'S SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS**

**SOMM at The Landmark Mandarin Oriental opened its doors in 2019. Sustainability and social responsibility are core to SOMM's beliefs. A casual neo-bistro featuring over 100 wines by-the-glass, we believe that wine is a gift from nature, finessed by the dedication and craftsmanship of winemakers and the communities around them.**

**Guided by the pioneering philosophies of Director of Culinary Operations and Food and Beverage, Richard Ekkebus, SOMM is dedicated to protecting our planet, on environmental and social performance to create meaningful social, material, and environmental impact.**

**We also work closely with 'Food Made Good', an organisation that provides foodservice businesses with manageable means of understanding, reviewing, and acting on the issues that matter. Within this framework, ten major areas of sustainability are divided under three pillars: Society, Sourcing, and Environment. Accountability is key. We participate in a bi-annual evaluation of the sustainability practices called Food Made Good Rating. The Rating helps us to legitimize our efforts and create a clear plan of action/improvement. It is a survey capturing our activity across the three pillars. Once the survey is completed, a percentage score is calculated for each key area, and the overall sustainability score is an average of those percentages. A business may achieve one, two, three, or no stars (committed) depending on its score. In 2021, SOMM has achieved 3-star rating. In the same year, SOMM was nominated and shortlisted in the category of Sourcing and was the winner of Business of the Year award which recognized our continued commitment to sustainability in our daily operations. In 2023, SOMM has maintained 3-star rating and 2% increase in overall score compared to 2021.**



In addition, the Hotel was assessed in 2023 by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council® (GSTC). The assessment is known as the GSTC Criteria, this global standard for sustainable travel and tourism by GSTC provides the industry with comprehensive criteria to operate and flourish in a sustainable manner. As the results of a worldwide effort to develop a common language about sustainability in tourism, the yardsticks could also be further divided into four pillars namely 1. Sustainable management, 2. Socioeconomic impacts, 3. Cultural impacts, and 4. Environmental impacts. All these criteria are designed and adapted to local conditions for seamless localization. In 2023, the Hotel successfully received the GSTC Certification to recognize our commitment for a better future.

We are committed to searching for the most ethical and sustainable ingredients while minimising our environmental footprint and being conscious about social responsibility.





Our sustainability efforts include:

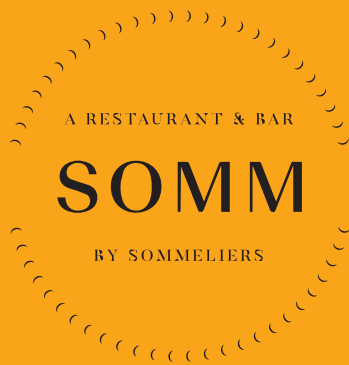
## **SOCIETY**

### **INTERNAL / WITHIN SOMM:**

SOMM prides itself as an employer that goes above and beyond for its team members. We firmly believe that our colleagues are our internal guests, and we ensure that they feel well taken care of. Colleague development is a key focus, ensuring everyone has equal learning and development opportunities to grow and develop their full potential. We encourage paid volunteering hours, ensure the continuous enhancement of our colleagues' experiences, and offer innovative bonus schemes. This also means going beyond the mandatory Hong Kong employee recognition and minimum wage. These are all part of our approach to building a team, encouraging staff loyalty, wellbeing, and commitment. We believe that a team that feels seen and supported will naturally ensure that guest experiences will be at the highest possible level.

A comprehensive list of our internal efforts to contribute to a sustainable staff environment and development can be found below:

**RECOGNISE GOOD PERFORMANCE:** Across teams in SOMM, there is a rewards structure in place that recognises excellent colleague performance. Rewards are tied to relevant goals - for example, receiving positive guest feedback, and comments are tied to monetary rewards. Acknowledging and rewarding performance is an integral part of the SOMM's DNA, with town hall meetings conducted monthly and quarterly to recognise outstanding performers.



**COLLEAGUE DEVELOPMENT:** At SOMM, we have a well-defined learning and development plan for each colleague, and a clearly defined system of performance evaluation. Training includes HACCP and food safety, corporate office-driven programs, a variety of online learning platforms, including but not limited to: e-Cornell, 'A Silver Lining' learning initiative by Jardines, LinkedIn Learning, cross-departmental training exposure via a program called 'Team Titans', and many more.

**HEALTHY DIET FOR COLLEAGUE MEALS, INCLUDING GREEN MONDAYS:** The hotel's canteen only offers vegetarian options every Monday to promote healthy eating. This is not only to reduce the amount of animal proteins that are linked to problems such as greenhouse gases and water wastage, but also to raise awareness and educate colleagues about the impacts on the environment. This allows us to offer high-quality and ethically sourced animal proteins on other days.

