

How Cape Grace, A Fairmont Managed Hotel, Cut Food Waste by 45% While Maximizing Flavour

Set on Cape Town's renowned V&A Waterfront, Cape Grace blends iconic elegance with a bold vision for sustainability. As part of the Fairmont Hotels & Resorts brand within the Accor Group, Cape Grace has long been recognized for its refined service and environmental leadership.

In 2024, the hotel partnered with Winnow, a globally approved Accor supplier, to address food waste in its kitchens. With a 30% waste reduction target set for 2030 across the hotel, Cape Grace has surpassed expectations early in their main kitchen—achieving a 45% reduction within 1 year. Along the way, they uncovered new culinary possibilities that elevate both flavour and sustainability.

The Team Behind the Transformation

Executive Pastry Chef, Lorraine Meaney brings over a decade of experience across Europe and Africa. Her leadership style is rooted in mentorship, creativity, and conscious cooking. For Lorraine, waste prevention begins before prep even starts.

“Be mindful of every single ingredient you touch and where it's going – what would I normally throw in the bin, and how can I repurpose it into another dish?” explains Lorraine Meaney.

Siphesihle Ndlovu, ESG Analyst of the Kasada Portfolio, ensures that the Winnow initiative aligns with Cape Grace's broader environmental strategy, including its Green Key certification and Accor's group-wide sustainability ambitions.

Waste reduction results



45% reduction in food waste



23,000 meals saved annually



9.1 tons of food waste saved annually



39.3 tons of CO₂e emissions avoided annually

Meeting Green Key Standards

As part of its Green Key certification, Cape Grace is required to actively measure and manage food waste. This includes tracking waste from preparation, overproduction, and plate waste. Winnow provides an ideal solution—its AI-powered system not only tracks waste in real time but also automatically uploads data to Accor's Gaia reporting platform. This seamless integration helps the hotel maintain compliance while contributing to Accor's broader ESG goals.



The Winnow system is really instrumental to reaching our ESG goals. It's our source to communicate with the kitchen . And so when the kitchens are happy with the system, we are also happy.

Siphesihle Ndlovu, ESG Analyst of the Kasada Portfolio



It's a big thing to reduce waste in a working kitchen with chefs that are busy in their sections. Winnow helped by providing clear data on where waste was happening.

Lorraine Meaney Executive Pastry Chef, Cape Grace

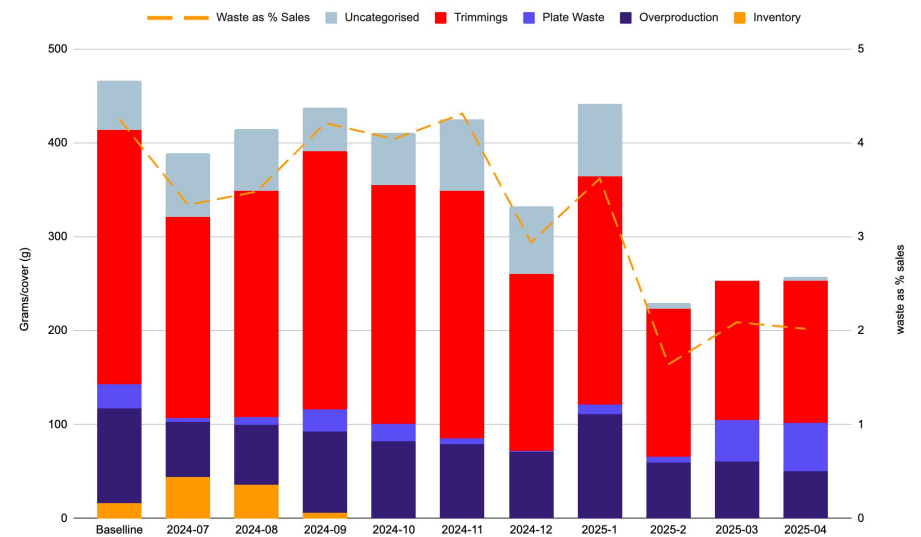
Maximising Flavours and Ingredients

Cape Grace's chefs transformed what once would have been discarded into high-value menu components. Chesray, a hot line chef, led by example by adjusting prep levels and inspiring secondary uses for trimmings across the kitchen.

- Cauliflower off-cuts were transformed into a creamy vegan white sauce, turning trimmings into a plant-based staple.
- Butternut skins were either blended into soups or deep-fried to serve as crispy garnishes.
- Chili and pepper cores, usually discarded, were repurposed into flavourful stocks and sauces.

Standout Dish: Tomato Consommé

One of the most creative examples of Cape Grace's zero-waste approach comes from their Afternoon Tea service: a delicate tomato consommé made entirely from repurposed tomato trimmings. Previously discarded tomato ends and juices are now carefully clarified to create a richly flavoured, crystal-clear broth. Served as a refined component of the tea menu, this consommé not only elevates trimmings into something elegant but also reflects the hotel's ethos of using every ingredient to its fullest.



Looking Ahead

Cape Grace is continuing its sustainability journey by planning to expand the use of Winnow across additional kitchen areas, ensuring a broader impact on food waste reduction. Innovation remains central to their approach, with a continued focus on discovering new ways to repurpose ingredients creatively and effectively. By exceeding its original food waste reduction targets and supporting Accor's broader ESG commitments, Cape Grace is redefining what sustainable luxury looks like. Their experience proves that culinary excellence and environmental stewardship don't just coexist—they enhance one another.

About Winnow

Winnow develops Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to help chefs in large businesses like hotels, contract caterers, casinos, and cruise ships to run more profitable, and sustainable kitchens by cutting food waste in half.

Measuring food waste is a challenge for all commercial kitchens with up to 20% of all food purchased going to waste. Winnow offers a solution for every kitchen.

Our analytics platform and reporting suite help teams pinpoint waste quickly, allowing enterprises to drive significant waste reductions at scale.

Kitchens that use Winnow cut food waste by half on average, driving food purchasing costs down by 3%-8%, improving margins whilst doing the right thing. Winnow is deployed in over 90 countries with offices in London, Dubai, Singapore, Cluj, and Chicago.