

# The rise of "zero-waste" restaurants

By Smithsonian.com, adapted by Newsela staff on 04.22.20

Word Count 498

Level 540L



Image 1. A food spread at Rhodora, a "zero-waste" restaurant in Brooklyn, New York. Photo by: Rhodora

Rhodora is a restaurant in New York City. Rhodora is a bit different. It creates no waste.

Rhodora is not a one-of-a-kind place. The number of "zero-waste" restaurants around the world is growing. These restaurants want to have no food leftovers. They also do not want to create trash.

Food waste has become something restaurants think about, says Andrew Stephen. He runs a group that helps restaurants. He helps them to be better for the environment. He said that food waste adds to greenhouse gas emissions. People want to reduce waste.

The Earth is heating up. This type of climate change is called global warming. Most scientists agree that global warming is caused by humans. People use fossil fuels such as oil and coal. It is how we heat our homes and power our cars. Fossil fuels emit greenhouse gases. Greenhouse gases trap heat in the air. This causes temperatures to rise.

## Nearly Half Of What Goes To Landfills Is Food Waste

In the United States, food waste makes up nearly half of what is sent to landfills. Restaurants such as McDonald's and Starbucks try to help. They do "no straw Mondays." That helps only a little.

Frea is a zero-waste restaurant in Germany. It has a composting machine in the back. Any leftover bits of food are turned into compost. Compost is spread over dirt in gardens and farms. It helps plants grow better. Farms provide fruits and vegetables for the restaurant. Frea gives the compost back to farms.

Avoiding food waste is important for zero-waste restaurants. Doug McMaster makes the food at Silo. It is a restaurant in London, England. He serves only a set list of food. That way it will all be eaten. Nothing will spoil in the refrigerator.



Getting supplies can be a problem. Big food suppliers ship in boxes or bins. These get tossed after food is delivered. Zero-waste restaurants work with smaller suppliers. Rhodora gets bread from a nearby bakery. At Silo, food is delivered in reusable crates and bags. At Frea, oil is brought in buckets.

### **How To Make Sure A Restaurant Is Truly Zero-Waste**

Sometimes restaurants call themselves zero-waste, but they are not. Stephen can help. He knows what to look for to make sure a restaurant is truly zero-waste.

He says look for meals that use all of the plant or animal. Pickled items are a good sign. These vegetables are stored in salty water. They last longer. Look for dishes with little — or no — meat.

Silo has one meat dish. Rhodora serves no meat, but small fish. Small fish are better than larger ones because they grow quickly. They do not need to be farmed. Frea is meat-free.

What can we eat at Frea? The restaurant has handmade bread, herby stuffed pasta and chocolate with pickled apples.

## Quiz

- 1 Which sentence from the article states a MAIN idea of the entire article?
- (A) Most scientists agree that global warming is caused by humans.
  - (B) Farms provide fruits and vegetables for the restaurant.
  - (C) Avoiding food waste is important for zero-waste restaurants.
  - (D) He says look for meals that use all of the plant or animal.
- 2 A main idea of the article is that zero-waste restaurants reduce what is sent to landfills.  
Which key detail from the article supports this main idea?
- (A) Restaurants such as McDonald's and Starbucks try to help.
  - (B) Compost is spread over dirt in gardens and farms.
  - (C) Big food suppliers ship in boxes or bins.
  - (D) At Silo, food is delivered in reusable crates and bags.
- 3 What does the section "How To Make Sure A Restaurant Is Truly Zero-Waste" show the reader?
- (A) some things that many zero-waste restaurants have in common
  - (B) how some restaurants avoid using food packaging
  - (C) why many restaurants are trying to reduce their waste
  - (D) where the zero-waste restaurant Rhodora is located
- 4 What information will the reader find in the section "Nearly Half Of What Goes To Landfills Is Food Waste"?
- (A) some of the kinds of food served at the restaurant Frea
  - (B) the effects of food waste on global warming
  - (C) ways that restaurants can reduce food waste
  - (D) methods to make vegetables last longer

## Answer Key

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