

# *Resort* Trades

*Every Resort; Every Month*



**Forecast 2020**  
**Happy Consumers,**  
**Slowing Growth**

**2020**

**2019**

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# Timeshare Resorts Contribute to Environmental Stewardship

By Marge Lennon

During the past few years, there has been a monumental swell of individual and corporate interest in implementing environmentally friendly policies, from curbing plastic pollution to conserving water. Suddenly, people from all walks of life are eager to help make a difference. Cities, states, and entire countries are starting a movement to ban the use of single-use plastic.

Aware citizens have jumped on the sustainability bandwagon to focus on the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

They are being motivated by some of these scary factoids:

- Single-use plastic straws, which are generally only used for about 15 minutes, never fully decompose and are one of the top 10 items found on beach clean-ups globally.
- By the year 2050, there will be more plastic than fish in our oceans!
- Only about 9% of plastic has been recycled since its invention in the 1950s and will most likely exist for hundreds of years.
- Of the over one million plastic bottles bought around the world every minute, less than half are recycled.
- Every day approximately 8 million pieces of plastic pollution find their way into our oceans with 100,000 marine and a million seabirds killed each year from plastic entanglement.

The timeshare companies in this story are forging ahead to conserve natural resources, combat pollution and protect biodiversity. Resort Trades salutes them for championing their impressive programs.



Brian Gray, VP of Organizational Capability for Wyndham Destinations

**WYNDHAM DESTINATIONS.** With their huge global presence and more than 200 worldwide resorts, Wyndham Destinations places a high value on protecting the environment and communities in which they live and operate.

Shared Brian Gray, VP of Organizational Capability for Wyndham Destinations, “As a socially-responsible, global corporate citizen, we recognize that our business activities impact the earth, our resources, and the lives of the guests we serve. We work tirelessly to conserve resources, preserve natural habitats, and prevent pollution, while supporting tourism around the globe.” Some of their programs include:

- Wyndham Destinations tracks its environmental footprint using a proprietary online environmental man-

agement system, which was developed to manage their energy, emissions, water, and waste globally — including the ability to share

dashboards that measure key performance indicators and goals.

- The company uses a combination of proven conservation strategies and energy efficiency retrofits to achieve ongoing reductions in energy and emissions. This includes: energy-efficient lighting in units, common areas, and back of house; motion sensors for lighting in common-area restrooms, break rooms, and storage rooms; default settings for in-unit HVAC systems; energy misers for refrigerated drink machines.

- Wyndham has recently eliminated plastic straws and other single-use plastic from food and beverage operations at its timeshare resorts around the world. The effort will eliminate more than 750,000 single-use plastic straws in North America alone and 1.1 million across the globe. About a year ago, the company’s Asia Pacific resorts removed disposable straws from 33 managed resorts.

- The company also announced it has developed a plan to eliminate plastic cups and lids, Styrofoam to-go boxes, plastic cutlery, and plastic to-go bags across the company’s managed resort locations. This initiative will eliminate more than 4.8 million single-use products by the end of 2020.

- They have hosted organized cleanup opportunities at many of its resorts in coastal communities for employees and resort guests to help remove plastic and other trash from important waterways.



