

Gaiña Riverlodge: Where Nature is a Fundamental Part of Sustainability Plan

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recently recertified Gaiña Riverlodge.

Overlooking the magnificent Five-Sisters Waterfalls in Belize's secluded Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve, Gaiña Riverlodge is one of the country's most recognized ecotourist destinations.

First certified in 2014, the resort remains committed to improving its sustainability performance and continues to offer guests an authentic and rewarding green tourism experience.



Gaiña Riverlodge

Solar Power For Hybrid System

Gaiña Riverlodge has been focussing on energy conservation strategies that utilize natural resources. The resort has committed to the procurement of a solar system as an additional alternative source of energy to meet power needs currently fulfilled from the burning of fossil fuel. It is expected that by the end of the first quarter of 2024, the installation should be completed and a hybrid system implemented that feeds off both solar and hydroelectricity as the property's main sources of energy. Currently, Gaiña Riverlodge produces 75% of its electrical energy consumption from its own hydro- electric generating system installed on Privassion Creek.

Breezy Outdoor Decking Areas

Best practices at Gaiña Riverlodge includes architectural planning that incorporates local environmental elements. Aesthetically, all buildings at the resort accentuate and blend in seamlessly with the natural environment, whilst design and construction reduce heating, cooling, lighting, and water consumption through the use of passive (low technology) design appropriate

to local conditions. All structures and accommodation buildings feature thatched roofs and panoramic windows with screens only. No air conditioners are utilized and only ceiling fans are used in rooms to maintain a cool climate with natural air circulation. To further reduce energy consumption and offset the effects of hotter conditions resulting from global warming, the resort has constructed new decks at different locations for guests to enjoy cooler outdoor temperatures in the evenings as there is no air conditioning onsite. More windows have also been installed at the restaurant for cross ventilation and natural cooling.

Limiting Single-use Plastics

In efforts to minimize single-use plastic consumption, Gaiña Riverlodge is now offering stylish branded reusable water bottles to guests during their stay. These bottles are gifted to guests as a souvenir to inspire responsible travel. A refill station is available at the lobby for guests and visitors to refill their water bottles as needed all in an effort to protect the environment.

Organic Gardening Practices

Gaiña Riverlodge has had a great deal of success in its gardens as well. The resort has an extensive organic garden that produces 60% of all vegetables for guest and staff kitchens. Vegetables are also supplied to sister property Mata Chica on Ambergris Caye. Furthermore, resort gardeners have come up with an innovative idea on how to utilize waste grease from kitchens and recycle plastic jugs to assist with pest control in the garden. It has been found that certain insects are attracted to the colours of blue and yellow, so waste grease is smeared on the outside of brightly coloured yellow plastic containers which attract and trap pests on the sticky surfaces. Not only is plastic and oil waste reduced, pesticides and chemicals are also completely avoided leading to healthier crops.

Contact

Nigel Richards

General Manager

Gaiña Riverlodge

PO Box 173

San Ignacio

Cayo Belize

phone 011-501-834 4024

fax 011-501-223 0002

email nrichards@gaiariverlodge.com

web www.gaiariverlodge.com

Bradley Cox

Green Globe

+ +1 3103373000

[email us here](#)

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