

## Environment Policy

Following consideration of the importance of environmental sustainability and a commitment to be a benefit to the MELBOURNE CBD community, ALTO HOTEL on BOURKE is committed to striving to achieve environmental and social sustainability for our 4 star boutique apartment-hotel.

Alto Hotel is situated in the CBD of Melbourne and is therefore in a very urban location, surrounded by large office buildings, civic facilities such as Southern Cross Railway Station, Telstra Dome etc. Alto Hotel stands out amongst most of these buildings due to its heritage, neo baroque façade, the lead-light windows and original terrazzo foyer acknowledging its first occupier, the Australian Railways Union.

Alto Hotel commits to continually improve its environmental and social sustainability performance. The environmental commitment extends to savings in energy, water conservation and minimization of waste-to-landfill.

Alto Hotel on Bourke will comply with all relevant legislation and regulations. We strive to achieve international best practice in use of energy, water and waste disposal on a guest-per-night standard

We have appointed Ricardo Krauskopf, a director of the company, as the Green Globe co-ordinator, who has responsibility for ensuring ongoing environmental performance, identification of environmental risks, recording and monitoring of impacts and implementing environmental and social sustainability measures.

Special consideration will be given to employing and empowering staff and whenever practical and environmentally sustainable, products and services will be sourced locally.

We encourage staff to present our commitment to environmental and social sustainability and our benchmarked / certified status under the Green Globe program to our guests, suppliers, contractors, agents and wholesalers.

### **Background/vision**

The idea of building an eco friendly hotel in a CBD location stems from a commitment by Suzanne and Ricardo Krauskopf, the developers of the hotel, to a combination of sustainable policies within a commercial environment.

With this in mind, they purchased the Unity Hall building at 636 Bourke St in 1999, formerly headquarters of the Australian Railways Union.

The final push to make the investment came from the commitment by AAA Tourism to a GREEN STARS – ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HOTEL policy. Under this AAA Tourism policy, qualifying hotels are awarded a Green Star – Environmentally Friendly status and permission to display the Green Star logo; Alto Hotel has satisfied these criteria as well as achieving a 4 star rating.

Environmentally Friendly Hotels must achieve adequate points against a set of practical environmental criteria. These criteria include energy efficiency, waste minimisation and water management.

### **Social responsibility**

The planning of the development took into consideration the historic background of the building.

Suzanne & Ricardo were conscious of the significance of the property to many people associated with the Rail, Tram & Bus Union, whom had spent many years working in the building.

They made a commitment to conserve the significant historical links with the RTBU & today this is reflected in the magnificent Terrazzo floor bearing the ARU logo in our reception, stained glass windows & the classic neo baroque façade.

We also invited past & present members of the RTBU to our opening & gave them an opportunity to talk on the history of the building & what it meant for them.

## **Ecological considerations**

Some of the areas where we found opportunities to be eco friendly & have taken appropriate action are;

**Carbon** – Minimise carbon output by minimising transport distance of supplies, choosing carbon neutral options where practical and offset estimated carbon output.

**Electricity** - Low wattage lighting, minimise consumption and purchase of green (renewable resources) energy.

**Air Conditioning** - Individual units that are used only when required as opposed to central cooling or heating.

**Water** - Minimal use of water in all showers, vanities, sinks and toilets. Rain-harvesting tank.

**Gas** - Hot Water is heated "on demand" with minimal stored water. Providing energy & water consumption savings compared to "boiler" mass stored hot water.

**Windows** - Laminate and / or double-glazed, to minimize heat loss / gain and provide noise attenuation. All rooms have at least 1 opening window to minimize use of air conditioning. Design walls and doors to minimise temperature and noise attenuation.

**Waste Management** - Recycle material from all areas of hotel operation including guest rooms. Compost organic material. Minimise volume of waste for landfill.

**Suppliers** - Where practical source products and collaborate with businesses that practise environmental sustainability. Where possible source products, especially food and beverages within the closest proximity to our location therefore minimising transport requirements and associated environment impact.

**Toiletries** - Utilise pump pack dispensers in guest rooms as opposed to miniature shampoo etc that usually ends in landfill with most of the contents unused. Use organic and biodegradable toiletries in pump packs.

## **Operational Initiatives**

Constantly review our hotel and business operations to identify where we can minimise our environmental impact.

## **Financial considerations**

It's one thing to be socially & environmentally responsible but we also have commercial considerations & have to make sure all our policies are financially viable.

Our development & implementation of policies reduce our operating cost by delivering substantial savings on our power, gas, water & linen expenses.

The marketing advantage green policies provide has and will continue to deliver increased revenue to our business. We believe all other things being equal, a majority of guests will choose an environmentally friendly hotel over one that is not.

We believe an organization's most valuable asset is its employees. An added bonus has been the enthusiasm of prospective employees in working for a hotel with "Green" policies. It has been a valuable tool in attracting a high calibre of industry professionals to our team.

## **Conclusion**

We have taken the initial steps of becoming a sustainable tourism product. From here, our strategy is to monitor and revise as required our operations to be at the forefront of new developments.

As part of this process, we participate in a range of programs such as – AAA Tourism Green Stars - Environmentally Friendly program, City of Melbourne - Savings In The City. VECCI (Victorian Employer Chamber of Commerce and Industry) - Grow Me The Money and Green Globe.

In conclusion, we believe what we are working towards is the future of our industry and that we have chosen to be leaders and innovators.