



The Kai Conscious team with the Zero Waste 2019 Fair on All Fronts award.
Photo Mike Maahs

More than just a free lunch

Kai Conscious Café has taken out the Fair on All Fronts award at the Zero Waste Awards 2019.

The award goes to an innovative community or social enterprise that's converting waste into resources and improving social, environmental and local economic outcomes.

"This is an award for all the community," says organiser and volunteer Kathy Voyles.

"It's for Countdown, all of the food businesses and cafés we work with and for all the locals who come to cook and eat, thereby saving rescue food that would otherwise be put into landfill.

"We are delighted to be running such a wonderful project which welcomes everyone on the island with good food and company. It's an award for everyone who has joined us at Kai Café."

Since launching in April 2017, the café, run by the Waiheke Resources Trust, has diverted tens of thousands of kilograms of food waste from landfill.

Every Friday, organisers including Carys Templar, Jay Annandale and volunteer cooks make a variety of free meals from food supplied by members of the public and local businesses.

Over the past couple of years, the café has developed into a community event that provides an opportunity for social interaction, participation, learning and support.

According to WRT's website, around 40 people per week join the gathering including "toddlers, teens, our wonderful international woofers, workers and holidaymakers, plus many retirees and passersby".

Jay went to the awards evening at Smales farm on Thursday 18 July to accept the award from environmental group Kaipatiki Project, which partnered with Auckland Council, Para Kore ki Tamaki and Pacific Vision Aotearoa to host the event.

"The hui and awards are a celebration of what's being done, and an opportunity to come together to get inspiration for the year ahead," said Kaipatiki Project chair Charmaine Bailie.

"Many people are working hard in communities to reduce waste in creative ways. They deserve acknowledgement."•

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