



ugsrp

University of Guelph
Sustainable Restaurant Project

A University of Guelph Sustainable Restaurant Project Case Study



The CN Tower: A Canadian Landmark

It's hard to imagine Toronto's picturesque skyline without the CN Tower. At 553.33m (1,815.5ft) this architectural wonder reminds the world of the strength and innovation of Canadian industry.

The tower was constructed in 1976 by Canadian National. They set out with the goal of building the tallest tower in the world, and for 34 years (1975-2009) they held the Guinness World Record for the world's tallest free-standing structure. While the tower no longer holds this record, it still boasts many achievements and records that drive tourism and keep Canadians proud of their beloved landmark.

For the tower's most continually adaptive achievements most people look to 360, the revolving restaurant at the CN Tower which offers market fresh and locally sourced ingredients. Seasonal menus and local suppliers have helped keep 360 in touch with their Canadian roots.

With the recent hiring of a new General Manager and Executive Chef 360 has been able to implement new strategies that place a focus on sustainability and community-driven efforts that have helped keep 360 in a league of its own.

Records & Awards

The Tower

- World's Tallest Free-Standing Structure (1975-2009)
- Highest External Walk on a Building – Edgewalk (2011-present)

360 Restaurant

- World's Highest Wine Cellar (351m)
- Toronto's Greenest Choice FeastON Restaurant (2018)
- DiRoNA Award for Excellence in Dining Experience (Since 1997)
- Best Bar None Ontario – Best Restaurant (2018, 2017, 2013)
- Les Clefs D'or Ontario – Golden Plate Award.
- TripAdvisor – Certificate of Excellence

True to Their Roots

"We Buy from the Person as Opposed to Buying from the Company"

- Cameron Dryburgh (General Manager)

A Canada First Philosophy

360 is passionate about purchasing local products. Cameron Dryburgh (General Manager) and John Morris (Executive Chef) of 360 admit that they don't *have* to go to additional effort to keep their menu Canadian, as the tower speaks for itself. Nevertheless, both leaders have set mandates to promote products that are as local as possible to capture this strategy's environmental and economic benefits.

Feast On is a certification program that recognizes restaurants that source Ontario grown and made food and drink. The minimum requirement for Feast On certification is that 25% of food and beverage receipts reflect Ontario purchases. When 360 were evaluated in 2018 they were closer to 32%, and when they were evaluated again in 2019 their efforts had improved with food receipts at 34% and beverage at 70%.

"I can remember working for a restaurant where we were going for Feast On and it was a struggle to figure out how we could make it happen. On our end here, it was literally like okay cool, come on in and look at our receipts, that's pretty much already what we do." – Cameron Dryburgh

