

TIAKI IN KIRIKIROA

Hayes Common and Weave Eatery

Sustainable sustenance at Hayes Common and Weave

Hamilton East hotspots Hayes Common and Weave Eatery have gained a name for serving some of the most delicious and sustainably-made gastronomic delights in the Waikato.

Both provide neighbourhood or community hubs where patrons can unwind in relaxing surroundings while enjoying meals that owner Lisa Quarrie proudly says are created with “people, place and planet” in mind.

“New Zealand’s Tiaki Promise underpins how we do business and that means really aligning our food and experience with our people, our environment and our communities.”

“At our eateries it’s important that we have the Promise at the forefront of our minds when we’re making any decisions about how we look after our guests or around the staff we employ.”



Lisa says Hayes Common takes inspiration from the history of the heritage precinct in Hamilton East, where the corner shop it is housed in was once the heart of the community, nourishing the local people with food and almost everything else they needed.

These days, the establishment attracts people from all around the city and further afield, and is the perfect spot for people who want to look out over the river, unwind, and enjoy fresh, seasonal food with locally-sourced ingredients.

“We’ve got daily regulars, weekly regulars and weekend regulars, and we’re getting lots of visitors from outside the region. People say Hayes Common feels like home and when they’ve got visitors coming from around New Zealand or overseas it’s a place they want to take them.”

Lisa says Hayes Common has assumed a similar role to that of a local town hall or church – a place for local people to come together. Doing so means fitting in with the community they serve – a philosophy that has seen the eatery’s interior design stay true to the 1940s aesthetic of the building it’s situated in to respect and celebrate its unique heritage.

“We’re very much part of a special neighbourhood here and we want to make sure our imprint on the community is a positive one.”

Lisa says she aims to make Hayes Common and sister restaurant Weave Eatery in Waikato’s Innovation Park places where customers and staff feel comfortable no matter what their identity or ability is, and to support as much ethnic, religious and rainbow diversity as possible.



The Mighty Waikato
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The Pride Pledge is embedded in the values of her businesses and is highlighted early on in the induction process for new staff, she says.

"We have strong core values around trust, inclusiveness, sustainability, teamwork and community.

"Care for people is at the centre of all our decision-making here at Hayes Common and Weave - we want our team to feel like they're really intrinsic to our operation."

Hayes Common recently hosted a Latin themed night with food created by some of its South American team members so they could celebrate and share their culture. Both eateries close on public holidays so staff can take a break and look after their own wellbeing, she says.

A reusable cup-library system at the two eateries and efforts to encourage customers to bring their own mugs have saved around 22,000 disposable cups from going to landfill in the past year, Lisa says. The approach sometimes requires her team to think on their feet when it comes to pricing – especially if someone brings in a mug of mammoth proportions – but the environmental benefits are appreciated and her customers have bought into it.

Minimising waste is a major focus as well, with 'old-school' approaches to food preparation such as preserving, pickling and bottling employed to make use of food that would otherwise go to waste, and a lot of what can't be used is fed to her chickens at home.

"A small amount of what we can't use does go into the rubbish, but we're always trying to minimise that and ask ourselves 'how can we turn it into something we can make use of'."

Lisa says she chooses her suppliers carefully, prioritising local businesses and seasonality to "support local" and cut down on carbon emissions that come from transporting ingredients.

The famous family-owned Magills Butchery in Te Awamutu supplies Lisa with bacon, Kaipaki Dairies in Ōhaupō provides her with milk in large returnable pales rather than plastic bottles, and Bootleg Brewery in Matangi takes care of the beer selection. Most of the wines and beers offered at Hayes Common are on tap, cutting down on bottles.

Her unstoppable passion for sustainability doesn't end there. Lisa is a voice for change across the entire hospitality industry through her role with the Restaurant Association of New Zealand's Sustainability & Environmental Practise Advisory Group.

Hayes Common has recently been part of a New Zealand-wide pilot scheme run by the Restaurant Association, measuring how much perishable waste it creates so as an industry the restaurant trade can analyse and try to reduce the waste that it is creating.

"It's been great for us because we want to bring on-site our own composting bins so we can be turning all that green waste into a more reusable compost resource to feed our kitchen gardens," she says.

The on-site garden at Hayes Common's supplies its kitchen with a bounty of fruit, herbs, garnishes and edible flowers.

"The idea was that everything in the garden is edible and it's not just there for us to consume but also for the local ecosystem of bugs, birds and bees as well," she says.

"It's about giving back in whatever ways we can, and making a positive change to the people, place and community around us."



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