



# SUSTAINABILITY MANIFESTO

Update April 1st, 2023

With the Sustainability Manifesto, we detail our journey and declare our commitment to running a responsible food and beverage and hospitality business that values resources, the environment, and its people and aligns with UAE National Agenda for sustainable development.

Photo credit: Dibba Bay Oysters



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## INTRODUCTION

BOCA is an independent, fine dining restaurant in the highly competitive dining area of the Dubai International Financial Center. The restaurant opened its doors in 2014. The cuisine is Modern European with a strong Spanish influence.

The restaurant was built on the belief that we have enough capable people living and working in the UAE who can create a modern, forward-thinking, and mindful establishment that is "future-ready" and can rival any world-class concept.

We are lucky to live in a country that has some of the best produce and the best restaurant brands imported from all over the world. What we wanted to establish, however, is that we can build something from the ground up and truly call 'home-grown. Something modern, creative, representative of the natural resources that we have here no matter how scarce they might seem with a narrative that is not just relevant in modern gastronomy but also addresses our modern-day challenges within the community and the environment.

Over the years, our sustainability journey and narrative evolved. Today, we still believe that we do not possess all the solutions. Nonetheless, we have accumulated a wealth of experience and expertise on how to inculcate a sustainable mindset in restaurants, built on a solid foundation that encompasses sourcing, waste, resources, the community, and reporting. This document affirms our steadfast commitment to sustainable development in our restaurant and provides a glimpse of our ongoing journey.



## MESSAGE FROM BOCA'S CHIEF SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER

BOCA is a home-grown concept, born in the desert, and we have consistently showcased the UAE as being far from a barren land. The Hajar mountains of the North are biologically rich habitats, while the Central Region's oases are home to modern hydroponic, organic, and traditional farms, and the bounty from the Arabian Gulf and the Indian Ocean is plentiful. We live in abundance; we just have to look a bit closer and work slightly harder.

In addition to sourcing ingredients locally and supporting local farmers and fishermen, BOCA has stepped up efforts to reduce waste with the help of its own Waste Officer. The restaurant continuously audits kitchen and bar operations, refuses single use plastic from suppliers and to customers, operates a demand-driven inventory, and prefers working with like-minded partners across the value chain. In its location in DIFC, Dubai, BOCA runs on 100% renewable energy and has just published its first carbon emissions report detailing its impact on the environment.

Apart from demonstrating our commitment to sustainability and conservation, (to help achieve our national targets, linked to the United Nation's Sustainability Development Goals,) this document details the journey and the mindset that we had along the way. We hope it inspires you to start your own journey.

Omar Shihab,  
Founder and Chief Sustainability Officer





## A CASE FOR HOSPITALITY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE

Why we deserve a seat at the table when it comes to discussing topics of climate change and sustainability:

- Food - the way it is grown and transported, and the way it is disposed of - accounts for more than a 1/3 of global greenhouse gas emissions.
- A third of the world's food supply is never eaten, with food waste contributing 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions.
- Tourism and hospitality provided the equivalent of 10% of the world's GDP. In the UAE, this figure reached 11.9% of GDP in 2019 and it is expected to grow to 15% in 2030. Our industry employs one in 10 people 60% of who are women. This is the livelihoods of millions of people, helping lift them out of poverty, and is an integral part of achieving many of the interlocked sustainability development goals.

Economically and socially, restaurants represent a large part of the food system, in some places even a larger part than agriculture, retail and logistics. Not only does that mean that we have the greatest responsibility, but also the opportunity to make the biggest impact.



## SUSTAINABILITY FOR LONGEVITY & PROFITABILITY

In the world of food and beverages, competition is fierce. The market in the UAE and the wider Gulf region is no different. In fact, there are more food and beverage concepts per million people in Dubai than in New York, and London\*. Sustaining the business, especially during the delicate first two years of operation, was high on our agenda. Sourcing locally and directly helped us reduce costs associated with suppliers and middlemen. Conscious waste management also helped us get more out of our products. Along with an on-demand inventory that is managed daily, we were able to navigate the restaurant through an extremely competitive industry and become a profitable business with long-term viability.