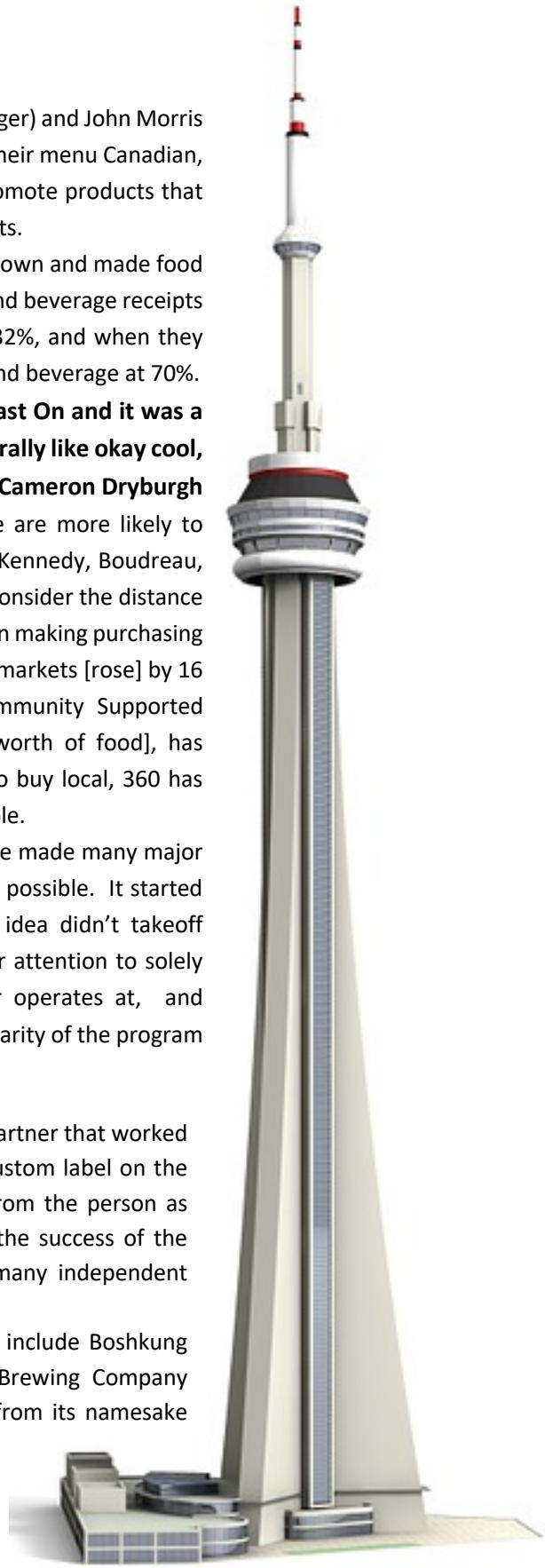
A study by the Nova Scotia Agricultural College indicated that increasingly people are more likely to consider how local their food products are before buying them (Duckshire, Garbes, Kennedy, Boudreau, & Osborne, 2011). These 'locavores', as they've so been dubbed, are more likely to consider the distance between the place of harvest and place of purchase than the price of the product when making purchasing decisions. "According to the U.S. department of agriculture, the number of farmers markets [rose] by 16 percent between 2009 and 2010, and the number of [groups supporting] Community Supported Agriculture, [where an individual pays a subscription to buy a weekly seasons worth of food], has skyrocketed from 60 in 1990 to 3600 in mid-2010." (Roehrig, 2011). In choosing to buy local, 360 has expanded their customer base to include those whose goal is to eat as local as possible.

Since Dryburgh was brought on as the General Manager at 360, he and his team have made many major strides towards making the Liquor, Wine and Beer Program at the Tower as local as possible. It started with making sure that 360's beer list was 100% Ontario Craft Beer. While the idea didn't takeoff immediately it's been a huge success for the tower in the long run. Devoting their attention to solely Ontario Craft Beer seemed like a crazy idea considering the volume the Tower operates at, and considering peoples affinity to stick with beers that they know and like, but the popularity of the program has allowed the tower to share their success with many local Ontario breweries.



Railway City Brewing, out of St. Thomas, Ontario, is one partner that worked very closely with 360 in order to provide them with a custom label on the new "Tower Lager". Cameron's philosophy of buying from the person as opposed to buying from the company has allowed for the success of the Tower's Ontario Craft Beer Program to be shared by many independent breweries.

Other breweries partnered with 360 and the CN Tower include Boshkung Brewing Co. which runs out of Haliburton, Brock St. Brewing Company running out of Whitby, and The Collingwood Brewery, from its namesake town.



Community Driven

Food Day Canada

Since their arrival at the CN Tower both Dryburgh and Chef Morris have made it their goal to be as involved in the community as possible. So, when Food Day Canada reached out to them last Summer, they took advantage of the opportunity to partner with them in running a waste-free event, while showcasing their new event space. On the August long weekend, they invited five different chefs from across Canada to 360. Each chef was tasked with making 500 units of any Canadian dish with absolutely no waste. "Since we were so successful, we're looking into how we can expand this for next year. Do we invite 20 chefs? ... It's led us to a point where now we're involved with the Terroir festival." As the CN Tower is a leader in this industry, it's participation in community events is taken seriously by surrounding restaurants. By proving their commitment to their community with increased events and sponsorship 360 is taking their commitment to sustainability to a new level. They are also expanding their network, helping develop their community's economic strategy and increasing the development of their staff (Schriner, 1997).



Educating Toronto

The Tower has two gardens at its base where they grow a multitude of fruits, vegetables and herbs. 360 uses some of their herbs as drink garnishes and the bartenders try to get creative with produce behind the bar with house-made spirits like hot pepper vodka, however the restaurant often doesn't use a lot of the produce they grow themselves due to their high volume. They instead opt for local vendors that can fill their tall orders.

