



SUSTAINABLE MEETINGS ARE MORE
LIKELY TO GET **HIGH MARKS** IF YOU
MAKE IT FUN TO DO GOOD

Brought to you by:

**2**

INTRODUCTION

4

GETTING STARTED

5

CHOOSING A DESTINATION

8ECO-TAINING &
ECO-FRIENDLY F&B**9**

GETTING ACTIVE GUIDELINES



While sustainability is larger than the environment, green issues are still the largest part of the initiative. But tell attendees their event is going green and the news fills their heads with images of eating with appetite-killing biodegradable spoons and forks, water-coolers instead of bottled water at coffee breaks, and paperless programs.

All of that is all part of the experience, and an important part too. But there are also entertaining ways to go green that can make being a good corporate citizen fun.

COSTA RICA CONVENTION CENTER

COMING SOON 2018



essential[®]
**COSTA
RICA**
MY CHOICE, NATURALLY.

Pure Meetings. *Pura Vida*

www.costaricapuremeetings.com
www.crconventioncenter.com



CostaRicaPuremeetings



Puremeetings



Getting

STARTED

Before you can begin to consider introducing eco-tainment to your meeting or event you've got to start with a basic sustainability program. Here's how to get that up and running.

1 Create a plan.

This will help you to establish your organization's sustainability philosophy, which will enable you to identify your event's sustainability objectives.

Some key parts of the plan should be strategies for achieving the objectives, identification of performance indicators to track success (this would include measurements on waste elimination or diversion, number of locally sourced or organic meals, etc.), and who is responsible for the end results.

2 Get buy-in from internal stakeholders to support the plan.

Initiatives like this need support from the top down. It's imperative to get buy-in from upper management, and that means being upfront with them. Tell them this will be a journey and that the first couple of years will be about gathering data that will be crucial to measuring success moving forward.



3 Communicate the results.

Quantify the results using statistics that are easy to understand. Focus on metrics like money saved and reduction of carbon footprint. This will help all of the event's stakeholders, from the attendees, to the vendors, to upper management stay engaged in the process on a year-to-year basis.

4 Get vendors involved in helping to implement the plan.

An important best practice is to include language in your contracts that requires vendors to supply you with data that will help track performance.

5 Track performance.

Use the first year you implement a program as an opportunity to gather data that can be used as a benchmark for future years. Keep accurate reports so you can build a history that will be beneficial in the site selection process and negotiations.

6 Make it fun for the attendees.

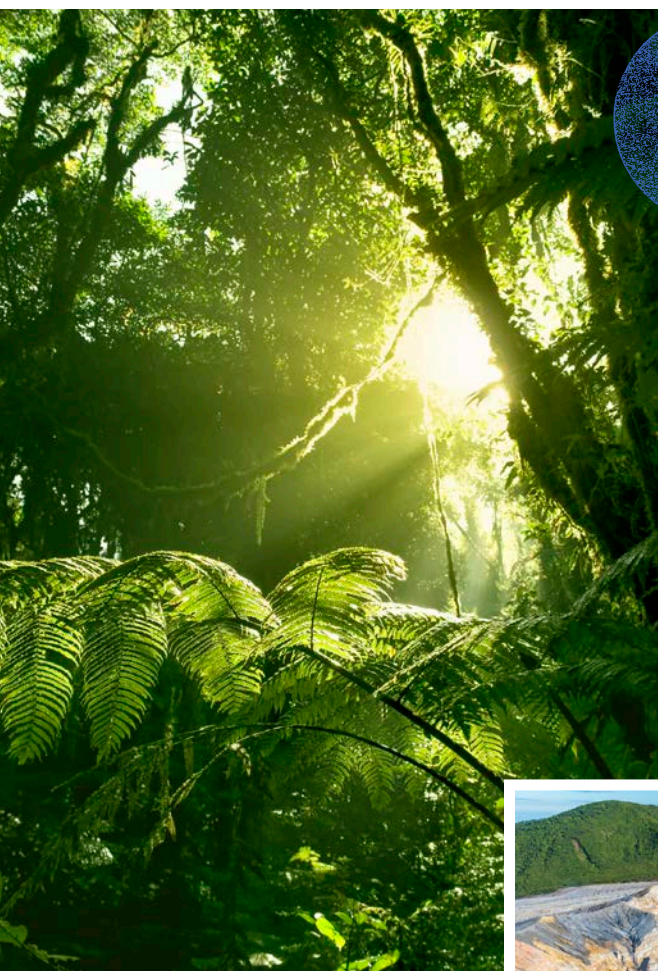
What follows will show you how to do that.



Choosing a

DESTINATION

It all starts with site selection. Eco-tainment can be delivered in an urban or a more natural environment. It all depends on how you integrate your surroundings into your meeting and the level of commitment the destination and the vendors have to being sustainable.



Look for a rainforest.

Destinations with endless acres of dense rainforest tend to have a natural mindset for promoting biodiversity. Chances are you can find suppliers that are well versed in helping groups enjoy the glories of nature in a way that is responsible.

8 Look for cities that have bike share programs.

This can be a fun way for attendees to get to and from the convention center. It enables attendees to experience the city as a local would, which is just the kind of experience many attendees are hoping to get when they are at a meeting. It also reduces the carbon footprint of the event by reducing the group's reliance on taxis, public transportation, and chartered motor coaches — the latter can also save money. It is especially useful in cities such as Long Beach, CA, that have developed entertainment districts around the convention facilities.



9

Look for natural wonders.