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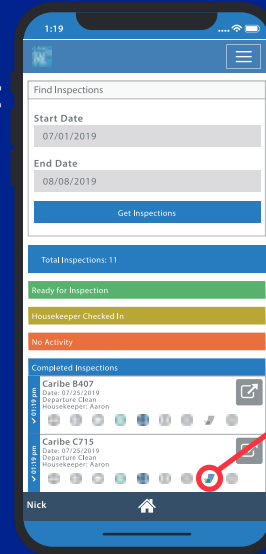
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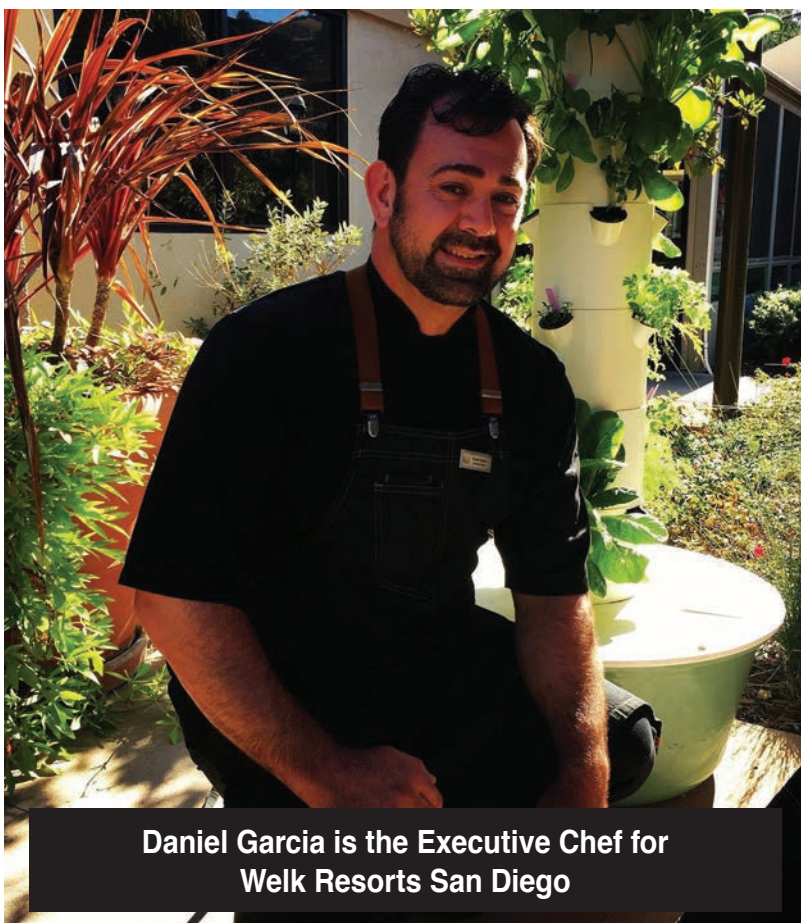
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About two years ago, [Welk] removed all Styrofoam from the property and all our take-out boxes are paper and bio-degradable.



Daniel Garcia is the Executive Chef for Welk Resorts San Diego



In 2019, the company produced its first Social Responsibility Report, which affirms their commitment to reduce environmental impacts. Many of the company's managed vacation club resorts are enrolled in a national program that includes enhanced education, reporting for recycling, and landfill diversion.

**WELK RESORTS.** Daniel Garcia is the Executive Chef for Welk Resorts San Diego, responsible for feeding as many as several thousand guests a day at six food and beverage facilities on site. This includes a 250-

seat restaurant, dinner theater and year-round weddings. About a year ago, Daniel connected Welk Resorts with New Leaf, a California-based company that recycles used cooking oil and converts it into high-quality biodiesel fuel. The fuel is then sold to distributors who blend the product with diesel and deliver to customers throughout Southern California. Biodiesel directly displaces petroleum

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## Continuation of Environmental Stewardship article

diesel fuel usage, reducing carbon greenhouse emissions by up to 80% and improving air quality.

“Not only do we reuse our oils, when trimming vegetables and preparing seafood,” says Daniel, “we try to utilize pieces normally discarded and transform them into other food products. As proponents of farm-to-table menu selections, we also source local produce and seafood as much as possible, focusing on organics and food we can obtain from the gardens right on our own property. We can all change and how we buy food products, knowing that every action we take can have an impact on the environment. My responsibility to Welk Resorts is to lesson that impact as much as possible and corporate is highly supportive of our missions.”

Continues Daniel, “Also, we only offer straws on demand. About two years ago, we removed all Styrofoam from the property and all our take-out boxes are paper and bio-degradable. With multiple kitchen ovens, we turn those off that are not in use, to ensure we are not wasting power. Since we introduced our farm-to-table menu, there has been a steady uptick up-tick in customer count surveys. Guests responded with positive comments about the quality of the food and our participation in taking our own small steps to protect the environment.”