*\* KPMG UAE 2018 Food & Beverage report.*



## POSITIVE IMPACT, A PLATFORM FOR THE COMMUNITY

We compete in the high end of the market; in a prominent location dominated by some of the most established restaurants in the city, if not the country and region. That has brought attention to what we do and how we do business locally and globally. We also recognized that restaurants - more than ever before - have a voice and an impact within the community. We can influence people and bring their attention to important issues, especially when it comes to food, natural resources, and waste.



## BOCA's PILLARS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is embedded in BOCA's foundations. The restaurant was built on the belief that there are enough creative people in the UAE who can build a modern, forward-thinking, and mindful establishment that is "future-ready" and can compete with any world-class concept.

Sourcing seafood from the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman to showcase the richness of local produce, reduce carbon footprint and support local fishermen was paramount in the first year of BOCA's operation. Over the years, we began to realize how much waste we were producing and how much consumption we were encouraging. And as climate change and environmental degradation became more pressing issues, we evolved and multiplied our sustainability efforts in many other aspects. Today, BOCA stands on five sustainability pillars:

1. Champion Local Produce
2. Proactive and Conscious Waste Management
3. Valuing Resources: Renewable Energy
4. Reporting Carbon Emissions, and Sustainability Ratings
5. Sustainability for Our Community





## 1. CHAMPION LOCAL PRODUCE

First, we started by looking at the 1,318 kilometers of coastline facing two oceans that we have access to here in the UAE. We wanted to showcase the richness of local produce, to reduce carbon footprint and support local fishermen. This was paramount in the first year of BOCA's operation.

Our first menu of 2014 included a few lesser-known fish from Arabian Gulf. By spring 2021, 90% of our fish and seafood was locally or regionally sourced and 50% of our vegetables and fruits were from local and regional farmers and producers.

We source directly from fishermen in Dubai's Waterfront Fish & Vegetables Market on a daily basis and since our first day of operation. Recently, we have expanded our local sourcing to include fish from the UAE's first and largest fish farming facility 'FishFarm' sourcing sustainable Hamour and Seabass from them. This is Hamour's debut on BOCA's menus since it has always been on the UAE's Ministry of Fisheries endangered list. Now that is farmed at the 'FishFarm' facilities we can safely place this delicious much sought after fish on our menus. We believe that every ton of Hamour sourced from the farming facility is



one ton that stays back in the waters of the Arabian Gulf, helping build back the dwindling population of this type of fish.

Our menu also exclusively features the UAE's first local oysters; Dibba Bay (we do not stock any other oyster variety.) These oysters are sourced from the pristine waters of Fujairah on the east coast of the country. We are proud to source the first batch of commercially viable from Dibba Bay and continue to do so until this date.

When it comes to fruits and vegetables we work with various local organic and hydroponic farms in Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, and the Northern Emirates. We have collaborated recently with new and upcoming farms across the country featuring their produce across our menu. Initiatives like this have brought us closer to local farming heroes who we may or may not have heard of before. It took us on multiple road trips across the United Arab Emirates discovering what very inspiring individuals have been doing in the desert. We were blown away by how much can be done here using new technology and techniques with absolute efficiency and minimum impact on the environment.

For fruits and vegetables, we also work with several local organic and hydroponic farms in the UAE. We recently signed up an exclusivity deal with Pure Harvest Smart farms to consolidate all of our tomato purchases with them.



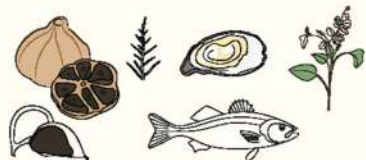
In 2021 we featured five species of native desert plants from the UAE, including Khobez, Homaïd and Khansour with the aim of starting a conversation on what is really native to the UAE and how the desert is very much alive and far away from barren.

## **CREDITING LOCAL AND SUSTAINABLE PRODUCE**

We built BOCA to be a member of the community. We recognize that as a restaurant, we have a bigger responsibility than just serving good food. We have a voice; we can drive trends and we feel compelled to talk about the enormous efforts that local farming heroes are exerting in the desert. We are constantly blown away by how much can be done here using new technologies and techniques with absolute efficiency and minimum impact on the environment.