Despite this the General Manager and Executive Chef try to make a point of being out in the garden to engage with their fellow Torontonians. "We literally cut produce and try to give it to people, and they don't know what to do with it," says Cameron, "It's that engagement, and starting conversations about food that really people them thinking." Through conversation with locals Dryburgh and Morris are able to prove that 360 values fresh ingredients, and the continued development of food education in Toronto.

By proving to their community through their garden and locally sourced menu that they place an emphasis on fresh and local produce, 360 are gradually changing what people think of when they think of food at the CN Tower. "We want to reinforce our brand, which in our case happens to be our country, by providing our guests with local, Canadian food."

Did You Know...

The CN Tower has a 150-seat movie theatre. 360 routinely invites local suppliers to come in and pitch their product in this theatre. A tower-wide invitation is sent out to all employees and management is even considering opening up open seats to students of George Brown in order to enhance their learning.



Sustainability

"We're not good at telling people about our sustainable efforts, and we need to be better at it." – Cameron Dryburgh

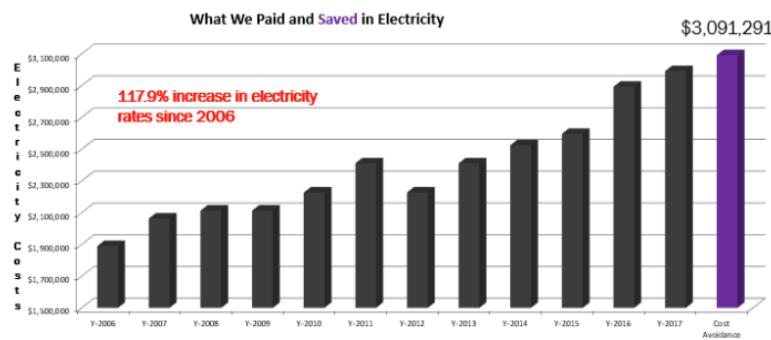
Building-Wide Achievements in Conservation

Energy Conservation:

- Converted all lighting to LED lighting.
- Upgraded electric heating systems.
- Replaced 25 year-old chillers with modern units.
- Air sealed and optimized ductwork.
- Upgraded inefficient motors throughout the facility.

Since 2006, these upgrades and changes to the tower resulted in electricity savings of 46.1 Million kWh and cost avoidance of over \$3,000,000 (Sustainability, 2017).

\$3.1 Million in Electricity Cost Avoidance Since 2006

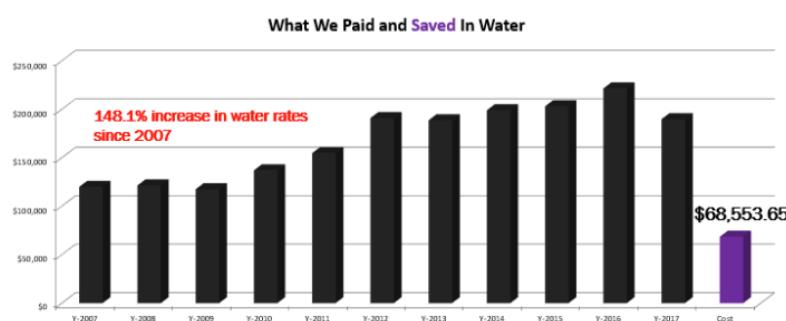


Water Conservation:

- Installed low-flow flushometers for washrooms.
- Eliminated gravity fed urinals.
- Converted water-cooled refrigeration to air-cooled.
- Minimized cooling tower water evaporation.
- Repaired over 100 leaking faucets.

Since 2006, these changes resulted in water savings of 21,795 m³ and cost avoidance of just under \$69,000 (Sustainability, 2017).

\$69,000 Water Cost Avoidance Since 2007



In May of 2018 the CN Tower introduced a new innovative food waste solution called ORCA. Each ORCA unit mimics a natural digestion process and creates the perfect environment to digest food waste into an energy-rich liquid. This liquid can be used to create renewable and sustainable energy (ORCA, 2018). After 8 months ORCA sent 360 a diversion report on their 'environmental savings', and here were some of the results:

- 30,016 lbs of food waste were diverted from landfills.
- 1,486 m³/year of avoided methane generation due to food waste sitting and decomposing in landfills.
- 2,855 gallons of liberated energy-rich water was returned to wastewater treatment plants.
- Elimination of weekly food waste collection, saving additional greenhouse gases.

