

CASE STUDY: Rene Rose Island Cuisine

**ReThink
Disposable**
STOP WASTE BEFORE IT STARTS

BUSINESS PROFILE

Name: Rene Rose Island Cuisine
Business Type: Casual
Location: Sunnyvale, CA
On-site dining: 24 seats
Take-out: Yes
Transactions per day: 50+
Ware Washing: Hand washing in a three sink system
Employees: 3

Rene Rose Island Cuisine is a small but cozy 700 square foot space serving authentic Filipino dishes to loyal customers in Sunnyvale, California. This is a family-owned business with the husband and wife team, Rene and Rose, working behind the counter and their daughter, Natalie, managing the business. The atmosphere is casual and busy during lunchtime. There is seating for 24 customers and about 70% of the customers dine-in.

Packaging Practices prior to Rethink Disposable:

- Dine-in customers served on all disposable foodware
- Each order required up to five disposable plates and bowls due to the menu structure
- Disposable plastic cups offered for water
- Napkins stacked in the self-service area

Recommendations Implemented:

- Reusable plates, bowls and baskets replaced disposable food ware
- Reusable water cups replaced disposable water cups
- Bulk sauce dispenser eliminated disposable ramekins and lids for dine-in customers
- Increased their stock of reusable cutlery
- Efficient napkin dispenser

After implementing the **ReThink Disposable** recommendations, Rene Rose Island Cuisine successfully completed a full transition from all disposables to all reusable food ware for dine-in customers and minimized the packaging walking out the door with

take-out orders. A cutlery organizer and an efficient one-at-a-time napkin dispenser ensure that customers only take what they need, avoiding over consumption. The owners purchased ample reusable food ware and cutlery to maintain enough stock for the busy lunch rush to avoid reverting to disposables.

The choice to serve specialty sauce in a self service bulk dispenser saves staff prep time in addition to reducing the disposable plastic ramekins and lids. Rene and Rose organized their limited space to accommodate the reusables and maximize the dishwashing space by installing shelving and utilizing a bus cart. Dishwashing has not been as difficult as they had feared. They feel great about the changes because there is noticeably less trash. They used to carry out the trash three times per day, and now they only take it out once. They are very happy with the results of the program, and customer feedback has been extremely positive.



BEFORE ReThink Disposable: A typical meal is served on 3-5 plates and bowls.



AFTER ReThink Disposable: Ample stock of reusable food and drink ware helped Rene Rose achieve 100% elimination of disposables for dine-in customers.



Natalie Nepomuceno, Owner: "I was pleasantly surprised. It was so easy; you made everything so easy by working with us. Honestly, I thought it would be much harder."

Results:

Recommendation	Product Replaced or Minimized	% Disposable Reduction	Payback Period (months)	Annual Savings (after payback period)	Annual Waste Reduction (lbs.)
Implement reusable food ware	9" Dinner Plate	100.0%	0.6	\$4,236.61	313
	10 oz. Bowl	100.0%	0.1	\$8,212.50	438
	12 oz. bowl	100.0%	0.2	\$6,022.50	321
	6" Plate	100.0%	0.7	\$2,415.26	438
Implement a reusable tumbler and eliminate disposable water cups	10 oz. Cups	100.0%	1.1	\$741.97	180
Implement an efficient napkin dispenser	1-ply Dinner Napkin	50.0%	1.1	\$359.02	402
Implement bulk sauce dispenser and eliminate disposable ramekins and lids	2 oz. Ramekins	50.0%	1.6	\$77.19	31
Implement bulk sauce dispenser and eliminate disposable ramekins and lids	2 oz. Ramekin Lids	50.0%	2.1	\$57.32	7
TOTAL				\$22,122.36	2,130 lbs.

THE BOTTOM LINE

- \$22,122 in annual savings after payback period
- 151,607 disposable items reduced per year
- 2,130 pounds of annual waste reduction
- Full transition to reusable food ware even without a mechanized dishwasher
- Less trash to manage during the day
- Less time shopping for disposables
- Improved dining experience
- No extra labor required

ReThink Disposable is a [Clean Water Fund](#) program conducted in partnership with local businesses and government agencies. Generous support for the program is provided by a changing list of public and private funders. To learn more about the program, its partners, and funders, visit: www.rethinkdisposable.org.



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