

Environmental Care & Sustainability

Owen River Lodge cares about the environment and the social sustainability of both our business and the local community. The owner and team at Owen River Lodge are committed to continually improving our environmental and social sustainability performance, and thereby decreasing our environmental footprint.

We have tried to balance the business imperatives of operating a luxury five star lodge with the needs and expectations of our guests, and the impact we all have on the environment. To help in achieving this goal, we have implemented a range of initiatives to assist in the reduction of pollution and to minimize the wasting of precious energy resources. Many of these you will not see, but some you may notice.

Laundry

You can help us care for our unique part of New Zealand by supporting our towel and linen policy. Many of our guests choose to reuse their towels and/or wish to have their bed linen changed less often, as this means we consume less water and use less energy and detergents, which can end up in our waterways. When you would like us to change your towels, please place them in the shower. Likewise, when you wish your bed linen changed, please place the "change me" card that we have placed in the bathroom, on your bed.

Water Supply

The lodge is not connected to a mains water supply. To provide water, we harvest rain water off the lodge roof and supplement this supply with a spring. All water is filtered firstly through a non-chemical, 20 micron filtration system and then again through a 1 micron filtration system.

Waste Water

We have installed an environmentally friendly, non-chemical, Bio Cycle septic system, which treats waste water through a three stage system. Waste water is then further treated through a UV filter as it is fed out along an irrigation line and waters some of our trees.

Vegetable Garden

The lodge's vegetable garden, which is grown on organic principles, supplies us with a large amount of fantastic fresh vegetables, herbs, berries and some fruit. We take advantage of our garden's seasonal produce by making our own jams and preserves.

Native Re-vegetation

Since establishing the lodge in 2003, we have planted several thousand native trees, shrubs, flaxes and grasses. Each year sees the number of native trees and shrubs increase as our garden is continually expanded. Additionally, we have fenced off all our waterways and wetland areas to keep the cattle out. These initiatives have encouraged a significant increase in the number of native birds that live in and around the lodge. Depending on the season, you will find Pukekos in our wetlands, Fern birds grubbing in the garden beds, Wood Pigeons and Moreporks in our trees and hear the sound of the Tuis calling each other.

Kitchen Waste

All organic kitchen waste is either composted or used as food for our chef's chickens – in return we obtain free-range eggs.

Recycling

We try and recycle as much as we possibly can. For example, large cardboard boxes are used as weed matting. All glass bottles/jars, metal cans, plastic bottles, newspaper, waste paper and cardboard are collected, sorted and recycled. Labelled recycling facilities are available in all guest cottage suites.

Mulching

We compost all leaves and shred/chip all branches pruned from our trees. This is then used as mulch for our gardens, thereby reducing the need to water.

Sourcing of Produce & Products

We try and source our food produce and other products as locally as possible. This supports the local community and small businesses, thereby increasing employment and reducing the distance our produce must travel to reach us. Some of our meat comes from Murchison Meats, which won an award in 2008 for the best bacon in New Zealand.

The Extra Virgin Olive Oil we use is sourced from Villa Grove, which is located near Nelson. The honey that is on the breakfast table is sourced from a bee keeper located in one of the neighbouring valleys.

The bottled water we provide in our lunch packs is a wonderful example of Kiwi ingenuity, rather than being made from petrochemical based plastics, the bottles are made from biodegradable corn based starches and sugars.

The premium coffee beans we use are roasted in Nelson and are certified organic and "Fair Trade". Rather than purchase single serve packaged coffee beans for use in our guest suites, we grind and package our own.

All products and services that are used at Owen River Lodge are constantly under review to ensure that they meet with our social and environmental objectives - distance travelled from source, recyclability, biodegradability, efficiency rating, and recycled content. Whenever possible, we purchase in bulk.

Cleaning Products

All cleaning products used at the lodge are biodegradable and have been chosen for their limited use of chemicals and minimal effect on the environment. The vast majority of our cleaning products are organic based, free of "nasty" chemicals, manufactured in New Zealand and are sourced from Eco Store.

Energy Use

The team members at Owen River Lodge try to turn off lights and electrical equipment when not needed, or when we leave a room. You may wish to do the same. We monitor/track our energy usage, thereby allowing us to continuously attempt to reduce our energy consumption. The bathrooms in our guest suites are fitted with heated towel rails. These are switched off, allowing you to choose if you require them or not.

Heating & Cooling

The lodge and the guest cottage suites are heated/cooled with one of the most energy efficient systems available. Each suite has its own reverse cycle, split system air conditioner (also known as a heat pump). To help maintain their energy efficiency, we ask that you close the windows in your suite when operating the system and consider switching the air conditioner off when you leave your suite.

Energy Saving Light Bulbs

We have installed motion sensors, light dimmers and energy saving/low voltage light bulbs where possible.

Hot Water

Rather than continuously heat and store hot water, we have installed instantaneous Natural Gas hot water systems. These systems use a fraction of the energy that the more traditional electric or gas storage hot water systems use.

Sustainable Design

The guest cottage suites are constructed from New Zealand plantation grown pine and recycled Oregon. Some of the windows in the main lodge building and the guest cottage suites have also been salvaged from recycled building supply yards. The carpets are 100% wool based – naturally, also grown in New Zealand. In keeping with all things natural, the wooden beech floor in the living areas is protected with a natural wax coating, rather than a petrochemical based sealer.

Spa Pool/Jacuzzi

The spa pool uses an Ozone generator to clean the water. This allows us to minimize the amount of chemicals needed to keep the water crystal clear and clean.

Local Community

We recognize our responsibility to the local community. We employ local staff and support various local not for profit organisations including the Murchison sport and recreation centre, the Murchison A&P show and the local theatre society. We donate unwanted goods to local charities and the Salvation Army.

Minimising Waste

The rubbish bags we use are made from biodegradable corn based starches and sugars. We actively try and reduce the use of office consumables where possible. Our office paper is a recycled, non-bleached paper. Additionally, we refill our printer cartridges.

Responsibility

The owner, Felix Borenstein, is responsible for ensuring ongoing environmental performance, identification of environmental risks, recording and monitoring of impacts, and implementing environmental and social sustainability measures. As an organisation, and a member of the community, we encourage the team members at Owen River Lodge to play an active part in our commitment to environmental and social sustainability to our guests, suppliers, contractors, agents and wholesalers.

We encourage and welcome feedback and suggestions from our guests.