In addition to the environmental advantages that come with having an ORCA, it is also great for cost savings. 360 was able to replace the recurring costs of having a truck come and pick up their food waste on a weekly basis with the upfront cost of the ORCA machine. While they are required to maintain and replenish the microorganisms that keep the machine functional this cost is small compared to the cost of waste pickup.

Dryburgh, noting another advantage of the technology added that "since installing ORCA, we've been a lot more conscious about what qualifies as food waste and it's largely because it's not just going into a bin that's tucked under the counter. You'll see something on the waste rack, and you'll say 'okay, why don't we use the tops of those radishes for something else?' So, it's also holding people a little bit more accountable for what's going in the bin and finding new ways to get the most out of our products."

“Sustainability is a mindset. When you commit to it your obstacles kind of disappear because a lot of the time the answer is simple.”
- Cameron Dryburgh

More on Sustainability



At the volume 360 operates at, ensuring that the majority of their seafood products are Ocean Wise certified is definitely a challenge. Ocean Wise is a conservation program that recommends seafood based on the abundance of the species but harvesting methods must also ensure limited bycatch of non-target and endangered species, and limited damage to aquatic habitats. 17 out of 21 of 360's seafood products are Ocean Wise certified, and when you're serving 1,000 dinners a night this requires skillful premeditation. By identifying each of these seafood items on their menu as Ocean Wise certified, 360 is able to reinforce their commitment to sustainability, and ensure added value to each of their seafood dishes. Sarah King, senior oceans strategist with Greenpeace Canada says the Ocean Wise program is also “useful for consumer education”. Every time a guest sees the Ocean Wise logo they are reminded that there are more sustainable options (Pynn, 2016).

LEAF Certified

LEAF certification offers accreditation to restaurants demonstrating efforts in sustainable foodservice practices. A consultant visits each restaurant and evaluates them based on ten areas of sustainability including food purchasing, location, furnishing, chemicals, and employees (How LEAF Works, 2019). LEAF has three different levels of certification, and 360 secured a level 2 (out of 3) by proving their commitment to reducing their environmental impact. Most restaurants that meet LEAF standards experience a reduction in operating costs, see increased guests that have similar sustainable values and attract forward-thinking and innovative staff that help make the facility even more sustainable. Additionally, as 360 is a recognized leader in its industry, its collection of sustainable labels are noticed by many restaurant owners who are inspired to meet and exceed 360's sustainability achievements.



VQA Wine



At 351 metres, 360's wine cellar is the highest of its kind on earth, so it's no surprise that guests of the tower consistently ask for a tour of the cellar. “It gives me a soapbox to talk about Canadian wine,” says Dryburgh, “All of the wine pairings on our menu are Ontario VQA... and we are even starting to introduce back vintages from Canadian wineries because we want to prove to people that Canadian wines evolve.” When Dryburgh started at the tower in May of 2018 there were around 70 Canadian labels on his wine list, he set a mandate to get the number of Canadian wines closer to 130 and in one year 360 has almost achieved this goal. “We really try to push Ontario wines as the first option, because we know that with our support people will spend money on Canadian wines.”

Take Away

Cameron Dryburgh admits that 360 needs to be better at communicating their sustainable efforts: “Right now, we prefer doing that quiet marketing through word of mouth. If you look on our website, you have to search pretty hard to find what our sustainability accomplishments are. We're not good at telling people, and we need to be better.”

Sustainability, while important, will never be the main draw to the tower. By continuing to focus on maintaining a high-quality product and providing ambiance that people travel to see, their take on sustainability has proven very successful for them in lowering costs and reducing their impact.

Currently, when choosing a restaurant, most people evaluate based on the quality of the food, service and ambiance, rather than based on sustainability (Shan Yu, Luo, & Hong Zhu, 2018). While sustainability is beginning to factor into the decision for a number of millennials (McCaskill, 2015), continuing to focus on providing exemplary service, top-quality food, and maintaining one of the best views in Ontario will be the most prominent factors for increasing guest patronage at 360. Sustainability for them is icing on the cake.

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