Across all our menus you will see highlights of local farms whenever they are used. This is also done meticulously with our grape and cocktail lists. We mention and always prefer to use local, sustainable, biodynamic, and organic suppliers.

We developed our own original local ingredient's guide, now in its second edition. Dubbed 'LOCAL INGREDIENTS: An Illustrated Guide,' this list is attached to our menus and includes our own original illustrations highlighting the best of local and home-made produce.



# LOCAL INGREDIENTS An Illustrated Guide



We live in the desert, but the UAE is far from being a barren land. The Hajar mountains of the North are biologically rich habitats, while the Central Region's oases are home to modern hydroponic, organic and traditional farms, and the bounty from the Arabian Gulf and the Indian Ocean is plentiful. We live in abundance; we just have to look a bit closer and work slightly harder.

Local ingredients have always taken precedence in our menus. Here we share some of the highlights.

## Rye + Sourdough

Meet sisters, Orea and Massa Mare, born in our bakery four years apart. The two 'bread mothers' evolved together and are still growing wilder and bolder. This season we serve our bread with a charred eggplant allioli.



## Khobez | Malva Parviflora

خبيز

Also known as Mallow, one of the more common native desert plants in the UAE and across the region. It has an unmistakable long petiole (the stalk that attaches the leaf to the stem) with a circular to kidney-shaped and toothed leaf. The taste is mildly bitter. We use it fresh and in a puree form.



## Homaid | Rumex Vesicarius

حميض

Found in both rocky and sandy terrains across the country, it translates loosely to 'sour-y'. The leaves are triangular to oval and the flowers bloom green with a red tinge. They have a slightly sour and bitter taste. We use Homaid leaves fresh and in a puree form.



## Khansour | Caralluma Arabica

خصور الجبل

A rare native plant that grows in the mountain areas of Ras al Khaimah, it has been recently introduced to the Jebel Hafeet Natural Reserve for conservation. Blooms a dark ruby flower, this succulent is extremely bitter. It has been traditionally used in medicine and cooked in a stew. We pickle it in this menu edition.



## Seedaf | Pteropyrum

سيداتف

A shrub common in the valleys of the UAE. The thorny leaves are slightly salty and are used fresh throughout our menu and in a vinaigrette with Dibba Bay oysters. A good complement to rosemary.



## Beetroot

Grown by traditional farms across the country and the region. We roast it and hang it to dry-age for five days, just like a fine steak! Aging pulls out the moisture, intensifies the flavor and gives the humble beetroot a meatier texture.

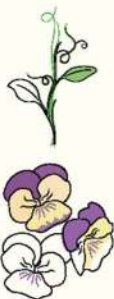


*There are many more edible native desert plants to explore. Head to our Desert Garden to see what we managed to source ourselves or visit the Jameel Arts Centre in Jaddaf, Dubai and check out 'Desert is a Forest' by Sunoj D and Namrata Neog.*

*New hydroponic, vertical, organic and traditional farms are popping up across the UAE and we try to explore as many of them as we can. We are now proud to source our herbs, tomatoes, cucumbers, mushrooms, sweet potatoes, yellow potatoes, and passion fruit locally and regionally.*

## Mary Anne's Edible Flowers

Just off the stretch between Dubai and Al Ain is a small indoor farm run by Mary Anne. She produces the edible flowers and microgreens used in our menus and delivers them to us personally only hours after they have been harvested. These nutrient dense plants are grown in indoor aquaponics which means that they are pesticide-free, and that water usage is reduced by 90% compared to traditional farming methods.



## Saline Water Crops

Pearl Millet, Salicornia and Quinoa are crops identified by the ICBA (The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture) research center in Dubai as nutrient dense plants that can tolerate high heat, salty waters, and poor soil. Although currently sourced from outside the region, we use these products throughout our menu as a salute to the non-profit center's work that aims to improve agricultural productivity and sustainability in marginal environments.



## Black Garlic



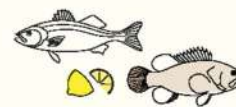
Produced in-house through aging regular garlic at 60°C and a constant 90% humidity with no additives, preservatives, or burning. The result is a breakdown of the garlic's sharpness, a caramelized taste, and a sticky date-like texture.