**BIRTHDAY LEAVE:** All colleagues have an additional day off because of their birthday that can be taken within one month.

**EQUAL PAY:** All our colleagues receive pay above the required HK minimum wage, and all genders are equally recognized.

**AIM FOR AN EQUITABLE GEDER BALANCE:** As of December 2023, our male-to-female ratio is 75% to 25% and our aim is to work constantly towards a 50/50 balance.

**HEALTH INSURANCE FOR ALL COLLEAGUES:** Although is not mandatory by Hong Kong law and not common practice in restaurants across the city, all our colleagues are insured via The Landmark Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong.



**EACH COLLEAGUE HAS A CONTRACT:** All our colleagues are employed by The Landmark Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong with a valid full-time work contract, which is mandatory by Hong Kong law.

**TIPS ARE EQUALLY SHARE AMONGST TEAM MEMBERS:** Every team member has an equal percentage of the overall cash and credit card tips, which is not based on rank or performance.

**RECREATIONAL ALLOWANCE:** Annually, the Hotel's Human Resources Department supports team culture and bonding by offering a recreational allowance to each colleague, enabling departments to organise activities outside of work environment to foster understanding and better mental health.

**FREE UNIFORMS:** Uniforms and laundry services are provided free of charge to all colleagues.

**OPTION TO CHOOSE REST DAY WITHIN THE WEEK:** Days off can be requested and are given whenever possible.

**SUSTAINABILITY TRAINING TO ALL COLLEAGUES:** We want to ensure that our colleagues are trained to understand the impact of our daily actions on the environment. We ensure that our colleagues are making conscious and informed decisions towards a greener future, and will be able to apply the knowledge in their daily lives, not just at work. We have initiated general sustainability training annually, as well as introductory training during the onboarding procedure, and raise more awareness with various initiatives throughout the year. Sustainability-related information is present in all colleagues' areas.



## **EXTERNAL / WITHIN THE COMMUNITY:**

To restore or refresh is the definition of the French word 'restaurant'. The very nature of hospitality is to bring people together through fabulous food. Kitchens that are connected to their communities are places that have loyal customers, loyal team members and some of the tastiest food. It's a recipe for a sustainable and successful business. Nine out of ten consumers remain loyal to socially responsible businesses. The best businesses in this area are building long-lasting partnerships with local community groups and charities, and have a named individual responsible for managing these relationships.

In addition to our internal efforts, SOMM is an active member of the community. We constantly contribute to local and international charities, not only through monetary contributions, but also by donating colleagues' time and skill sets. We recognise our privileged position in the market, and have made it one of our key missions to give back when and where we can.



**SUPPORT LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL CHARITIES:** We always seek opportunities to raise awareness and funds for causes close to our hearts, such as Feeding Hong Kong, More Good, Food Angel, MINDSET, Movember, r é n, Baan Nokkamin Orphanage, World Ocean Day and A Plastic Ocean Foundation.

**SOCIAL INCLUSION:** We work closely with MINDSET, Shining Star, and Hong Chi Association, offering re-integration and development opportunities to their service users. We aim to equip them with new skill sets and to ultimately offer them job opportunities within SOMM.

**PROVIDE COMMUNITY S SERVICE: ERVICE:** We volunteer with NGOs such as Food Angel and Soap Cycling. We have distributed hygiene and PPE kits to street cleaners in Hong Kong in partnership with Soap Cycling, and have organised colleague wellness activities such as hiking, running, and wellness activities within the Spa infrastructure.

**FREQUENT GUEST SPEAKER ON SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED ISSUES:** Being a sustainability advocate, Richard Ekkebus is frequently invited to speak about sustainability and to be on discussion panels hosted by institutions such as ICI VTC Pokfulam Complex, Food Made Good, ReThink, Future Green, WWF, G.R.E.E.N. Hospitality, and so on.

**PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ON SUSTAINABILITY:** SOMM has been participating in research and development to further sustainable practices within the hospitality industry, collaborating with various institutions such as G.R.E.E.N. Hospitality to study food waste and packaging waste in hospitality. Together with the School of Energy and Environment in City University of Hong Kong, we have participated in research on sustainable kitchens and their energy and water performance.



## Sourcing

Sourcing is a topic that we at SOMM, helmed by Director of Culinary Operations and Food and Beverage, Richard Ekkebus, have long been passionate about. The sustainable, organic, and local sourcing of ingredients is one of the key initiatives that sets SOMM apart from most of the restaurants in Asia. SOMM is one of the very few restaurants in the region that has such an extensive and comprehensive sourcing program to ensure the use of fully traceable, local and regional, organic and sustainable produce wherever possible.

**SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD:** All fish and seafood used at SOMM are sourced sustainably. Currently, all our seafood is sourced through suppliers who deliver seafood harvested using sustainable techniques such as line fishing, hand diving, and other methods with no negative impact on the environment. In addition, we respect the sustainable fishing calendar whereby we only purchase fish when they are not carrying eggs. Also, certain species that reproduce later in their lifetime, and are therefore quite vulnerable to overfishing, are not featured on our menus. We manage our menus utilizing the following resources: Australia Seafood Guide, Good Fish Guide by the Marine Conservation Society for European seafood, and the WWF Seafood guide for local and regional sourcing. We are members and work very closely with Hong Kong's Sustainable Seafood Coalition, which promotes sustainable seafood initiatives and the preservation of different species.





**WE SUPPORT BIODIVERSITY:** Biodiversity is the variety of life on Earth - the number of different species of plants, animals, and microorganisms from Earth's vastly different ecosystems, from deserts, rainforests, coral reefs, grasslands, tundra, to polar ice caps. Biodiversity is essential to the well-being of the planet. As a result, we love to feature lesser-known seafood, ethical-sourced heritage meats and poultry, heirloom plants, roots and fruits

**ONLY SOURCE FAIR TRADE AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES: CHOCOLATE, VANILLA, COFFEE, SUGAR AND TEA:** We exclusively use ethical and responsible agricultural commodities, certified by Rainforest Alliance, Fair Trade and others.

**ETHICAL-SOURCED ANIMAL PROTEIN:** All our ingredients are thoroughly scrutinised before being featured on SOMM's menu. We care that all our animal proteins are ethically raised, antibiotic- and growth hormone-free, and where appropriate, grass-fed, free roaming, sustainably sourced, and raised by people who share our sustainability values.

- **Brandt Beef:** Our beef from Brandt embodies a "farm-to-fork" philosophy that involves raising animals humanely and naturally, without hormones and antibiotics. This commitment to sustainability also includes being responsible stewards of the land.



- **Organic KIN eggs:** In our continuous efforts to progress ethical sourcing, The Landmark Mandarin Oriental uses only organic KIN Eggs in SOMM. KIN Eggs are exclusively produced at a family-owned sustainable farm located in the pristine mountainous region of Yunnan with a closed-cycle supply chain - chickens are fed by organic corn grown on the farm while utilizing their waste as soil fertilizer.
- **Foie gras:** Our foie gras by Rougié is sustainably farmed. The ducks are raised with no added hormones or antibiotics. Rougié has also obtained a CLT welfare certificate for handling and transportation.

**PRIORITISE SOURCING ORGANIC, LOCAL, AND REGIONAL TO REDUCE CARBON FOOTPRINT:** We predominantly work with organic farms from Hong Kong's New Territories, including fruit, vegetable, pig and poultry farms, such as local yellow chicken from local producers. Buying from local producers gives us access to seasonal, fresh food with a smaller carbon price tag. It is also a valuable investment into the local economy, helps to establish thriving food networks and protects Hong Kong's food heritage. Where we cannot source local, most of the time, we source regionally, in particular from organic farms in Southern China, Taiwan and Kyushu (Japan) and, only when even those are not possible, organic from Australia and Europe.



**PRIORITISE WINE SOURCING FROM SMALL BATCH PRODUCERS:**

**SOMM's wine list features wine from small producers all over the world. We understand the importance of highlighting producers that are an integral part of their communities and ensuring that proceeds of the sales of their products go directly where they are needed and do not get lost in big supply chains. Additionally, biodynamic and organic wines are featured and highlighted, with suppliers that match SOMM's high sustainability standards.**



## Environment

The third pillar of our sustainability efforts is environment. We believe that operating in a sustainable way and leading by example across waste management, energy management and resource management is crucial in order to bring upon lasting change in the hospitality industry. All our waste and resource output is closely monitored and measured to ensure that we constantly operate in the most efficient way possible.

**WE FAVOUR PLANT-BASED OPTIONS:** Food accounts for 25-30% of greenhouse gas emissions, while livestock production alone accounts for 15% of all greenhouse gas emissions. Making our menu less meat-centric reduces our overall environmental impact and resonates with the growing number of diners who believe that a good meal doesn't require meat. We define vegetable-led dishes as those that emphasise and celebrate vegetarian ingredients. This includes fruit and vegetables, whole grains, beans, pulses, soy or other protein alternatives, nuts and seeds, plant oils, and so on. In SOMM, around 25% of the dish are vegetarian or plant based. For example, we offered plant-based protein salad with chickpeas and edamame during breakfast.

