

VIKING LINE

Food waste has been cut in half on Turku vessels: "Making sustainable choices must be made easy enough"

Some 58 per cent of Finns think it is important that restaurants act in a sustainable way. That is one finding from a survey recently carried out by Viking Line. On the company's vessels serving the Turku route, food waste was nearly cut in half with the help of data, staff engagement and passengers' willingness to make sustainable choices.

The restaurants on Viking Glory and Viking Grace launched a major food waste campaign in the autumn of 2024. In almost one year, food waste per passenger has been halved on the company's vessels sailing between Turku and Stockholm. At the end of 2024, food waste was 137 grams per passenger, but now that figure has fallen to 77 grams.

"The outcome of the project surprised us since our goal was to reduce food waste per passenger to under 100 grams. Each year we serve more than 2.3 million guests in the restaurants on Glory and Grace so every gram counts. When less food is wasted, we can invest even more in the quality of our ingredients – for instance, from an environmental perspective, products that are sustainable and locally sourced," says Viking Line's Restaurant Manager, **Janne Lindholm**

The nearly 50 per cent reduction in waste is mostly due to changes made in the kitchen. When menus are planned, all the different ingredients and dishes are prepared in suitable quantities relative to the number of guests eating in the vessels' restaurants.

"It's been fantastic to see how our staff have actively started to come up with ideas to use ingredients even more efficiently. For example, we can use every part of root vegetables, even the last bits, by making stock out of them. We can use the stalks from tomatoes when we make pizza sauces. With the croissants left over from breakfast, we create delicious desserts," Lindholm adds.

Viking Line's partner in this project has been the Swedish company Generation Waste, which provided the technology needed to monitor food waste as well as trained and inspired the staff on board. To determine the baseline figure, staff started to weigh and analyze food waste in all the restaurants and in the canteens on Viking Glory and Viking Grace.

Restaurant survey: 58 per cent of Finns value cutting food waste

According to a survey commissioned* by Viking Line, sustainably produced food is an important aspect for 41 per cent of Finns when they make decisions about restaurant visits. Some 58 per cent of Finns think it is important for restaurants to take a sustainable approach, for example by cutting their waste and carbon footprint, and a full 64 per cent think that it is important for dishes to be prepared with locally sourced or Nordic ingredients.

"We see in our restaurants every day how a sustainable approach is increasingly important. People are much more interested in where their food and ingredients are sourced from than before, and we often get questions about that. People actually make sustainable choices when we make it easy enough for them and provide information – the results from our food waste project show this in practical terms," says Lindholm.

It is not possible to eliminate all food waste in restaurant operations. Food waste from Viking Grace, Viking Glory and Viking XPRS on the Helsinki–Tallinn route is used as material to produce biogas.

“From an environmental perspective, it’s best that the remaining food waste is converted into a carbon-neutral fuel that replaces fossil fuels. This biogas can also be used as fuel on our vessels that serve the Turku route,” says Viking Line’s Sustainability Manager, **Dani Lindberg**.

** Viking Line commissioned a survey of Finns’ attitudes to eating in restaurants. In the survey, which was conducted by Kuulas Helsinki early this summer, a total of 2,000 Finns were interviewed, with the respondents, ages 18–74, making up a representative sample of the country’s population.*

For further information

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