## Dibba Bay Oysters



Thanks to local hero, Ramie Murray, we now have world class oysters that we can call our own. Grown in the pristine waters of Dibba in Northern Fujairah these oysters carry the right balance of saltiness, acidity, sweetness and 'meatiness'.

## Local Fish & Seafood



Did you know that Hamour has a life span of over 20 years but because of overfishing they are only growing to a maximum age of eight years in the Arabian Gulf\*. That is why we prefer to use sustainable Hamour and Seabass from the UAE's 'FishFarm'. The fish grow 4.5 KM off the coast of Dibba, Fujairah and receive only organic feed. With every Hamour we source from 'FishFarm' we are making sure that at least one Hamour stays and grows in the wild.



## **2. PROACTIVE AND CONSCIOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT**

Over the years, we began to realize how much waste we were producing and how much consumption we were encouraging. It was like a bell we could not ‘un-ring.’ So as climate change and environmental degradation became more pressing issues, we evolved and multiplied our efforts to make more with less.

Our kitchen and bar are continuously looking for ways to make use of the entire fish, vegetable, and animal carcass and cross menu usage of ingredients and sub-ingredients to reduce food waste to an absolute minimum. Stocks are made of all bones, vegetable ends and peels in the kitchen, husks of freshly squeezed citrus fruit are used to make cocktail bases in the bar. We have started using mild fermentation to evolve seasonal vegetables bought in abundance during season and working on new initiatives to create sodas from pineapple skins and currently brewing our own kombucha.

### **DEMAND DRIVEN INVENTORY**

Since the beginning of our operations in 2014 we have kept a ‘MARKET AVAILABILITY’ board in the restaurant visible to all guests showing items that are in limited supply. Guest foot fall in DIFC is cyclical, which means we have large variance in the number of guests throughout the week. The kitchen limits quantity of supply of certain high-cost short-expiry items on



slower days in order to avoid wastage and freezing of fresh produce. This is a common practice all over the world but could be a foreign concept to clients locally. We are constantly doing our part in educating the public around this.

Initiatives like these have helped us reduce food preparation waste to 5% or less.

## **NO SINGLE USE PLASTIC UTENSILS**

We have ditched all plastic straws, stirrers and cutlery years ago and currently use a mix of paper, bamboo, and cassava straws. We have just partnered with a small company that is producing hand-made bamboo straws for us sourced from small farmers in Palawan in the Philippines employing less fortunate families on the island. The bamboo straws are reusable for up to 10 times.

## **THE ROLE OF A WASTE OFFICER**

In order to tackle waste efficiently and effectively, we wanted to have a factual understanding of what we are disposing off at the end of our production and operation cycle.

We have had the duties of what we now identify as Waste Officer shared between a couple of our senior staff for more than a year since 2019. In 2020, it was about time to have accountability and formalize the

responsibility with one person, and to give that person authority and autonomy on how to manage the tasks/duties at hand. We also wanted to record accurate figures and to understand to a large degree of accuracy how much waste we are producing and how much of it we can reduce.



Mohammad Zulfaquar M Salahuddin, Head of Stewarding & BOCA's Waste Officer

The person has an additional incentive to record accurate numbers and give feedback to the bar, kitchen, and service team on their waste production. The waste officer feeds raw data into an excel sheet to keep track. Later on, this data will be valuable when talking to suppliers, facility management and waste management. We have also started using it to inspire and challenge our respective teams to come up with creative ways to repurpose and upcycle what is considered waste.