Seek out sites such as the Poás Volcano National Park in Costa Rica, home to the Poás Volcano's mile-wide crater. Few things are more entertaining for attendees than experiencing a unique natural landscape, and if it is possible to hold a reception or a meal function there, that will make the impact more memorable. This is where a good relationship with a hotel or DMC partner can really take the eco-tainment factor of an event to the next level



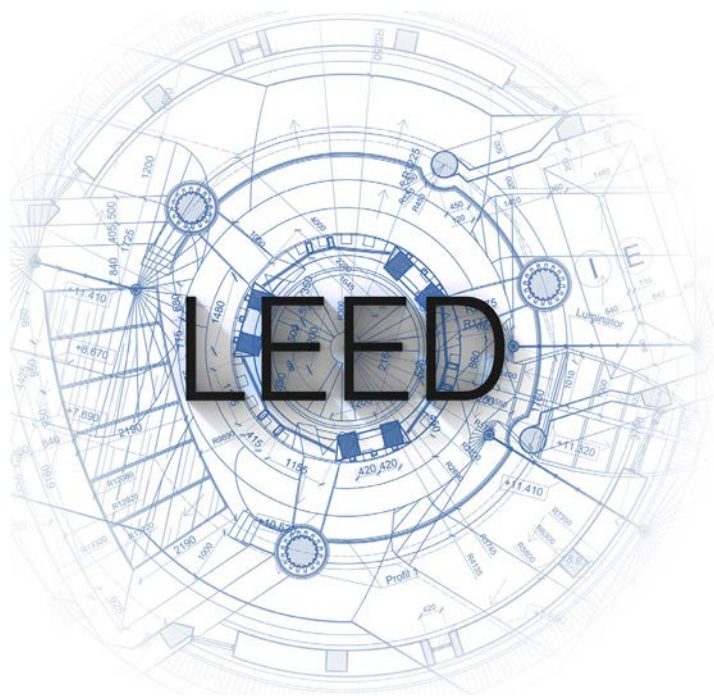
10

Look for former plantations.

Destinations that offer outstanding eco-tainment opportunities often have a plantation economy period in their history. These former plantations, reimagined as working farms/tourist attractions, offer unique windows into local culture as well as the history of everyday products we all consume such as coffee, sugar, bananas, pineapples and other commodities. They can also be great learning incubators for groups interested in sustainable growing, harvesting, and processing practices. The plantations themselves often feature historic haciendas and other structures that are quite picturesque and many have on-site docents or curators that can give groups lessons in the history of the specific products and how to prepare them.

11 Look for venues with LEED Certifications.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is one of the most popular green building certification programs used worldwide. Developed by the non-profit U.S. Green Building Council, it includes a set of rating systems for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of green buildings that aim to help building owners and operators be environmentally responsible and use resources efficiently. Many hotels and convention centers either have the certification or are working towards getting it.





12

Look for animal sanctuaries or nature preserves.

These types of institutions can offer great touring options and in some cases options for offsite venues. They also offer possibilities for corporate social responsibility activities and charitable opportunities for the group.



13 Look for rooftops.

Lot's of hotels and convention centers have green rooftops that are perfect for group tours and receptions. The roofs also serve a purpose in making the facility more sustainable which underscores the environmentally friendly tone of the meeting. And you never know what you will find on a green rooftop. The New York Hilton Midtown in New York, for example has six bee hives with over 450,000 bees making honey that is used in the hotel's restaurants and in items on its banquet menu.

Eco-taining &

ECO-FRIENDLY

Environmentally-friendly F&B offers great opportunities for attendees to bond with each other, enjoy good food, and feel great about the minimal impact the meal is having on the environment.

F&B



14

Find a farm.

Or maybe a handful of farms. Sourcing local food-stuffs not only helps the local economy, but it reduces the carbon footprint of a meeting by containing the vehicle emissions sent into the atmosphere while transporting the food to the meeting site.

15 Eat like a family.

Having farm-to-table meals that are served family-style makes a bold statement about how the organization feels about the attendees. It also offers wonderful networking opportunities for them to bond with each other as they literally “share” a meal together. Family-style is also easier on a meetings budget than a traditional sit-down dinner.

16 Dine with the Locals.

Instead of organizing a dine-around in a handful of restaurants, break up your group and arrange for them to have dinner in the homes of local families in the destination. A good DMC or tourist board can help arrange it. This will provide your attendees with an unforgettable and authentic experience that can take an event to the next level. If your group is too large, make dining with a local family one of the options in a traditional dine-around.



17

Let the attendees cook the meal.

This is a fun teambuilding event that will also give the attendees an opportunity to interact with the local culture in a very meaningful way. It also relies on using farm-to-table food that hasn't traveled far.

Getting Active

GUIDELINES

It's impossible to execute a meeting that has zero impact on an environment, especially when it comes to attendees enjoying the local activities. But here are three best practices for minimizing a group's impact.



18

Offer groups high-impact and low impact resort options.

Resorts at these types of destinations routinely offer relaxing experiences such as lying on a beach or having a spa treatment as well as more adventurous excursions such as hiking, zip lining, kayaking, and snorkeling. So make sure that you offer both to your group. When enjoying the spa, it's advisable to encourage your attendees to choose treatments that feature products made from indigenous plants and resources. This cuts down on the carbon emissions necessary to transport these treatment ingredients and connects the attendees to the local culture.

19 Keep group sizes manageable.

Whatever the activity is, be sure to consult with your hotel and DMC vendors to keep the groups at a manageable size so it doesn't over-tax the eco-system. It could be a matter of coming up with a number of options and putting limits on the number of attendees that can participate in them.



20 Get Out Into the Community.

One way to ease a group's impact on an environment is to get the attendees out into the community to help clean up an area, or build something the community needs. These are great teambuilding activities that also give the attendee an opportunity to make a difference.