

success story

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As part of our efforts to eradicate the use of non-recyclable single-use plastic, we have stopped using tea bags that contain or use plastic in their packaging

All non-recyclable plastic associated with our tea supplies eliminated!

The tea bags we had been using were not only wrapped in non-recyclable plastic, but also included plastic in the construction of each bag, so we set about looking for plastic-free alternatives.



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By reviewing the available options and seeking simple but innovative solutions, we have eliminated the use of plastic associated with our tea bags.

Challenge

Our previous brand of tea ticked a lot of boxes for us, being both organic and fair trade. The packaging however included a laminated foil inner bag which is not currently recyclable, while each of the individual tea bags was heat-sealed using polypropylene.

While wanting to address the sustainability problem created by this, we still wanted to be able to supply a quality product, and offer a similar variety of tea-based options for our guests.

Solution

We looked at a few different alternatives, including the possibility of using a loose leaf tea. While this would easily eradicate half the problem (no tea bag!), in practice, having up to 200 delegates serving themselves with loose leaf tea would prove fiddley, time consuming and rather messy!

After ruling this out, we turned our attention to sourcing a plastic-free tea bag. Luckily, this didn't prove too difficult, as we promptly discovered Teapigs.

Teapigs use a tea bag made from corn starch, and so are fully compostable. In addition, the inner packaging is made of Natureflex, a compostable material made from wood pulp. Teapigs were also the very first brand to receive a Plastic-Free Trustmark from A Plastic Planet. And to top it off, their tea tastes delicious!

Top tips

Avoid the need for non-recyclable single-use plastic associated with your tea supplies with our top tips:

- Use loose leaf tea rather than tea bags. This will reduce the amount of packaging straightaway. Many loose leaf teas are also available in tins
- If you are using tea bags, make sure they are free of plastic, both in their packaging and manufacture, and dispose of them in the correct waste stream. If you are unsure, check with your local council



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