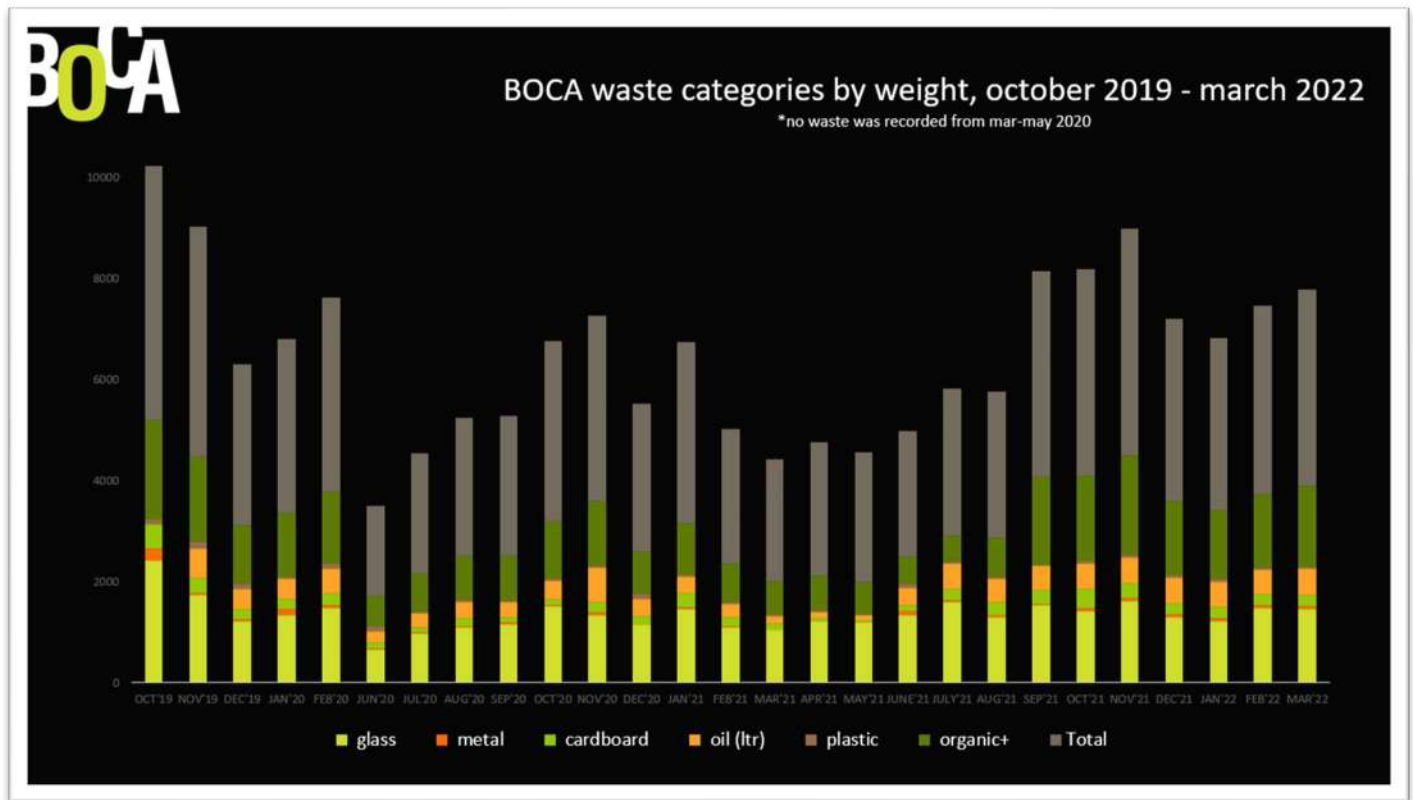
The role of the Waste Office is set to achieve simple goals:

- Come up with formal procedures for separating waste across the entire restaurant in four main areas: kitchen, bar, floor and housekeeping.
- Improve the quality of waste ending in the bin.
- Correct separation in the different bins.
- Record weight of the different waste bags before leaving the outlet.
- Correct separation in the building's waste separation facility.
- Consolidate data on the monthly basis in the master waste sheet to be shared with management.
- Semi-annual review of waste by weight with annual and monthly comparisons with management.
- Report back to kitchen, bar, floor, and house keeping with waste figures and incentivize teams to action.

This way, all waste in BOCA is separated and weighed before it leaves our premises. Understanding this has enabled us to give feedback to the different production areas. It has also enabled us to start conversations with suppliers to reconsider their packaging and the way they deliver to us.



By December 31, 2022, our average monthly waste decreased compared to 2021 by 5% across most categories. Glass waste remains the highest waste by weight. A nationwide bottle collection campaign by one of our main suppliers, influenced by us should materialize before the end of the year to aid this.



