

## **Case Study - Little Missy Patisserie**

### **Inspiring customers to make the switch to BYO reusables**

Just outside Hobart's CBD, a cozy vegetarian cafe known for its French-Provincial style dishes is taking big steps to ditch single-use plastics. By adding a small surcharge to disposable food ware and chatting with customers about bringing their own reusables, they're encouraging everyone to make more sustainable choices — all while enjoying their favourite pastries.

From the inspiration behind their switch, to the response from their customers, Little Missy Patisserie's story shows how cafes and restaurants can make simple switches to become plastic free in a mindful, community-centric and fun way.

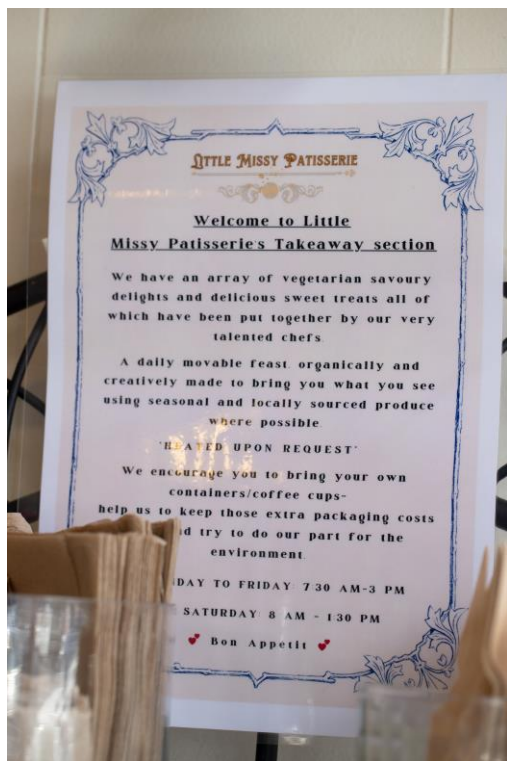
Manager Denise Shukri explains how the patisserie is making a difference, one reusable cup and container at a time.

#### ***Who is Little Missy Patisserie?***

"We are a small business nestled just on the cusp of the Hobart CBD. When we started, we were a hole in the wall patisserie, and we've now extended with a brand-new dining area. From oven-to-table through to takeaway options, we offer a movable feast with no set menu. Our chefs create beautifully hand-crafted, French-Provincial, vegetarian savoury pastries on a daily basis, sometimes even on an hourly basis. We use local produce as much as possible and even offer a bartering exchange with our local growers within the community."

#### ***Tell us about the reusable foodware initiatives you've implemented so far?***

"Encouraging our customers to bring their own reusable cups and containers has been our biggest initiative. We try to make our customers more aware of the environmental and monetary effect single-use plastics are having on both sides. One thing we have done is display a breakdown of how much we were spending on packaging to show the



A sign to encourage Little Missy Patisserie customers to adopt reusables

reason we started to charge 20 cents for every takeaway box used. We've also introduced a 40 cent discount for customers who bring along a reusable cup for their hot drinks."

***What made you decide to transition away from single-use plastic foodware towards reusables?***

"We are a very environmentally conscious cafe and are trying to do our best to minimise single-use plastics. Even transitioning a few years ago towards becoming a vegetarian establishment was an ethical decision we all agreed upon. Step-by-step, we seem to be heading in the right direction."

***What single-use plastic items have you switched away from?***

"The first single-use plastic item that we targeted was our coffee cups. We switched from double-walled, plastic-lined cups to water-based aqueous coated, home compostable cups.

After changing the cups, this led to some initiatives within the rest of our takeaway items. We switched to wooden cutlery, bamboo compostable salad bowls, kraft cardboard takeaway boxes, and even no bleach napkins.

We did have a mug library, but we lost a lot of mugs along the way, and we also initially offered a discount for bringing in your own containers, but we realised that rather than rewarding customers for doing this, we should make it the norm. That's why we decided to add a surcharge for disposable takeaway containers."



### ***What were some of the challenges you faced?***

“Not long after we started encouraging our customers to bring their own reusable cups and containers, Covid struck and we saw a change in customer’s behaviour where they were more wary about bringing in reusables.

Over that time, the cost of packaging also went up by 11%. This was particularly true for compostable items.”

Customers purchasing a coffee with their reusable cups. Photo credit: Denise Shukri

### ***How did you overcome these challenges?***

“We found that the best way to get people using their reusable cups and containers again was to verbally ask every customer if they had their own cup or container. Other things that have helped are building awareness that we accept reusables and about our other initiatives on social media, putting up posters, relying on word-of-mouth from our customer community.”

### ***What are some of the positive outcomes you’ve achieved?***

“So far this year, 15% of our customers are now bringing their own reusable cups when they come to get a hot drink, and 8%, are bringing their own reusable containers. A great example is the staff who visit us from a nearby workplace. Over the last two years they had been using single-use takeaway cups, right up until last month. Now all five of them are bringing their own cups, which is a direct result of our team at Little Missy Patisserie encouraging them to bring their own cups.”

***What's next in plastic reduction for Little Missy Patisserie?***

“Our aim is to continue to grow the numbers and have a target for at least 40% of our customers to bring in their own reusable cups and a target of 20% for containers. We want to buy less packaging, to maybe host a reusable cup day, or perhaps hold a competition to see who can bring in their most funny cup! Our community love us when we offer something different and fun.”

***What would you say to other cafes who are thinking of transitioning away from single-use plastic cups and containers?***

“Keep talking to your customers and encourage them to bring in their own cups or containers, and to be a bit more environmentally conscious. Help increase people's interest for the right reasons; make it fun, not a bore or a lecture.”