**BLUEGREEN VACATIONS.** Lauren Capone is the Bluegreen Vacations VP of Operational Compliance and Resort Procurement. As part of this role, she has been leading their sus-

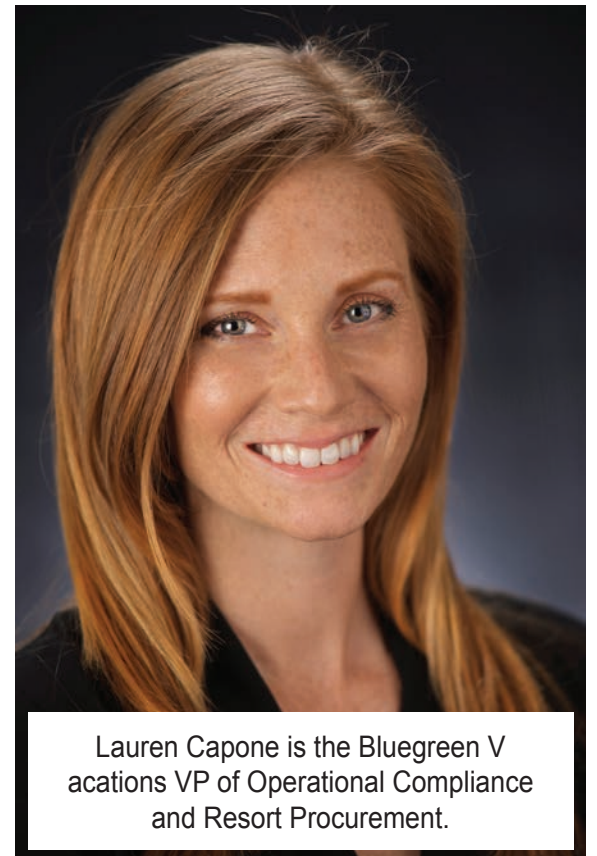
tainability program for almost five years and believes it is important to integrate sustainability into their business in a manner that protects the planet, while also focusing on profit.

“With our corporate-wide sustainability program,” says Lauren, “our goal is to impact people, planet and profit. We’ve built our program around this concept and have initiatives in place at the resort level to make this happen. The program is embedded within our Operational Compliance audit, so every resort is required to meet pre-determined sustainability standards.”

This has allowed Bluegreen to drive many outstanding initiatives, such as a conversion to LED lighting, which is currently at over an 80% conversion rate and an increase of recycling touch points throughout the property. Every resort has a sustainability team to ensure initiatives like these are in place.

All efforts are tracked through a dashboard that captures more than 100 Key Performance Indicators at the resort level. The program is collaborative in nature, with each resort having their own log-in to track performance on these intricate, but meaningful data points. With the sustainability program being embedded within the audit, there is a robust system of accountability to ensure that items are appropriately logged into the system.

The company’s various initiatives and requirements are built around five pillars: Carbon Footprint, Water Usage, Waste to Landfill Diversion, Sustainable Sourcing and Community Partnerships.



Lauren Capone is the Bluegreen Vacations VP of Operational Compliance and Resort Procurement.

For example, some of the program components are: all irrigation systems must be equipped with smart water sensors that prevent watering when it is raining. Single-used plastics for associates has been eliminated. Recycling bags are provided in every unit for guests. Every common area, bath and break room must have motion-sensor lighting. All resorts are required to have a food donation box in the lobby for the collection of nonperishable food items, which are donated to local food banks. Additionally, associates are incentivized to participate in four community service events within a year.

In line with the Sustainable Sourcing pillar, Lauren helped create a new proprietary bathroom amenity line that has lifted the people of Togo, Africa, providing education, health services, maternal care, reforestation and other life altering programs for one of the world’s most impoverished nations. Lauren also launched a fully organic coffee program in partnership with Christel House, which directly benefits the lives of impoverished children in and outside of US borders. Using these amenities helps meet sustainability standards while giving back to the causes that Bluegreen Vacations believe in and improving guest experience.

Bluegreen’s goals for 2022 are to reduce carbon footprint 20%, waste to landfill 30%, water usage by 20%, increase sustainable product offerings by 40% and community partnerships by 20%.

**Congratulations to ALL these companies for their efforts in helping to protect our environment.**



Marge Lennon has been writing about the timeshare industry since 1978. If you’d like to share how your company is helping save the planet, connect with her at [Marge@LenonCommunications.com](mailto:Marge@LenonCommunications.com)

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