## USED COOKING OIL

According to the Waste Data, the second largest category of waste by weight was used cooking oil. BOCA today has its used cooking oil collected by Neutral Fuels, the company that has made a commercial success of recycling waste oil into biodiesel, locally here in the UAE.



## **ORGANIC WASTE**

Organic waste from preparation and from guest leftover represents the third largest category of waste. Today, BOCA contracted The Waste Lab to collect all this organic matter to be transformed into compost, also locally here in the UAE.

## **3. VALUING RESOURCES: RENEWABLE ENERGY**

In November 2021, we reinforced our commitment to sustainability by using 100% renewable energy. The energy source comes from solar power generated by the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, which feeds electricity into the city's main grid.

BOCA has acquired international renewable energy certificates from DEWA's Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park to meet 100% of its electricity consumption. This is part of its commitment to mitigating climate change and promoting the use of clean energy.

International renewable energy certificates (I-RECs) function as tradable credits in the renewable energy markets and can be bought and sold between different parties. By purchasing and redeeming (I-RECs), establishments can genuinely declare that they are powered by 100% renewable energy.



With this purchase, BOCA saves approximately 75 tonnes of CO2 emissions. According to results of BOCA's carbon footprint calculations, this is close to 20% reduction in its overall carbon footprint.

At BOCA, we are committed to investing in the future and the UAE's 2030 greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, not just the bottom line. A 20% reduction in our carbon footprint was a remarkable start for us.

**THE INTERNATIONAL REC STANDARD**

This Redemption Statement has been produced for

**FOOD WORKS ME GENERAL TRADING (DIFC) LTD. (BOCA)**

by

**ELEMENTSIX**

confirming the Redemption of

**229**

1-REC Certificates, representing 229 MWh of electricity generated from renewable sources

This Statement relates to electricity consumption located at or in

**Dubai, UAE**  
**United Arab Emirates**

in respect of the reporting period

**2021-01-01 to 2021-12-31**

The stated Redemption Purpose is

As part of their commitment to reducing carbon emissions, BOCA is sourcing 100% of their electrical energy from local solar projects

**Evident**

**QR Code Verification**

Verify the status of this Redemption Statement by scanning the QR code on the left and entering in the Verification Key below

**Verification Key**

**7 4 8 3 1 5 9 6**

<https://evident.app/public/certificates/en/b1T2UaaMKyxGedzt/qfmeFAUHVlq3mbbd5Zhp7xFE>

Gate Village 6, DIFC  
P.O.Box 506772, Dubai, UAE  
T +971 4 323 1833  
F +971 4 323 1566  
info@boca.ae  
[www.boca.ae](http://www.boca.ae)



## 4. CALCULATING & REPORTING CARBON EMISSIONS, AND SUSTAINABILITY RATINGS

In 2021 we partnered with elementsix, a Dubai-based sustainability and carbon management consultancy to calculate our carbon emissions. As part of the project, elementsix will audit our operations and production lifecycle to assess BOCA's greenhouse gas emissions under rigorous global accreditation standards.

The report, calculated by consulting firm elementsix, shows that emissions from BOCA were 754 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2021. This is a 10% reduction from the official figures, as we continue to source electricity from renewable energy sources.

We are committed to making a greater contribution to the fight against climate change, and we wanted to know with great accuracy where we stood in this regard. That was the reason for calculating our carbon footprint.

BOCA 's operations and production lifecycle were assessed to measure the restaurant's greenhouse gas emissions against strict global accreditation standards. Based on the published carbon footprint figures, we can make conscious decisions when it comes to reducing energy and water consumption, reducing waste in certain categories, and finding alternatives to ingredients that have a particularly high carbon footprint.



In addition, elementsix will also advise us on methods to offset unavoidable emissions, so we can then advise our guests on how to offset their meals with us as well.

We want our guests to know that we are focused on serving them a delicious meal in a refined environment while maintaining the highest standards of waste management, responsible sourcing, and low impact business practices. All they need to know is that the environmental impact of dining with us will be one of the lowest in the country. Today, the average carbon emissions per guest at BOCA stands at 15.01 KG of CO<sub>2</sub>.

