

Sustainability Initiatives at 137 Pillars Hotels & Resorts

In addition to eliminating single-use plastic from its hotel rooms and outlets, 137 Pillars Hotels & Resorts is making a concerted effort to reduce its environmental footprint, increase CSR activities and review its sustainable purchasing options.

The luxury hotel owner and management company currently operates two 5-star hotels in Thailand – one in Bangkok, the other in Chiang Mai with further properties in the pipeline.

Anne Arrowsmith, Corporate General Manager of 137 Pillars Hotels & Resorts said, “A day does not go by without us learning more about the damage that plastic, especially single-use plastic, has on the environment. 137 Pillars Hotels & Resorts has long had a strong sustainable policy and we are now taking that to the next level. It’s vital as a company, and as human beings, that the impact we have on the environment is as minimal as possible. What we are doing won’t solve the global problem, but if we all play our part and take responsibility for our choices, then we will eventually overcome this and create a better world for future generations.”

Since it opened in 2011, **137 Pillars House in Chiang Mai** has become one of the most photographed and popular resorts in the Kingdom of Thailand. It is the ideal retreat for those looking to get away from the stress of city life and submerge themselves in a cocoon of luxury that delivers on every level.

The award-winning hotel has been widely praised for its many different environmentally-friendly initiatives. This includes reducing the amount of waste it generates, as well as separating recycling and selling waste paper, cardboard, glass, plastic and aluminium.

Almost all organic waste from the gardens is either made into compost or turned into biochar - charcoal that is added back into the compost to make it richer and more nourishing for plants. The compost is then used to make the landscaped gardens and grounds even more lush and beautiful. The property also has an ever-expanding vegetable and herb garden which produces more and more of the delicious food used in the restaurant and bar.

For waste collection, instead of plastic garbage bags, 137 Pillars House uses reusable woven bags, and, with the exception of the front office and hotel cars, water is presented to guests in recycled glass bottles. Reusable mesh bags have been provided to all suppliers for fruit and vegetable deliveries as they will not be accepted in plastic packaging.

The hotel has replaced plastic straws with paper straws and these are only offered to guests on request. Take away breakfast choices are presented in natural woven containers vs plastic and wooden utensils are provided in lieu of plastic ones.

An intelligent AC system, which automatically turns off the air-conditioning in the suite if the patio doors are opened, has also helped to reduce wasteful electricity consumption. And guest linens are only changed daily if guests request, otherwise it’s every third day.

One of the most important initiatives that many guests won’t even be aware of, is that the luxury boutique hotel has hired an internationally acclaimed mosquito expert who has shown the property how best to sustainably eliminate / limit mosquito breeding areas without the use of chemicals so that fogging is required a lot less frequently.

... 2

“We are very pleased with the results so far, but there is still a lot to do. Our next objective is to eliminate individual plastic shampoo, conditioner and lotion containers. It is important that we do this in a calculated manner to make sure that the changes we put in place are safe and suitable for guests and that they really do make a difference to our goal of a more sustainable future. We need to find an option that ticks all the boxes, and that can take time,” said Anne Arrowsmith

In Bangkok, **137 Pillars Suites & Residences** already has an ongoing sustainable policy in place and has unveiled plans to expand this to more areas of the hotel – especially front of house.

The hotel, which opened in 2017, uses LED lights throughout the property to save energy, the air conditioning units in the room are also controlled by sensors so that when the doors to the very large balconies are open, the AC automatically turns itself off. The room key cards have a green function that can control what power is used when nobody is in the room, and motion detectors help to save electricity by turning off unneeded lights. The 2-step toilet flushing system helps to save water as does the high-tech sprinkler system in the gardens and the innovative pool treatment system. The advanced Heat Pump System not only helps keep the property nice and cool but has also been designed to save energy. These are just a few of the systems that are already in place at the luxury hotel on Sukhumvit Soi 39.

The hotel has eliminated the use of plastic straws from all of its F&B outlets, replaced plastic water bottles in the rooms with glass bottles, replaced the plastic containers for shampoo, conditioner and body lotion with suitable dispensers, expanded its purchasing policy to more sustainable suppliers in Thailand and maximized its recycling efforts for any waste paper, cardboard, glass, plastic and aluminium.

Anne Arrowsmith said “We already have a solid foundation in place when it comes to sustainable best practices, but we are now taking this a step further. As a luxury hotel, our clients want to know that we are doing as much as we can to ensure that their stay is as sustainable as can be and our goal is to not only meet those expectations but to surpass them. This involves us all, and the solution has to start with education. If we can change the mind-set of a few people so that they adopt more sustainable practices in their daily lives, then all of us will benefit.”

The group conducts training sessions with its associates to ensure that not only are the hotels as sustainable as possible but that they take these best practices home with them. Associates are encouraged to take their own bags to the shops, to say no to straws and plastic spoons when they are not needed, and to be much more proactive in their own daily lives.

137 Pillars House Chiang Mai and 137 Pillars Suites & Residences Bangkok are both members of Small Luxury Hotels of the World.

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...3

About 137 Pillars Suites & Residences Bangkok

137 Pillars Hotels & Resorts, launched in Bangkok in January 2016, is a passionately curated luxury boutique brand, offering unique, memorable signature experiences and legendary service in each of its properties.

Following the success of the award-winning 30-suite 137 Pillars House Chiang Mai which opened in 2012, the second property, 137 Pillars Suites & Residences Bangkok opened in February 2017, showcasing 34 exquisitely appointed suites and 179 private residences.

A hallmark of 137 Pillars Hotels & Resorts is the team who are dedicated to legendary hospitality and service, as well as a respect for environmental sustainability.