**SUP-FREE OPERATIONS:** Reducing single-use plastic (SUP) output across all waste streams is our number one objective. Over the past six years, we have diligently operated towards a fully SUP-free operation by closely working with manufacturers to develop plant-based alternatives for commonly used cling film, vacuum pouches and bin liners. Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group has followed our best practices and has eliminated over 60 SUP items in 2021.



**WASTE PREVENTION:** We consider waste prevention to be even more important than waste management, especially in a city like Hong Kong where waste management and recycling infrastructure can be difficult and unsatisfactory. We believe that waste prevention is crucial. Therefore, we closely monitor, analyse, and examine our operations on a regular basis, to understand where and how we can further reduce our waste. Waste output is recorded daily and consolidated monthly, and analysed. An action plan is then derived in order to reduce input for the subsequent month. The data is openly shared with all colleagues to raise awareness and further facilitate reduction. The anaerobic waste digester in Amber's kitchen is another key initiative - in 2023, we diverted an average of 37.77% of our total waste from the landfill. We are actively engaged in the formal practice of diverting coffee grounds and eggshells to a local farm, with the purpose of enriching the soil through their utilization.

**OIL RECYCLING:** Since June 2011, we recycle all cooking oil and currently we work closely with Gammon Biofuel, a waste oil recycling company, and fully-licensed biodiesel manufacturer in Hong Kong. Their key focus is to transform cooking oil into a renewable energy for local use. In our hotel on average of 200kg of oil per month is diverted.

**WASTE SEGREGATION FOR RECYCLING:** We separate our waste into metal, plastic, styrofoam, food waste, glass, paper and carton, oil, and electronics. We recycle wherever possible. All staff are thoroughly trained on waste prevention and waste segregation.



**PAPER PRODUCTS:** At SOMM, we are strongly committed to recycling, all our paper products such as menus (non-laminated), shopping bags, collateral, paper napkins, paper straws and tissue are all FSC certified, recycled and recyclable.

**DIGITAL MENUS:** All guests in SOMM are encouraged to use digital QR code menus, which reduce wear and tear on the paper menus, and therefore paper usage and wastage.

**MANAGE NATURAL RESOURCES:** Energy and water consumption are recorded in a monthly basis, and analysed. An action plan is then derived to reduce usage for the subsequent month. The data is openly shared with all colleagues to raise awareness and further facilitate reduction. SOMM's front-of-house and heart-of-house spaces use exclusively LED lighting, for further reduction in energy consumption.

**NO LINEN:** No tablecloths are used at SOMM. This decision was made to reduce the environmental impact of industrial laundering, which uses bleach. We chose to use napkins of natural colours as opposed to white for the same reason.

**CUTLERY BOX:** The table design features a hidden cutlery box, which was inspired by local Hong Kong culture. This enables guests to only select the cutlery they need, and reduces unnecessary washing of unused cutlery - an issue common in high-end restaurants around the world.



**IN-HOUSE WATER BOTTLING FOR COLLEAGUES AND GUESTS:** We use the Nordaq FRESH water filtration and bottling system from Sweden in both front- and heart-of-house, thereby completely eliminating plastic bottles, as well as imported bottled water. This not only reduces SUP usage, but also significantly reduces the carbon footprint associated with importing bottled water. Water fountains are also used by colleagues to help further minimise SUP bottle usage. In 2020 alone, we saved 57,212 plastic bottles from landfills, equivalent to 7,095kg of plastic waste.

**ELIMINATE CHEMICAL CLEANING PRODUCTS:** In 2022, we pledge to eliminate chemical cleaning products by deploying the natural sanitation and disinfection solutions by Biotek Ozone - a modern, safe and effective technology for sanitizing all fresh vegetables, fruits and eggs in our kitchen operations. Furthermore, only 100% chemical-free and certified biodegradable cleaning products of Zero Impact are used for day-to-day cleaning tasks. The used bottles are collected and recycled for the new batch of production. We carefully selected hand sanitizers from Safe+Sound, which are vegan-friendly, alcohol-free and made from biodegradable lactic acid. Their newly created, circular refill system helps us eliminate single-use plastic bottles.



## **Our Sustainability Related Awards & Certificates:**

**2023 | GSTC - Global Sustainable Tourism Council Certification**

**2023 | Green & CSR Hotelier of the Year for Richard Ekkebus by Stelliers**

**2023 | 3-Star Rating - Food Made Good**

**2022 | Distinguished Sustainability leadership award for Mr Richard Ekkebus by the Hong Kong Management Association**

**2021 | Business of the Year - Food Made Good**

**2021 | 3-Star Rating - Food Made Good**