# 2021 CARBON FOOTPRINT REPORT

At BOCA we strive to keep sustainability at the core of our operation. We continue to source ingredients locally and support local farmers and fishermen. As tackling climate change becomes more pressing than ever, we have stepped up our efforts by engaging a local Carbon Consulting firm, elementsix, to calculate our 2020 and 2021 carbon footprint. This allows us to understand where our biggest emission sources are, and enables us to effectively reduce our impact on the environment, while preserving a unique, fine dining experience for our patrons. Below you can find a summary of our 2021 carbon footprint:

Total Carbon Footprint (CFP)



**BOUNDARY** - entire operations including upstream and downstream

**SCOPES** - all direct and indirect emissions (scopes 1, 2, and 3)

**AVERAGE CARBON FOOTPRINT PER GUEST** - 15.01 kgCO<sub>2</sub>

**754,262 kgCO<sub>2</sub>**

Scope 1 **5.8%**

**48,811 kgCO<sub>2</sub>**

Scope 1

Scope 1 emissions are direct greenhouse (GHG) emissions that occur from sources controlled or owned by the reporting company (e.g., emissions associated with fuel combustion in boilers and company fleet).

LPG Consumption



**48,811 kgCO<sub>2</sub>**



BOCA's entire 2020 and 2021 electricity consumption is purchased from renewable energy sources using I-RECs, offsetting this value to **zero**.

Scope 2 **33.8%**

**193,983 kgCO<sub>2</sub>**

Scope 2

Scope 2 emissions are indirect GHG emissions that occur from the generation of purchased energy (e.g., emissions associated with electricity consumption and district cooling).

Electricity Consumption



**0 kgCO<sub>2</sub>**

District Cooling



**193,983 kgCO<sub>2</sub>**

Scope 3 **60.4%**

**511,468 kgCO<sub>2</sub>**

Scope 3

Scope 3 emissions are indirect GHG emissions that occur in the value chain of the reporting company, including both upstream and downstream emissions.

Purchased Goods\*



**315,987 kgCO<sub>2</sub>**

Waste Generated\*\*



**35,715 kgCO<sub>2</sub>**

Employee Commutes



**16,119 kgCO<sub>2</sub>**

Transportation



**143,522 kgCO<sub>2</sub>**

## \*Purchased Goods

Beef & Lamb	<b>43%</b>
Drinks	<b>20%</b>
Fish & Seafood	<b>12%</b>
Dairy	<b>7%</b>
Water	<b>6%</b>
Others	<b>5%</b>
Oils	<b>5%</b>
Vegetables & Fruits	<b>1%</b>
Poultry	<b>1%</b>

## \*\*Waste Generated

Oil <sup>†</sup>	<b>32%</b>
Glass	<b>23%</b>
Organics	<b>17%</b>
Cardboard	<b>11%</b>
Metal	<b>7%</b>
Plastics	<b>3%</b>

<sup>†</sup>As of December 2021, BOCA's used cooking oil is being recycled into biodiesel, which will reduce the emissions associated with oil waste.



## 5. SUSTAINABILITY FOR OUR COMMUNITY

People lie at the heart of hospitality, and treating staff fairly comes as a priority for us at BOCA. Providing equal opportunities across genders, orientations and backgrounds has been engrained in our recruitment policy since day one.

Today BOCA employs more than 40 members from 18 nationalities, 35% of who are women. Although the overall figure of women is 'work-in-progress' (we aim to raise that figure to more than 50% of our staff,) the top leadership roles, including Restaurant Manager, Guest Relations Manager, Bar Manager, 3 out of 4 senior supervisors and the Executive Chef of BOCA are helmed by women.

Training and clear policies to keep employees happy and productive are set in place. Staff are encouraged to attend and cross training programs from different areas of the restaurant, from service to bar and wine, to sustainability training and in the kitchen.

Engaging with the local community, is a big part of our sustainability ethos. BOCA is a regular contributor to local registered charities and causes including The Puppy Ball, marine conservationist Azraq, Gulf for Good and many more.



Annually, BOCA hosts no less than five special dinners, usually a collaboration with local and international chefs, farmers, and other industry professionals to create a special menu in an interactive setting. We seek partnerships with like-minded individuals and organizations that share the same values around sustainability. Head to our events page to see the long list of events we have been hosting since 2015.

