

How a Local Small Business Restaurant is Saving Energy

Grill Counter is an Asian fusion cuisine restaurant in Compton, California, owned by small business owner, Amanda Chao, who is dedicated to serving and giving back to the people who live and work in her community by offering affordable, healthy and fresh foods. Amanda is also a community partner of Energy Upgrade California, which encourages residents and small businesses to use energy better to help keep California golden. She shares a look behind the counter on why she started her business, how she saves energy and the positive benefits it has on the community around her.

Why did you start this business?

We want to bring this farm to table idea to Compton and have accomplished that goal! We started this business because we wanted to lead a healthy lifestyle and there weren't many options for healthy foods here in Compton. We wanted to break the stigma that a place like this would only have greasy food like burgers and chicken wings. There aren't many (if any) healthy food options in our community and residents and business owners were driving to other cities looking for healthier options.

We saw a need for change and wanted our business to be for the people who live, work, and do business in our city. We currently buy our vegetables from Alma's Backyard Farm, a local farm here in the city as a way of giving back. It's kind of nice that they support us, and we support them. We also support Energy Upgrade California, a statewide initiative focused on encouraging residents and small businesses to use energy better.

How did you get connected with Energy Upgrade California?

Walter Contreras, VP of the National Latino Evangelical Coalition originally introduced us to Energy Upgrade California as a resource.

As a business owner, Energy Upgrade California keeps me up to date on ways I can operate a more energy efficient business. When I reduce my



energy use, I shrink not only my footprint on my community, but it can help my bottom line, too. This movement is happening all over California, and I am proud to come together with other businesses and communities to reduce our impact on the environment together.

How are you saving energy at the Grill Counter?

We were taught growing up to save energy and be energy efficient, so in the restaurant we switched the light bulbs to LED ones. They are brighter, and they have been saving us on our bottom line plus a 12-watt LED bulb can last up to 25,000 hours. It's about the little things; small actions like turning off electronics you are not using and utilizing power strips that make it easy to turn things on and off when we close our business at the end of day.

Why is it important to save energy?

There are a lot of benefits to saving energy, it can add up. Cleaner air, less pollution, improved public health, jobs, economic benefits, the list goes on. There is no downside to supporting organizations that help you better your business, your community and your future.

--

To learn more about ways to save energy, visit <https://www.energyupgradeca.org/zh/>.

