

Type: Catering /Café  
Country: Ireland



## Why it is a good practice?

FoodSpace is an Irish sustainable on-site food service & hospitality management company, which operate a zero-waste policy. Their ethos is 'Loyal to Local' and this is the idea behind everything they do. The business focuses on using local, seasonal produce and making sure it is sustainable. FoodSpace work closely with each business they cater for. They focus on tailor-made solutions and take time to develop bespoke ideas to match the client culture, employees' tastes and the physical environment. This is a key differential compared to other contract catering organisations. As a result, menus are carefully crafted to a local and healthy dimension.

## About

FoodSpace culture is based on the personalities of their entrepreneurial foodie leaders. Together, they have created a collaboration of like-minded people, who enjoy what they do every day! The team have operated food service and hospitality catering facilities in workplaces and colleges across Ireland, however they wanted to spread their ethos further and wider by opening a site that the general public could visit. So recently FoodSpace opened their own café called Ink, based in Dún Laoghaire, so that members of the public could enjoy their food and find out more about the ethos of the business with the focus on local suppliers, farmers and fishermen, and seasonality. Most of their food comes from within 50 miles of the site, and 85% from Ireland. Menus are written depending on what vegetables are in seasons and available that week. The only imported items are those not produced in Ireland, such as coffee, tea, and spices. Wine and Prosecco is sourced from sustainable vineyards, and beers and ciders are from independent Irish brewers.

## Healthy

The chefs in this company learn about the importance and principles behind nutritionally balanced menus by working with qualified dietitians. This gives them the tools to create truly nutritious meals and the ability to answer the growing need for special dietary requirements.

So, they create wholly inclusive menus for every customer in every location. FoodSpace chefs cook 100% of the food they serve fresh every morning, with an emphasis on fruit and vegetables and meals made using the minimum amount of dairy products. They bake every day and that means out of the oven fresh scones, muffins, sourdough and ryes free of all but the most natural preservatives or additives.

## Sustainable

FoodSpace are also committed to completely eliminating waste, with all fresh food delivered in reusable crates, no single use plastics (including clingfilm), and menus are pinned onto cardboard from deliveries. That goes for food waste too, with fruit skins and cores fermented to make vinegars, vegetable skins dehydrated and turned into powders for seasoning or sauces, and overripe fruit used to flavour their kombucha. Used coffee grounds are repurposed to make a version of pastrami, and as compost for growing their own herbs and salads. Conor Spacey, Culinary Director at FoodSpace is very focused on providing a sustainable food system that involves seasonal Irish ingredients, working directly with farmers across the country and implementing a zero-waste policy that also reduces our carbon footprint.

### Culinary Director Conor Spacey explains:

*"Onion skins, we roast and dehydrate. Others buy in bouillons but we in effect make our own with the tops and tails of veg. We take whey from ricotta, which we make and use it for barley porridges or as a base for a ferment. The people dining in our canteens are eating better... Kombucha, ferments, scobys and so on are good for their gut health. We make a Kim Chee cauliflower... from the leaves and the stalks, using sea salt, sugar, ginger, garlic, and carrot for sweetness. All these ideas are from a history that we lost, and we are bringing them back."*

FoodSpace was the first and to date, the only Irish catering company to receive and retain three gold stars at the Sustainable Restaurant Association awards, as well as an additional gold award for Loyal to Local.

Follow FoodSpace's story