## **SUSTAINABLE UNIFORMS**

In 2022 we found a way to incorporate our values into staff uniforms thanks to Goshopia. We approached Goshopia with an idea: to create a line of uniforms that are made from sustainable material and sourced responsibly, different to what was available in the market and would fit the demanding needs of a restaurant operation.

Goshopia is the leader of slow and sustainable fashion in the region. From the initial focus on fashion, the platform has grown to also offer accessories, beauty, home décor and soon corporate gifting. All following their 3S's or core values:

- Slow philosophy
- Sustainability, and
- Social Responsibility





The design process was totally collaborative, with BOCA's and Goshopia's teams bouncing ideas, designs and selecting fabrics and colors.

The result is a line of uniforms that combine comfort, function, and beauty in a sustainable fabric that's easy on the environment. The uniforms are designed and built to last using 100% hemp.

Hemp is a sustainable material that's been used for centuries because of its durability and comfort. Totally biodegradable, it gets better with every wash. What's more? Hemp is UV-resistant and anti-bacterial and requires less water to grow than other natural fibers. Also, can be recycled at the end of their lifecycle.

The new uniforms are 100% earth-friendly and look amazing on the team. This is part of a larger effort by Goshopia to make their sustainable products available not only for direct consumers but also for business and corporations. Hence the birth of the new division of the company offering sustainable uniforms, eco corporate gifting and even plants to improve the air quality of the office or workspace. Photo credits to Lorena de la Torre.





## PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Building a sustainable restaurant did not necessarily mean we had to become completely "hip" in our approach, it just meant we had to have a better understanding of the supply chain and navigate the decisions we make on a daily basis with more thought, reflection, and responsibility.

The idea was instilled in all the "department heads" of the restaurant – floor managers, head chef, beverage, and bar heads, purchasing and stewarding. We questioned our daily tasks, how we receive goods, who our suppliers are, where they source their goods from, if there is a local alternative, how we dispose of waste, what is considered waste and so on to create purpose driven policies in all the standard operations of the restaurant.

The next step was constant discovery and understanding that this would be an evolution. With each season, we sought out new local producers and farmers. Because we were talking about it brought us attention from thought leaders in the field and allowed us to learn a lot about more conscious practices that we could implement in the restaurant.



## IMPACT

The biggest impact we see is on the commercial aspect, because without revenue we would not be able to sustain our business and our current model. Reducing food and beverage costs, estimated at 1-2% per month, is extremely important to our operation.

Sourcing locally and directly helped us reduce costs associated with suppliers and middlemen.

Conscious waste management also helped us get more out of our products and send less to landfill.

We also recognized the impact we have within the community. We can influence people and bring their attention to important issues, especially when it comes to food, natural resources, and waste.



## INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

As diverse as the topic of sustainability is, so are the applications used throughout the restaurant. In the kitchen, in addition to the standard broths and sauces used with what is traditionally considered waste (bones, peels, vegetable scraps...etc.), many locally sourced secondary ingredients like sumac, zaatar, and black lime make their way into recipes. A humble local ingredient like beetroot is treated like a fine steak; an aging process is applied to the vegetable to intensify the aroma and enhance the flavor.

Our recent spring menu was an accumulation of research shared with farmers, artists, and scientists from the International Center for Bio-saline Agriculture. Building such partnerships helps us understand the landscape of the land, and edible native wild plants of the region.

We also recently unveiled our own "DESERT GARDEN" featuring eight native desert plants. The garden is used to showcase edible native plants to our guests and serve as a platform for us to experiment with more of them in the future. These desert plants and other ingredients of the menu are in the illustration guide mentioned previously, "LOCAL INGREDIENTS: An Illustrated Guide".

At the bar, orange peels and rinds are given a second life. They find their way back into cocktails in the form of saccharum. Pureed whole fruits



and vegetables are used to make garnishes and edible leather, while unused bar supplies are dehydrated to be used in tea infusions. In the case of passion fruit, the peels are ground to make a paste that, when dried, is made into special drink coasters.

Corks, boxes, and bottles also find their way back into the outlet as decorations, gifts, and more functional items like trivets, and handbag stands.