



San Chez A Tapas Bistro: A Heartside Treasure

About San Chez A Tapas Bistro

In 1992, San Chez Bistro strategized a dining concept which would provoke a "big city feel", like nothing else in Grand Rapids at the time. San Chez Bistro was dedicated to the prosperity of the Heartside neighborhood back when downtown wasn't the hustle and bustle place it is today. They witnessed local commerce and community growth during their almost 30 years of serving authentic European cuisine. It doesn't stop there. San Chez Bistro is dedicated to sustainability, from locally sourced ingredients to energy management.

THE AUDIT

The Grand Rapids 2030 District's Energy Assistance Program sponsored an ASHRAE level "1.5" energy audit, which was performed by Foresight Management. The audit discovered no-cost behavioral and operational changes, appliance maintenance and upgrades. The audit highlighted overlooked ticket items, such as the ice maker in the corner, decorative neon signs, and the exit signs. A lesson learned in the audit is the importance of tenant/landlord relationships. Upgrades such as thermostats, HVAC economizers, and tune ups require tenant/landlord coordination.

AFTER

The owners commented that the audit provided a great self-check. It highlighted what San Chez Bistro was already doing right and identified ways they could be even better. In addition to energy conservation measures, Foresight Management was able to set them up with gas procurement as well as give useful advice in navigating landlord/tenant cooperation regarding HVAC equipment. San Chez has updated insulation, lighting and thermostat adjustments. Next on their hit list is a EnergyStar water heater and economizer. Tangible facilities updates can be simpler than behavioral changes, though San Chez Bistro understand the importance of an aware work culture. Their on-boarding video and curriculum will emphasize these values and practices, so that every employee will participate in the sustainable success of the business from day one.

BEFORE

The Salsa Verde team, their in-house green team, is a testament to San Chez Bistro's authentic interest in sustainable practices. In 2017, they improved their recycling and composting practices after a waste diversion audit. The kitchen grease is now distilled to biofuel. According to the GR Zero Cities Project results, restaurants are a business sector with the highest energy use intensity (EUI), averaging nationally at 493 kbtu/sq ft/ year (warehouses average at 76). Energy management was San Chez's next primary focus. They usually run AC year around, as the open kitchen plan heats the dining space. Box fans were installed in 2012 to destratify the air in the tall ceilings and decrease pockets of temperature variation. They also participated in a pilot program with Consumers Energy in 2016 to replace all their light bulbs with LEDs. With the "usual suspects" having been addressed, the Salsa Verde team were curious about other energy savings opportunities.



Energy Conservation Measures (ECMs) Earmarked for year 1 and 2

ECMs	Annual Cost Savings	Rebates Available	Payback
Space Heater Removal	\$300	NA	Immediate
Door Seals	\$255	NA	1.2 years
Window Seals	\$15 per unit	NA	1.66 years
Smart Thermostats	\$1,600	Donated	Immediate
LED Upgrades	\$2,000	\$1,150	4.4 years
Café Destratification	\$800	NA	6.25 years

To Put This into Perspective

The pride in doing "the right thing" for the community, the business, and the planet can be observed throughout all management and staff. The owners have been able to take their time with bistro by reflecting and tweaking operational strategies. The lessons learned at San Chez set the standard for their new restaurant Roam and emerging venture, Beacon. Another sustainable venture to watch out for is their Urban Roots program through GFS. In August 2019, shipping containers were delivered to grow their veggies and spices ingredients on site. Next time you visit San Chez Bistro, pay attention to the details; each nuance is intentionally designed.